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**All of the People all of the Time?
Configurations of actors, knowledge and space in the
making of local development.**

**Volume 1 of 2
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Declaration

I hereby certify that this thesis is all my own work and that I have not has not obtained a degree in this University, or elsewhere, on the basis of this work.

Patrick Joseph O'Reilly

Acknowledgments

The original idea underlying this study was developed an embarrassingly long time ago while I was in the process of completing an M.A. through the Programme in Community Development at the National University of Ireland Galway. Two things in particular made this research possible. The first of these was the opportunity that this course afforded to us to travel to and study in Wageningen Agricultural University. There I had the great privilege of meeting and learning with some wonderful researchers and lecturers including Professor Norman Long and other staff and researchers in his department. Their work had a profound influence on the approach to social research outlined in this study. While not in any way responsible for any of its flaws anything of merit in this study owes something to the Wageningen School. The second and equally crucial event that made this research possible was the fact that I was fortunate to be offered a placement with W.W.D.P affording me the opportunity to spend the first of the series of prolonged stays in the area which provided the fieldwork on which this study is based. I am indebted to Mr. Jimmy Taffe and his staff for their patience with me, as I am to the many research collaborators and indeed friends I met in Waterford during my time there.

Any doctoral project is a substantial undertaking, however in this particular case the gestation has been longer and more accident prone than most. There are a number of reasons for this most of which are entirely the fault of yours truly and none of which need elaboration here. Suffice it to say that had someone told me in June 2011 that I would be sitting down to write an acknowledgements page in Kuala Lumpur in June 2012 I would have asked them what planet they were from. The fact that I am doing so is entirely because of the seemingly limitless forbearance and support of a number of people. Not least my family my parents; Mary and Hugh and sisters as well as my son Fintan all of whom have put up with more than they I could have expected them to in seeing this through. As well as the members of the faculty in N.U.I.Galway in particular Dr. John Canavan, Dr. Tony Varley, Dr. Anne Byrne, Dr George Taylor, Marilyn Moylan who had the misfortune to share an office with me and of course Mick Donelly. To them and the

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Glossary

A.A.E.S	-Area Allowance Enterprise Scheme
A.B.R.	-Area Based Response Programme
A.D.M`	-Area Development Management
A.T.G.W.U	-Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union
AnCO	-Industrial Training Authority
B.I.M	-Bord Iascaigh Mhara (the Irish sea fisheries board)
B.T.W	-Back to Work Scheme
C.A.P	-Common Agricultural Policy
C.D.E.P	-Community Enterprise and Development Programme
C.D.P	-Community Development Programme
C.D.T	-County Development Team
C.E.	-Community Employment Scheme
C.E.B	-County Enterprise Board
C.E.P	-Community Enterprise Programme
C.E.D.P	-Community Enterprise Development Programme
C.P.A	-Combat Poverty Agency
C.S.O	-Central Statistics Office
CYTP	-Community Youth Training Programme
D.E.W.T	-Discover East Waterford Tourism
D.S.W/S.F.C.A	-Department of Social Welfare/Social Community and Family Affairs
E.C. `	-European Community*
E.E.C	-European Economic Community*
E.S.F	-European Social Fund
E.U.	-European Union*
FAS	-Foras Áiseanna Saothair, The Training and Employment Authority
GCRM	-The Gaeltacht Civil Rights Movement
H.S.E	-Health Services Executive
L.D.S.I.P	-Local Development and Social Inclusion Progamme
LEADER	-Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale
L.E.S	-Local Employment Service
I.C.A	-Irish Countrywomen's Association

I.C.M.S.A	-Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association
I.C.T.U	-Irish Congress of Trade Unions
I.D.A	-The Industrial Development Authority
I.F.A	-Irish Farmers Association
INTERREG	-Initiative to support measures that stimulate cooperation between E.U member states
I.R.D	-Integrated Rural Development
LDP	-Local Development Programme
LDSIP	-Local Development and Social Inclusion Programme
L.I.S.H.I	-Low income smallholders initiative
Macra na Feirme	-Organisation for young people in farming
MnT	-Muintir Na Tire (An Irish Rural Community Development Movement)
N.E.S.C	-National Economic and Social Council
N.E.S.F	-National Economic and Social Forum
P.E.S.P	-Programme for Economic and Social Programme
P.E.S.C.A	-EU initiative concerning the restructuring of the fisheries sector
P.N.R	-Programme for National Recovery
S.C.E.S	-Small and Community Enterprise Scheme
S.E.H.B	-The South Eastern Health Board
S.E.R.T.O	-South East Regional Tourism Organisation
S.E.S	-Social Employment Scheme
U.F.A	-United Farmers Association
V.E.C	-Vocational Education Committees
V.T.O.S	-Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme
W.A.R.D	-Waterford Area Rural Development
W.D.P	-Waterford Development Partnership
W.L.P	Waterford LEADER Partnership
W.W.D.P	-West Waterford Development Partnership
YEA	-Youth Employment Agency

* The term E.C. is generally employed to refer to the European Community up until November 1993 after which the term E.U. is used to reflect the formal creation of the European union.

For Claire

Chapter 1 Introduction: Understanding the paradox of State induced local development

1.1 How local is local development

The approach adopted by LEADER was perceived to have put a major focus on prioritising local needs and issues and facilitated community and voluntary input to local development. This perception was captured in an observation that “you do not have a perception of local needs without a bottom-up approach”.

Kearney (p.4 1998)

Today, the Partnerships have become one of the primary institutional frameworks within which community concerns can be transmitted to the relevant Government departments and state agencies.

Haaze and McKeown –(p.12 2003)

The above statements feature in evaluations of two significant programmes introduced as part of the movement within Irish public policy which is the subject of this study. During the late 1980's and early 1990's local development programmes were presented as a new and vital approach to addressing a wide range of socio-economic issues. The early 1990's saw the introduction of a series of such initiatives in diverse areas of public policy, including economic development, employment support, education and social welfare. These programmes were introduced under the auspices of a wide range of government departments and agencies including the Departments of the Taoiseach, Enterprise, Environment, The Gaeltacht, Agriculture, Social Welfare and Fisheries. While these programmes differed, it is possible to identify certain common characteristics in how they defined the specific nature of the policy challenges they faced and in how they proposed to address these challenges (See for example Shortall 1994, NESF 1997, OECD 1996, 1998, 2006). These policy initiatives claimed to offer a means for addressing the specific problems facing areas through forms of intervention that were locally based and driven. It is these claims that this study examines through an in-depth study of a local development project.

Local development lays a particular emphasis on the way in which programmes are planned and implemented through decentralised entities which involve a high level of local involvement. Such arrangements are not simply intended to enhance the efficiency with which services are delivered and projects implemented, there is also *a “belief that decentralisation and participation makes for better government because it brings government spatially closer to people and allows greater involvement or ‘social inclusion’”* (Shortall 2006). Such claims have become the focus of a considerable degree of attention both nationally and internationally between those who agree with these suggestions and regard local development as a potentially emancipatory process which promotes an enhanced form of participatory democracy (C.P.A 2000, OECD 2006, Lee 2003, Haaze and McKeown 2003) and those who have argued that such forms of development are fundamentally oppressive, representing a further extension of the role of government into the lives of people (Meade 2005). However despite the central significance placed on the process through which such programmes are implemented, there has been a lack of in depth analysis of the events that occur during the course of local development programmes (MacAreavy 2006, Thuesen 2010). In the absence of such research there is insufficient empirical evidence to adequately test some of the most significant features of the local development approach. The problem can perhaps be stated in a more succinct fashion. There is not yet sufficient evidence to demonstrate the nature and significance of the local in local development policy and practice. This study seeks to address this issue, by firstly outlining a theoretical approach to researching local development projects which is capable of examining these issues and then testing this approach by interrogating data from one such project.

This chapter seeks to outline the justification for the approach employed in this study in more detail. In the next section the emergence of local development in Irish public policy is discussed, with a particular emphasis on examining the implications of the claims made for the approach. Specific concerns that emerge as a result of the way in which the emergence of local development approaches was treated by policy analysts and other researchers are also highlighted. It will be argued that much of this work was informed by and also contributed to an erroneous “binary view,” which juxtaposes views of local development as a vehicle of either emancipatory or oppressive outcomes. Both positions involve making a-priori assumptions about these programmes narrowing the research focus to a specific question of power which ignores the immanent nature of such projects and the possibility that for specific

actors such projects may have wildly varying significance. Following from this it will be argued that efforts to understand how such programmes operate require an approach that focusses first and foremost on actual events as they happen, rather than analysing them through the lens of a policy model which has already predetermined what features are significant, which aren't and which can be dismissed as externalities or local factors. Amongst the features of such an approach are that it must be empirically grounded (Van Der Ploeg 2000, Lewis and Mosse 2006). It should also be symmetrical that is, it should not presuppose what is and isn't important (Callon 1985, 1991). It should also not be assumed that the events which are examined are of a special order (Olivier De Sardan 2004, 2005) or make any a-priori assumptions about the nature of these events or what features of these events are important based on their formal description as local development entities. Rather than a special theory of local development, such an approach should outline how more general sociological concepts can be applied to the study of local development policy and practice (*ibid*). The approach outlined in this study utilises features of the actor oriented and network approaches to develop a position which embraces features of what have been variously described as the anthropology of policy (Shore and Wright 1997, 2011), the anthropology of development (Arce and Long 2007) and the ethnography of aid (Mosse 2005, Lewis and Mosse 2006).

Having briefly outlined the basic principles of the approach the chapter then turns to the specific subject matter which is examined in this study with a view to identifying the key research questions which will be examined using this approach. Finally the structure of the rest of the study is briefly summarised.

1.2 The emergence of local development in the republic of Ireland.

Local development has in, various forms long been a feature of public life in the Republic of Ireland (Commins 1985, O'Cinneide and Walsh 1990, Curtin 1996). However the emergence of a coherent local development policy can be identified very clearly with the introduction, at the end of the nineteen eighties and the beginning of the nineteen nineties of a number of public programmes with a clearly definable set of features which can be identified and described as the elements of a common local development approach (Curtin And Varley 1995, Moseley 2001, 2003). One of the key features of these programmes was a concern with

the increasing scale of certain social problems in specific geographical locations. As Moseley et al put it “*there was growing concern for the intractable nature of a number of socioeconomic problems, namely high and persistent unemployment, a sharp decline in agricultural employment, rural depopulation, poverty and social exclusion. With a belief (which is contested) that a high proportion of those suffering are located in geographically confined ‘blackspots’, including several peripheral rural areas*, (Moseley et al 2001 p. 177). Local development programmes were justified on the basis that existing styles of intervention were not fulfilling their objectives in certain areas which could be identified as experiencing specific socio-economic challenges or problems. Alongside the recognition of the geographical concentration of disadvantage, the new local development programmes attributed a degree of causality to this spatial dimension. Aligning the Irish approach with the growing American literature in this area Haaze and McKeown referred to these as the “*poorly understood cumulative effects which occur as a result of the clustering of distinct forms of deprivation amongst particular social groups and/or in specific neighbourhoods. This is frequently referred to as multiple deprivation, but it is more precise to speak of neighbourhood effects,*” (Haaze and McKeown 2003 p. 3). Not only were such challenges concentrated in certain locations, but they compounded each other collectively contributing to the overall level of disadvantage experienced in these areas through what came to be variously known as cumulative or multiple deprivation. Local development, it was argued, could address these spatial factors. “*The raison d’être of area-based initiatives is that space is an important aspect of the structuring of social processes.....The chief purpose of area-based initiatives.... is therefore to counter the effects of the additional or cumulative effects arising out of the clustering of poor households.*”(ibid un-numbered)

Recognition of these spatial factors was in turn pivotal to shaping the view adopted in the local development approach as to the best way of implementing the programmes through which these issues were to be addressed. The advocates of local development did not simply focus their criticisms of existing policies on the nature of the services and supports delivered but also on the means by which such services and supports were delivered (see for example CPA 1989, Duggan and Roynane 1991, Faughnan 1989). The ability of traditional public services, implementing programmes which were decided upon and directed at national level and which dealt with a specific sphere or sector of activity to adequately respond to the combination of socio economic challenges facing particular areas was questioned. National programmes were, the proponents of local development argued, insensitive to the needs of

areas experiencing the effects of cumulative disadvantage. There was a lack of co-ordination between them and by limiting control to those within the state agencies and government departments responsible, they excluded local communities from decision making. Such public services were inherently unlikely to respond to the specific needs of areas which experienced spatial disadvantage attributable to multiple causes. What was needed, the argument logically followed, were approaches that were more responsive to these needs within specific localities and capable of achieving a degree of horizontal integration of service provision across a range of policy areas within these localities. It was this role that the new local development policies set out to fill. As Hugh Frazer put it "*The radical aspect of the Area Based Response is that it is developing an approach which directly challenges our excessively centralised and compartmentalised bureaucratic and administrative system, by emphasising the need for a much more integrated, holistic and wide ranging response by the different agencies, by stressing the active involvement of those affected by unemployment and poverty in the planning and implementation of the initiative,*" (Frazer in Craig et al 1993 p. 3). The existing administrative arrangements were themselves part of the problem and as a corollary of this, the new local development bodies constituted part of the solution. Thus a key feature of the local development approach and one which set it apart from other forms of policy intervention was the significant emphasis it placed on the role of the delivery mechanism. Here we can identify a key feature of the local development approach, the view that the formation of an effective local development entity was the means through which the programmes could be implemented. Local development policy would deliver programmes that would be more effective at addressing the problems associated with spatial disadvantage. They would do so because these programmes would address the specific needs of these areas, transcending the traditional boundaries between national agencies and combining a range of activities into integrated programmes tailored towards the needs of specific areas (See Kelleher and Whelan 1992, CPA 1989). A feature of the approach was thus the view that such programmes would be best administered locally by organisations which had the capacity to put together multi-faceted programmes that were relevant to the needs of individual localities. This in turn led to another key feature of the approach, the idea that these spatial problems could be best addressed through local bodies which facilitated the participation of people from the area experiencing those disadvantages. Local people were to become involved in the projects not as passive clients but as active participants in both their planning and implementation. This would ensure local relevance and address the issues of

disempowerment and alienation from the existing state services which were seen to exist in such areas (Kelleher and Whelan 1992).

The related ideas that programmes should be delivered through local bodies and that they should reflect a wide range of local interests were encapsulated in the principle of partnership. The idea of partnership was initially adopted in Irish public policy to describe the series of national wage agreements which commenced with the Programme for National Recovery (P.N.R) and subsequent Programme for Economic and Social Progress (P.E.S.P) agreed between the government and “social partners,” chiefly the trade unions and employers’ organisations (See N.E.S.F 1997, C.P.A 2006)¹. The term subsequently came to be adopted in local development policy to describe arrangements at local level whereby a range of local players representing the state agencies, the social partners and representatives of the local community would be brought together to jointly plan and deliver a set of local development actions which would be implemented in their area. The practical manifestation of this trend was the introduction of programmes geared towards addressing diverse issues ranging from the socio-economic challenges posed by long term unemployment through to the information deficits confronting small and medium sized businesses. These programmes established a range of “area based,” organisations that claimed to involve new styles of intervention taking account of local views, needs and priorities. Amongst them were the Area Based Responses to Long Term Unemployment (A.B.R’s), The LEADER rural development organisations² and to a lesser extent the County Enterprise Boards (C.E.B’s). Under each of these programmes new organisations were established covering various different designated geographical areas in the Republic of Ireland. Each was provided with resources in order to implement programmes of intervention that reflected the needs and priorities of specific localities. Each programme brought with it new resources and claimed to involve new forms of action and new relationships between the statutory and non- statutory actors. With their support, a kaleidoscopic array of actions were undertaken varying from the staid and mundane such as the construction of local enterprise centres and information offices to the exotic and unprecedented such as Ostrich Farms and Samba Drum workshops.

¹ InitiallyThe State, Employers and Trade Unions made up the three “pillars,” of partnership while the community and voluntary sectors had an advisory input via the national economic and social forum. In 1997 they were added as the fourth pillar of national Partnership (Acheson et al 2004).

² LEADER is an acronym for the elaborately titled programme; “Liaison Entre Actions de Dévelopement de l’Economie Rurale,” An E.U funded rural development programme.

The very fact that the programmes were to target resources and concentrate effort on specific spatial areas was itself significant, representing an advance on the previous situation in which local and community development had been primarily regarded as a form of voluntary activity by groups on the fringes of public policy (See for example O'Cearbhaile and Varley 1988, CWC 1989, O' Cinneide and Walsh 1990, Varley 1991). However the new partnership arrangements that characterised these local development programmes were regarded with particular interest by researchers and policy makers³. These programmes ran contrary to established patterns of administrative practice in the Republic of Ireland. At best the state had had an ambiguous position towards sub-national bodies to the extent that the issue has become something of an old saw for academics⁴. Historically policy makers eschewed local autonomy, preferring formal control over public policy to be retained at the centre with programmes being planned, implemented and delivered by government departments or national agencies⁵. The bulk of the state's activities in relation to the development of rural areas were subsumed within the sphere of agriculture policy⁶ while its approach to the development of urban areas was, with some exceptions incorporated within more general environmental, employment and industrialisation policies, and the terms local and community development themselves were with some limited exceptions scarcely mentioned at all⁷. The introduction of new local programmes targeting resources to specific areas where cumulative problems of deprivation existed involved devolving a considerable degree of control over the

³ This point is reflected in the remarks of Sable (1996) who refers to these programmes as forms of "democratic experimentalism," and was reiterated in research undertaken by Haaze (1998, 2003) on behalf of ADM one of the main national agencies funded to undertake these programmes who related the need for these programmes to remain semi-independent to their ability to provide "laboratories," for experiments in democratic experimentalism.

⁴ See for example Commins (1985, 1991) O'Cinneide & Walsh (1990) Varley (1990, 1991). The vehemence of some of these arguments may help to account for the subsequent enthusiasm with which the initiatives undertaken in the period since have been greeted by many Irish academics.

⁵ This has often been referred to in the context of the Republic of Ireland's weak system of local government. The 1948 Act which introduced the unelected position of county manager cited as being an example of the reluctance of national politicians to devolve power (See Barrington 1975, Lee 1987)

⁶ While this is generally the case some gestures towards a wider rural development problem were made throughout the period discussed. These are considered in more detail later.

⁷ Notable exceptions include the first Combat Poverty Programme, and the Gaeltacht community development projects. These are given a more in depth treatment in chapter 2.

design and implementation of local programmes. Local organisations would, in theory, be able to identify local needs and local priorities and respond to them. This offered the potential to enhance co-ordination between local communities and local service providers through decision-making structures that required them to work together. Through their enhanced involvement, target groups would come to see these programmes as something over which they had a degree of control; in the language of community development they would feel a sense of ownership. For many professionals, volunteers and researchers alike the introduction of partnership structures were nothing less than a new form of governance, an exercise in participatory democracy that offered the opportunity to restructure the relationship between local communities and the state (Loughry 2002, Shortall 2006, Murray and Greer 2007)

1.3 Midwifing a new paradigm the research response to the new programmes

The period examined in this study started with substantial experimentation as the state attempted to implement a paradox, creating national programmes to induce local and community development. These first programmes were to be innovative initiatives, aimed at testing new approaches to state intervention. In most instances the projects were initially intended to be short term pilot projects with an initial life span of up to three years. Within these programmes planned efforts to change the traditional dynamics of relationships between the state and localities, between economic interest groups and the state and between the target groups and implementers were all to be tested. Given the fact that these programmes claimed to involve such a fundamental alteration in the relationship between state and community, it is scarcely surprising that the field became the subject of considerable research effort. This was a situation which was further fostered by the status of these programmes as pilot projects and the requirement that they be subject to substantial evaluation, leading one commentator to speak of a “cottage industry,” of research on the problems facing rural communities in the west of Ireland. The attention this new approach received, its novelty and rapid introduction through a number of specific programmes led many researchers to speak in terms of a paradigm shift requiring major changes in national policy. In 1995 two of the Country’s leading rural development researchers suggesting that the emergence of “several pilot programmes of rural development... ...adopting variations of an area based approach,”(N.E.S.C 1995 p. 156) constituted a “newer version of the bottom up model,” (ibid p.212) and concluded that “it would seem appropriate and desirable

now to consolidate this emergent policy framework by taking strategic decisions in regard to development organised on a spatial basis" (ibid p. 213). Suggesting that the merits of this new approach in which a central role was given to the interaction between local actors and the state in the implementation of local development programmes had been clearly demonstrated.

This report was but one of a number of studies that endorsed a local development approach in which area-based development partnerships would operate integrated, multi-sectoral programmes to address socio-economic development issues in specific localities. This involved at the very least a reconfiguration of the forms through which control and hence power over development projects in certain areas was expressed. Irish policy makers greeted the emergence of this new local development trend with considerable enthusiasm seeming at times to be only too happy to assist in the birth of a new policy paradigm. -Shortall illustrated this trend describing the trend by which local people were seen to be involved in rural development through programmes in which "*the local community must feel a sense of ownership of the development plan and projects. They must feel it is they who are the key directors and to whom the benefits of success will accrue,*" (1994 p.256). Citing Stohr (Stohr and Fraser Taylor 1981) and writing in terms that echo the views of NESC on the course of future research Murray and Greer (1993) also concluded that there had been a paradigm shift in basic thinking on development. They outlined a new "prescriptive inventory," for research which included the need for development strategies that were responsive to local cultural, social and historical factors, favoured the production of locally relevant goods and services, promoted regional economic circuits, incorporated a heightened degree of local participation, fostered innovation in the organisational and cultural spheres and involved the integration of decision making (pp 260 – 261). The net result was to convey the idea that as a concept, local development had arrived. Given the nature of these programmes and more specifically the claims implicit within them as regards their ability to bring about fundamental changes in the relationship between the state and the community, the local and the national these assertions appear to be particularly brave suggesting that in little over five years and with exceptionally limited resources, these short term programmes had transformed centralising administrative practices which had been evolved over decades.

Regardless of the claims made for these programmes one thing was clear, by the mid 1990's the local development approach was no longer small scale and experimental. Rather local

development programmes involving some form of partnership arrangement were rapidly becoming an established plank of Irish public policy, so much so that by the latter half of that decade the number of partnership style organisations in rural areas alone exceeded one hundred leading Moseley et al to conclude that “*the Irish State is endowed - pro rata to its population size more than any other European State - with a plethora of local partnerships devoted to the cause of local socio-economic development*” (2001 p. 191). However while supporters and advocates of locally based development have been quick to associate these programmes with a new paradigm, less attention has been paid to the actual dynamics of these interventions. The question of what actually happens when new locally based bodies are introduced into specific localities or of the overall impact of such programmes on the distribution of power and control over decision making within these areas are rarely addressed directly (Shortall 2004, MacAreavy 2006).

The lack of specific information on the way in which these programmes operate in practice is particularly significant in relation to local development, given the importance that this particular policy approach places on the structures and processes which are introduced during the planning and implementation of programmes. The local development approach is based on a critique not only of existing public policy but also of the way in which this policy is delivered, proposing instead an alternative approach which incorporates a greater degree of local participation in the design of projects which are specifically tailored to the needs of particular localities. Partnership is not simply an administrative device through which local development outputs are delivered but is itself an important component of these outputs, conferred with a range of positive attributes that have evolved over time. Initially much emphasis was placed on the role of partnership in mobilising support for the efforts of communities to address specific issues such as unemployment (Raftery 1989) and empowerment (Varley 1991). Later, emphasis was placed on the capacity of such programmes to enhance governance (Sable 1996) and promote local entrepreneurship (Bowler et al 1996). More recently the analysis of the benefits of local development and partnership have become increasingly sophisticated linking the concept with innovation (Dargan and Shucksmith 2008), sustainability and the promotion of a knowledge society (Tovey 2008) as well as the generation of social capital and the promotion of civic engagement (Shortall 2008). The sheer variety of claims made for the potential of such approaches provides an illustration of the lack of clarity surrounding the potential benefits associated with the local development process. Yet despite the crucial importance attached to these processes, many of the

fundamental ideas which underlie the local development approach in Ireland, ideas upon which its claims to be effective are based, have not been subject to rigorous analysis. This generates a number of concerns relating to the claims made by local development policy. The most obvious and basic of these, concerns the quality of current knowledge about the way in which such programmes are established and operate. The local development approach regularly describes this as first involving the identification of suitable geographical areas and the subsequent formation of partnership boards in terms which suggest the “bringing together,” of groups of individuals who have a common interest in the area’s development. One of the key features of the approach is the idea that individual actors on this board can represent a range of local interests and that as a group they can agree a common local agenda which reflects these interests. It is a broadly consensual model in which the state can act as an honest broker and local development policy creates an environment in which various local actors can agree. Meade and O’Donovan describe it thus *‘Contemporary discourses of partnership suggest that the state, in its role as bridge builder, will facilitate the process of integrated and judicious development by transcending the polarities that have hindered development to date.’* (2002 p. 3) However little if any data exists as to how such areas are identified and how such groups are brought together. In its absence claims such as those contained in the quotes that opened this chapter appear less as statements based on solid analysis of facts than as professions of faith, an assertion that by bringing together certain people in a partnership, community input into public policy can be facilitated and transmitted to government through an unspecified process which is not subject to direct evaluation. The extent to which it is possible to establish how these boards function, what role the state plays in them and whether they do in fact succeed in agreeing mutually beneficial development goals reflecting the interests of the wider community all remain matters of conjecture.

This leads to a second and related concern. This is the limited extent to which the causal relationship between the local development approach itself and the outcomes of local development projects have been investigated. There appears to be little data on how the processes that occur during local development programmes relate to their results. Instead much of the emphasis in research has focussed on the examination of quantitative data (often produced in evaluations) relating to programme outputs which are then presented as evidence that the programme has succeeded and by inference that the approach that underlies it is sound. This does not provide a coherent explanation of how a programme has worked. It does not illustrate which particular facets of the approach were actually responsible for its

success or otherwise. It does not identify features of the programme which could be improved or discarded. Nor does it demonstrate how the outcomes correlate with the various interests which were brought together in the partnership to deliver the programme. Rather than the clarity and transparency that some associate with the local development approach this situation has the potential to compound the uncertainty surrounding what are some of the central claims of local development. At best what this approach can produce are statements to the effect that people who may or may not have represented the community in which they live, implemented a set of proposals which they agreed would help them to achieve objectives which they said that they believed to be in the interests of their community, producing outcomes which they said they believed were in line with these objectives.

This in turn gives rise to another concern, the extent to which the research that is employed in local development programmes reflexively influences the way in which local development is understood. The early emphasis in these programmes was on experimentation alongside which there is a continued requirement for substantial monitoring and evaluation of these programmes and, it could be argued, for local development organisations to produce evidence to support the case for the next round of funding⁸. This has resulted in the production of significant research documentation as part of these programmes in the form of a range of studies and in particular action plans and evaluations together with the generation of considerable additional academic comment. In evaluation studies in particular there is an emphasis on the description of the morphological features of the projects (board structures and management arrangements for example) and the production of quantitative data⁹, occasionally using the latter to infer things about the former; “We had a board, the project was a success therefore the board was a success.” This may seem like a logical chain of reasoning but this is only the case if the reasons for the project’s success are clearly related to

⁸ Ironically and perhaps regrettably while the impact of funding arrangements was a regular issue in the community development literature in the 1980’s (See for example Kelleher 1986, CWC1989) the influence of funding considerations on the activities of both researchers and other actors involved in local development has received relatively little attention over the past two decades.

⁹ Haaze and McKeown (2003) for example describe the system of quantitative indicators devised by Area Development Management in some detail together with outlines of how such systems can be refined and utilised to provide more effective information to policy makers. While they also mention some 350 qualitative studies as being conducted in this period, little if any comment is made on the quality of these studies. There is no indication as to what uses these studies are put.

the board's presence. The emphasis on the production of research documentation in local development programmes has created new interrelationships between academic researchers and other societal actors. Daniel describes such relationships as "*often tak(ing) the form of short-term contracts that encourage academics to build up research programmes, often based on public-private partnerships, in which the research objectives are partly defined by societal (as opposed to academic) interests*" (2010 p. 18). Through such relationships research shapes the social objects which it describes, equally academic work is shaped by these objects. Yet little if any consideration has been given within this body of research to the potential implications of these reflexive processes. Rather the result of the style and extensive nature of evaluation research has been to create the sense that these programmes have been closely evaluated and researched allowing inferences to be drawn about the local development approach while in fact many of the key elements of that approach are not examined in this material. The success of a project is demonstrated through practical project outcomes. Where this is not possible however the existence of a non-quantifiable element in the project in the form of ephemeral, emancipatory or participative goals such as those listed above can be invoked to explain the lack of material outputs¹⁰. Such evaluations are prepared with a specific policy audience in mind and are subject to review by the commissioning organisation (See for example Faughnan et al 1989). They are not prepared with a view to producing rigorous scientific accounts of social processes but often with an eye to positioning the organisation favourably with funders (See for example Kelleher 1986). They are not normally subject to scientific peer review. Nevertheless the same pressures that drive organisations to undertake evaluation research results in many of these studies being published. As a consequence a significant body of such reports have found their way into scientific discussions in which the expressed intention of those involved is to produce rigorous scientific accounts of social processes. There is a danger that in such circumstances such reports may become employed in scientific research papers as general evidence of the "success,"¹¹ of the local development approach without due recognition being given to the

¹⁰ See for example the stress on the significance of the contribution of LEADER companies to capacity building for rural tourism. (Kearney et al 1994, 2001)

¹¹ There are numerous examples of this in the literature. For example Mosely et al (2001, 2003) almost solely make use of evaluation reports as evidence of the "success," of partnerships in Ireland and Europe respectively. Such reports were also incorporated into a combat poverty literature review of research on the role of communities in tackling poverty (Motherway 2006). The problem is compounded by the fact that certain agencies including the Combat Poverty Agency and ADM (later Pobail) adopted a policy of producing in house

limitations under which this work was undertaken. However the applied nature of much of this research has a bearing on the data it contains which needs to be recognised by researchers who employ it. This is not to suggest that there should be no relationship between applied and academic research but rather to highlight the fact that the articulation of this relationship needs careful attention. In particular it is important that academic research not restrict itself to the analytical parameters established by applied researchers. It may be the case that such reports have as much to say about the things they do not examine as about the things that they do.

While the concerns outlined above have an immediate relevance to those involved in the fields of community and rural development in Ireland they have a wider relevance, as the understandings and “lessons,” drawn from these programmes have the potential to impact internationally on wider debates about the role of local development. It is undoubtedly the case that the events discussed here can be associated with a larger international phenomenon in which the role of the state in development has undergone considerable change. There has been a period of “decentralisation fever” (Tendler 1997, Houtzager and Moore 2005), a “*neoliberal trend to de-nationalise and decentralise aid (which) serves to further diversify sources of power and influence via a proliferation of organisations and intermediary networks,*”(Lewis and Mosse 2006 p. 2). Underlying this international movement are assumptions which in many ways echo those described above. These include a belief that the process of decentralising decision making to subnational structures leads to better government “*the most common argument is that, because decentralisation by definition involves bringing government closer to the governed in both spatial and institutional settings government will be more knowledgeable about and hence more responsive to the needs of the people,*” (Crook and Svorrison 2003 p. 233). Whether or not locally based development in any of its varieties has lived up to the expectations of its advocates, many of the ideas and strategies employed in local development policy (such as stakeholder engagement programmes, participative planning strategies and the creation of local development coalitions in the form of “partnerships”), have become part of the lingua franca of managing the relationship between target communities, wider society, statutory agencies and non-

publications of such evaluations or of studies based on evaluations without peer review and under titles which do not clearly indicate that these studies are such (see for example Craig 1993, Cullen 1994, Haaze and McKeown 2003,)

governmental organisations, not only in Ireland but internationally (see Bierschenk et al 2002, OECD 2006). The broader adoption of elements of the local development approach by a wide range of state bodies and organisations is testament to its wider impact. There are few areas of public policy which do not now possess “stakeholders,” who must be “engaged” in the course of implementing any initiative. In the Republic of Ireland architects working on local authority renovation projects are required to hold consultations with residents, as is the forestry commission prior to undertaking sustainable felling in line with its forestry management plans. While it is not entirely clear how such practices lead to better policies it is quite clear that many of those engaged in making and implementing public policy now perceive it as being in their interests to integrate concepts derived from local development policy into their own practices. In part at least the attraction of the approach lies in the ideological power of concepts like local participation, community and empowerment. Choices between local development and other approaches appear as not so much decisions over the selection of the best way to address a policy issue but rather as debates about better local democracy. The local development discourse makes what are sometimes highly politicised claims which can rapidly polarise policy debates into either-or, with us or against us arguments. Given the importance that this approach now enjoys, the need to generate increasingly exhaustive accounts of how these concepts actually function in a real development setting is becoming increasingly important. There is in a very real sense a connection between the global and the local, a degree to which studies of specific development settings can shed light on the universal claims made for the potential of certain approaches to address social and economic problems, not only in relation to debates over policy but in relation to the nature of modern civil society.

1.4 An anthropology of local development?

In the previous section the existence of a gap in current knowledge of the operation of local development programmes was identified, together with some of the concerns this gap raises. In this section existing approaches to the study of local development in Ireland are briefly discussed with a view to identifying the possible causes for this gap. This is done with a view to highlighting the potential of an anthropology of intervention to address the deficiencies in current research approaches. The intention here is to make the case for such an approach in

broad terms outlining some of its general principles. These will serve as the basis for the theoretical discussion which will be outlined in more detail in the next chapter.

This study concentrates on one of that cluster of local development organisations introduced in the early 1990's under a number of programmes. These bodies shared a range of features in common which we can identify, describe and define as comprising the elements of a local development approach. As we have seen a crucial component of this approach was the emphasis that it placed on the way in which projects were undertaken. Participation and local engagement were seen as being an important feature of this process. The state was trying to manage a paradox by inducing locally driven development. Given the central significance attached to these processes it is scarcely surprising that among the most dominant themes in research and writing on local development have been questions concerning the impact of these new programmes on state-community relations and the more general question of how such programmes effect existing power relations within specific localities. Such issues have been and remain a major focus of research in community and local development (Midgely, 1986, Hall and Midgely 1988, Masaki, 2007). This is an often highly charged debate in which the ideological biases of the protagonists feature prominently, leading to what Masaki (2007) describes as a simplistic and dichotomized view of how such programmes are worked out in which the emancipatory and oppressive dimensions of policy are often juxtaposed.

Within the literature a further distinction can be identified between what Clyde Wilson (2003) describes as radical and pragmatic approaches, or between those who see the potential role of such interventions to deliver either ideological or functional benefits. The former base their views on the role of the local groups on value driven assertions which stress the capacity for locally based development to redress social and political imbalances (Ledwith, 1997, 2005, Mayo 2011). This incorporates a focus on the capacity of local development programmes to form the basis for radical socio-political change. Within such ideological perspectives the local group provides a vehicle through which traditional power imbalances in the policy making process can be redressed leading to the restructuring of local political relations. Varley and Curtin go a considerable way towards describing one such ideological perspective in terms of a scenario which envisages "*radical populist type collective actors becoming the driving force in local partnerships, pushing their own agendas in a radical direction, using them to build their own capacities for democratic self-organisation,*"(2006 p 427). The latter relate the local development organisation to the challenge of more effective

policy delivery. Again they recognise the potential of the local development approach to impact on traditional power imbalance but in this case the result is new forms of compromise enhancing policy delivery. Both NESC (1994) and the OECD (1993,1998) saw the formation of programmes involving a greater level of local input as the key to developing new initiatives that could act as a ‘springboard’ to an exploration of innovative responses to economic and social problems. As Sabel puts it *"area based approaches also permit policies to be more socially inclusive and help ensure the social stability and a social cohesion without which economic growth and structural readjustment will be obstructed"* (Sabel, 1996 p. 3). In the view of Sabel, NESC and other researchers working in this perspective, the area-based partnerships offered a new and distinct method of co-ordinating public policy, avoiding the process of compartmentalisation and bureau shaping which undermined previous attempts at resolving the problems of long-term unemployment and rural development (Dunleavy, 1986, Frazer in Craig et al, 1993 p3). The emphasis amongst commentators who stressed the operational benefits of partnership was thus on the general theme of its ability to improve public administration and service delivery through enhanced forms of governance (Powell and Geoghegan 2004)

Those who focus on the ideological potential of local development policy emphasize its potential to “empower,” local communities and equate the approach with efforts to address the local balance of power through concepts such as participation, empowerment and partnership. Those focussing on the operational potential of these programmes emphasise its ability to overcome institutional log jams within existing service organisations, stressing the ability of local bodies to co-ordinate, co-operate and communicate more effectively with the local state. However, whether as a vehicle for ideological change or functional improvement it remained the case that those who support local development approaches regard the local development body itself as a key distinguishing feature of these policies, one which is central to its potential to overcome the perceived inadequacies of existing policies. It is equally the case that those who have criticised the local development approach have pinpointed the role of the local board as a key area of failure arguing that local board structures have failed to achieve the type of changes envisaged by advocates of either the ideological or functional potential of local development projects (Lowenstein 1984, Taylor 2005, Meade 2005)¹². For

¹² The ability of the new local development organisations to address the “functional,” goals of reducing bureaucratic compartmentalisation and improving service delivery has in fact been the subject of particular

them local programmes are simply another form of dominating knowledge (Marglin and Marglin 1990) through which the state is able to extend its control over the lives of its citizens. Development policy necessarily involves debates about power and social change and the question of who determines it. As a consequence debates about development tend to be “*permeated with normative judgements arising from a variety of ideologies and meta – ideologies....the literature is an endless stream of value judgements.*” (Oliviere De Sardan, 2005 pp. 1-2).

Among the results of the dominance of these normative themes in relation to Irish local development policy has been the tendency to focus research on attempts to locate specific programmes in relation to the oppressive or emancipatory poles of a continuum. By doing so it is not only the case that the supporters of the local development approach and its critics identify in advance what are the important elements of the local development approach, they go a considerable way towards outlining how they envisage that these elements operate, thus demarcating the terrain over which debates about local development and hence research should focus. For example both the ideological and functional perspectives envisage these boards as forums in which a variety of different actors come together and through a process of negotiation and structured planning put together an agreed local development programme. For advocates in both perspectives the potential of local development rests upon the ability of the local development entity to produce and subsequently to implement plans which address the ideological and/or functional challenges these perspectives identify, while of course those who argued the opposite question their ability to do so. In both cases, commentators make significant inferences about the way in which these local bodies work. For optimists such bodies provide a context in which actors agree a development agenda. For those in the negative camp such bodies provide a context in which certain actors can impose their development priorities at the expense of others. Taylor for example points to the fact that within such bodies actors pursue strategies in line with interests “*within the field of community development a network of actors and/or interests utilise a common discourse both to define the policy terrain and to act as a mechanism for excluding others*” (Taylor 2005 p. 146). Given the almost universal assertion of the importance of such events in the way that

criticism even among those who view the role of such bodies in a generally favourable light. The Combat Poverty Agency’s review of the original partnerships particularly highlighted the problems those organisations encountered in working with other agencies and facilitating the re-allocation of existing resources as a particularly problematic one.

development programmes are worked out and indeed the confidence with which various commentators have made inferences about the ideological implications of such events, it is ironic that while development research often tends to be dominated by the type of normative arguments described above, much of this debate has occurred in an empirical vacuum. In the Irish context it was and remains the case that little if any research has been undertaken in relation to how such bodies actually operate in practice. As has been shown, instead of detailed and in depth studies of how such organisations are formed and how they make decisions it appears that in many cases commentators simply infer things about the way that such boards function by examining post facto the outcomes of local development programmes. It is this which generates one of the other concerns mentioned above. This is the question of the manner in which the results of applied research are incorporated into academic debates. Such research may prove a useful resource in normative arguments over the pros and cons of the local development approach, particularly if it can draw on the legitimacy conferred to the statements it makes due to the “scientific,” manner in which the data contained in this research is generated. However policy documentation and academic research are “*reflection(s) of two competing cultures. One - that of the researcher tends to add complexities and resist final closure. The other – that of the political actor – tends to demand straightforward and easily communicated lessons that will lead to some kind of action,*” (Heng 2008 p. 222). It may be useful for actors in the policy process to fall back on in house research in order to draw inferences about the way in which local development programmes operate as they struggle to fill in the gaps, utilising existing available data rather than attempting the more problematic task of undertaking in depth research into how programmes operate. This may be particularly so in debates which focus on wider normative issues concerning the political economy of public policy. Equally it may be the case that applied research is devised with such a role in mind. A brief survey of recent Irish studies of local development suggests that in many cases reports which are commissioned and published in house are cited extensively as evidence about the way in which these programmes operate¹³. However the manner in which such information is produced and the motive behind its production raises serious questions as to how such research should be incorporated into academic research.

¹³ See for example Moseley et al 2003, Acheson et al 2004, CPA 2006

A-priori decisions about what is and is not important in development projects have a fatal impact on the way in which research questions are formulated particularly if these decisions are driven by the immediate needs of policy makers. This was illustrated during the course of this study when it became apparent that a number of significant processes and phenomena occurred during the course of the local development project under examination which scarcely featured in the existing local development literature. These included such phenomena as organisational self-interest, the impact of local elites, the practices adopted by field workers and the behaviour of “clients”. While these phenomena appear to have an effect on the shape policies take, by making a-priori decisions about what are and are not the important factors in the working out of policies, current forms of analysis fail to take account of these factors reducing them to “externalities” (Clay and Schaffer 1984). Yet during this study it became obvious that far from being externalities in many cases these phenomena were crucial to understanding how the initiative was worked out. What unfolded was a reality in which it was quite clear that some of the features that were placed firmly at the edges of the “official” world of development policy were central to how these schemes operated in practice, in ways which were similar to Lynch’s description of the role of hidden knowledge in producing formal scientific data (Lynch 1988). The informal practices of some actors in the development project contributed significantly to the formal outcomes produced. This at the very least points to the value in developing an approach to research which is able to explore these observable phenomena rather than ignoring or dismissing them out of hand as externalities.

In summary with some notable exceptions there has been a dearth of studies focussing on the social processes that occur during local development projects in Ireland. In part at least this can be understood as the consequence of the dominance of a particular episteme within the research community which has emphasised normative debate along a certain binary trajectory. This limits the extent to which the in-depth study of these processes is deemed necessary or useful. Allied to this has been an assumption by some within the Irish research community, not only that the data produced through internal evaluations can be treated in the same way as academic research but that the data so produced can serve as the basis for drawing inferences as to how such programmes actually do function. As a consequence a considerable gap in existing scientific knowledge exists as to how these programmes operate. Worse still a combination of ideological stances, administrative guile and the almost

universal acceptance of the conclusions produced in evaluations conspire to draw a cordon sanitaire around these issues preserving them from direct investigation.

These criticisms inform the basic principles underlying the approach to conducting the research adopted in this study outlined below. These include;

- Empirical Grounding

First and foremost the brief overview of debates in Irish local development research points to a key area of weakness. This is the lack of attention to the empirical reality of local development. It sometimes seems as if research is regarded as little more than an awkward bit of fact gathering between bouts of ideologically theoretical fisticuffs. The approach employed in this study is driven by the view that research needs to be empirically grounded (Van Der Ploeg et al 2000) keeping theory at arms-length and the data at its fingertips, by which I mean that such an approach needs to be driven and informed by the data rather than as often appears to be the case driven by the need to support one or another position in public policy debates.

- Symmetry

In order to focus on the empirical data research needs to avoid any preconceptions as to what is or is not important in the research, it must be symmetrical (Callon 1985). For this reason the research attempts to “*avoid preconceived norms, be they positive (brokers as emanations of a «civil society» confronting adversity) or negative (brokers as «parasites» preying on mismanaged aid).* The type of research we advocate is characterized, among other things, by wariness in the face of ideological digressions of all types,” (Bierschenk 2002 p. 4) allowing us to as Murdoch phrased it “follow the actor,” (Murdoch`1995).

- Application of general sociological and anthropological approach

A feature of the existing approach which has been applied to local development described above is that of conceptual closure, with programmes treated in isolation from the wider world in which they operate. An empirically driven research strategy is not consistent with

any assumption that local development represents a specific category of events involving certain types of processes which occur in isolation. It must rather admit the possibility that the events that occur during local development policies are entangled in the wider social world and avoid assuming anything about the nature of such events. This study adopts the view that “‘Development’(is) just another form of social change; it cannot be understood in isolation. The analysis of development actions and of popular reactions to these actions should not be isolated from the study of local dynamics, of endogenous processes, of ‘informal’ processes of change” (Olivier De Sardan 2005 p. 24). Rather than a special theory of local development, the approach adopted in this study applies general sociological and anthropological concepts to the study of the programme local development policy.

- Recognising the multi-dimensional nature of social reality

While this study will make use of specific concepts to describe events it is also recognised that the social world is complex. In reality everything happens everywhere, and at once. Social events are complex and entangled and while it may be possible to discern such phenomena as networks and interfaces they are ultimately bound up or entangled in a social reality which is many dimensioned and complex. Within this complex world we can understand development as a multi-level, multi-actor and multi-facetted process, researching them requires an approach that is capable of recognising the “*subtle nature of power dynamics in which oppression and emancipation are interwoven,*” (Masaki 2007 p 2). It cannot be assumed in advance that the outcomes of local development policies are necessarily oppressive or emancipatory or indeed a combination of the two. Development projects constitute a field of activity or an arena involving, but not limited to, what Masaki refers to as a complex web of cultural politics. They are open ended networks in which actors respond to the threats and opportunities posed in many complex ways; they “*involve(s) a great number of interactions between actors with varying resources and dissimilar goals.*” (Mosse and Lewis 2006 p 1). Actors are not rigidly bound or defined within fixed roles in specific networks but occupy multiple roles in diverse networks utilising knowledge strategically. Networks can place actors who may be regarded as “local” in geographical terms in close social proximity with senior figures in the decision making process. It is essential that the research perspective retain the flexibility to adapt to and interpret the multidimensional nature of these processes as they happen. Such an approach needs to allow for the fact that for the actors involved, the significance of a development programme may

not lie in either its oppressive or emancipatory potential or even a mixture of the two but in entirely different considerations.

- Accounting for the reproduction of asymmetries of power and knowledge over time.

Permeating the features listed above is the notion of agency, the idea that it is “*flesh-and-blood people who act(ed) and change(d) the world they are living in,*” (Hebinck, Den Ouden and Verschoor 2001 p. 4). The actions of specific actors in specific sites contribute to the social reality of local development programmes. However the approach envisaged in this study also attempts to account for the existence over time of what Benda-Beckman (1989) describes as discontinuities in social systems. More specifically it must be able to deal with the question of the reproduction of asymmetries of power and knowledge over time and the seeming durability of organisational forms in a way which is consistent with the operation of agency (See Callon 1985). This involves more than a simple and mechanistic attempt to make ethnographic findings “fit in” to any theory or configuration of theories that attempt to provide a totalising account of supposedly macro power relations. Rather an approach which seeks to demonstrate how the activities of specific actors generate so-called “macro” effects is needed. In attempting to do so the study makes use of an approach that borrows from the “practice approach” to organisations developed by Nuitjen (2001, 2003). This approach embarks from the recognition that organisational forms are the cumulative output of the activities of actors located in a range of sites in constantly changing dynamic network which may or may not correspond with formal organisational structures (See also Bierschenk and Elwert 1988). Referring to Long (1989) Nuitjen speaks of “*fields of action which often crosscut organisation boundaries*” (Long, 1989 p. 252 in Nuitjen 2001 p 142). This research thus investigates how specific sets of organisational arrangements are established and maintained over time by actors in these networks. The actor oriented and network approaches thus provide a valuable tool allowing us to examine how objects and relations hold together specific arrangements of space and time (See Latham 2002 pp. 115 - 144). The role of different forms of discourse in making possible the specific arrangements of objects in such networks offers a useful means for examining these issues and their potential to do so will be discussed further in the next chapter.

- Reflexivity.

Finally the research needs to incorporate an awareness of the reflexive nature of the process through which the data is shaped by the interaction between the researcher and the researched. Reflexivity bears on this study in two specific senses. Firstly this research deals with texts and verbal utterances which are the product of reflexive processes between other actors. In examining such artefacts and reports the reflexive nature of the processes that produced them cannot be ignored, indeed a recognition that such data is not a verbatim reflexion of reality but the result of interactions between actors is an essential feature of this research process. Secondly and more obviously is the reflexive nature of the knowledge produced between the researcher and other actors. In relation to this second point the researcher has attempted to incorporate this consideration into the analysis.

These six components form the underlying principles of the approach employed in this study. It utilises features of the actor oriented and network approaches together with ideas drawn from what have been described as the anthropology of policy (Shore and Wright 1997, 2011) and the ethnography of aid (Lewis and Mosse 2006). It forms the basis for an in-depth consideration of how these programmes operated. It is hoped that this approach will have things to say about how individuals and groups react to the introduction of new and relatively novel policy initiatives in their area. In so doing it facilitates a consideration of local development policies more generally, allowing us to examine the assertions made for local development approaches in the light of actual experience. This study will attempt to do so by presenting a case study of one such organisation West Waterford Development Partnership (W.W.D.P), later re-named Waterford Development Partnership (W.D.P) and ultimately Waterford LEADER Partnership (W.L.P). By so doing the study seeks to examine how the policy and practices associated with the organisation progressed and considers in detail the dynamics of an externally imposed local development programme in one locality over a significant period of time. In the next section of the introduction the area in which the study took place is briefly introduced with a view to identifying the research questions that will be addressed through applying the principles outlined above.

1.5 The Area Based Response and County Waterford

The organisation which is the subject of this research originally came into existence in 1991 as West Waterford Development Partnership. This was one of 12 organisations funded under the Area Based Response (A.B.R) which collectively came to be known as "The Partnerships" the first local development organisations in Ireland to be described as such. The A.B.R was initiated under section seven of the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (P.E.S.P) agreement between the government and the Social Partners in 1991. This was an arrangement between the state, employers and trade unions which has been variously described as a form of corporatism or neo corporatism (Taylor 1996, Meade and O'Donovan 2002) which established a national wage agreement, then seen as vital to sustaining the improvements in national economic performance that had been achieved under the P.N.R. Though one of the desired outcomes of the programme was to achieve reductions in the numbers unemployed, section seven was the only section that involved a direct response to the problem of unemployment through the proposed introduction of the Partnerships. In addition to the P.E.S.P agreement the Partnerships must also be considered in the context of E.U. employment policy. The measure that became known as the Area Based Partnerships also met the criteria for funding of actions proposed in the 1990 E.C. resolution on action to assist 'the long term unemployed,' (Official Publications, 1991). Though this issue has tended to be overlooked, the fact that the measures proposed under section seven of the PESP agreement were suitable for funding from the European Union is highly significant¹⁴.

The twelve designated areas were announced in 1991 and in all twelve areas an existing entity was given responsibility for establishing the partnership. In some cases these were long established community organisations that had operated under previous state funding arrangements. In other areas the group in the newly designated areas were relatively new. Beyond the suggestion discussed above, that these areas were considered to be suffering specific problems of cumulative disadvantage, it is hard to discern a pattern as to why areas

¹⁴ The Manager of the Waterford Partnership was in no doubt that had this funding not been available the Partnerships would not have been established. He stated that he believed that a particular senior civil servant in the Department of the Taoiseach had identified this funding opportunity and that the Partnerships were established as a result of a desire to avail of it. If the Partnerships had not been established it was his belief that these funds would not have been taken up in Ireland.

were selected¹⁵. Having been designated, all twelve areas-based bodies were required to establish a suitable Partnership structure as proposed by the Department of the Taoiseach. The process of ‘partnership building’ as envisioned by the state was originally outlined in the “*Area-based response to long-term unemployment: guidelines for partnership*” (Area Partnership Co-Ordination Office 1991) a small publication which became known as the ‘*the Gold Book*’, as well as in the detailed operational guidelines and contracts under which the Partnerships operated. These texts outlined the proposed structure of the board and the purpose of the Partnerships. Each was to be incorporated as a legal entity. They were to have boards comprised of eighteen people, six of whom were to be representatives of state bodies associated with the delivery of services relevant to the target group i.e. the unemployed and those in danger of becoming unemployed. An additional six members of the board were to be drawn from the social partners¹⁶ and six were to be community representatives. A substantial element of local participation was envisaged in the programme. The local board, including community representatives would have a central role. The document envisaged that each partnership would design and deliver a ‘ladder’ of developmental measures aimed at providing a means of ‘progression’ for those suffering from the effects of social exclusion related to the issue of long term unemployment. As such each partnership would adopt strategies that would address specific local issues. Beginning from such basic services as personal development and literacy and progressing into areas such as occupational training and further education. The primary thrust of the Partnerships work was to address issues related to the problem of long term unemployment. The terms of reference gave individual groups considerable latitude in deciding on the relevant measures that could be implemented.

The organisations established under the A.B.R incorporate many of the features of the local development model discussed above. Firstly it embodies the idea that disadvantaged areas could be identified and resources targeted at them in order to address the problem of long-

¹⁵ In Tallaght for example, a long established community based initiatives was in place. In Waterford this was not the case.

¹⁶ The term social partner was first adopted at national level to describe the non-governmental parties to the national partnership. Primarily therefore this term referred to the principal economic interest groups mainly employers and the trade unions although in rural areas the term was also used to refer to the farming organisations. After 1994 the community sector also came to be recognised as participants in the national partnership arrangement; the supposed “fourth pillar” of partnership. In the local partnerships the term was employed to refer to business, trade union and farming appointees to the partnership boards

term unemployment. Secondly it was envisioned that such measures would be drawn up and implemented by local partnerships with a substantial degree of local autonomy. The local boards would agree a local plan that was to be based on local research and the inputs of local people and groups. Thirdly these measures would represent a range of integrated services including welfare measures, training, job creation, education and economic development. A fourth element of the programme was that the re-allocation of existing resources was to be a significant element of the programme. Finally the programme was to be subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation with a view to producing lessons for the future.

While it was envisaged that the local partnerships would have substantial power over the implementation of their own locally devised programmes both national government and the E.U. required that the programme would have some level of co-ordination at national level. Initially it was agreed that an advisory unit within the Department of the Taoiseach would fulfil this task. This unit would in turn be responsible to a board made up of representatives of the twelve new local Partnerships and national representatives of the state, social partners and “community sector.” reflecting in many ways the neo-corporatist arrangement of the P.E.S.P. This Board was directly responsible to the E.U. for overseeing the operation of the programme. In addition the board had considerable decision making responsibility as regards the programme. Its members represented different interests and acted, at national level, as representatives for those interests. Subsequently this national board and the staff unit were superseded by an autonomous entity, entirely separate and distinct from the Department. This entity was named "Area Development Management" (A.D.M)¹⁷. The creation of A.D.M involved the existing national board taking on an autonomous legal status. The new body retained most of the staff and the responsibilities of the Department of the Taoiseach unit in relation to the monitoring and evaluation of the programme. However it was incorporated as a company and as such acted as a non-governmental body operating the programme on a contract basis from the Department of the Taoiseach. This arrangement was broadly in line with the E.U. funding guidelines, which were supportive of the idea of appointing an autonomous national co-ordinating body to oversee programmes given GLOBAL¹⁸ funding. Nevertheless the organisation retained close links with central government and continued to rely on it for a portion of its funding.

¹⁷ A.D.M. was rebranded as Pobal in 2005.

¹⁸ GLOBAL was the community initiative under which the E.U. allocated money to the partnerships.

Even at the outset these arrangements illustrate the dilemma that the state creates for itself in attempting to introduce policies aimed at inducing local development. The Department of the Taoiseach and later A.D.M, was required to oversee the A.B.R carrying out monitoring and evaluation functions¹⁹. It was also responsible for developing the programme, providing technical support and advice to the local groups as well as disseminating the information generated from the programme. This situation established a tension within the programme. On the one hand A.D.M was required to ensure that funds were spent in accordance with E.U. and national requirements. On the other the organization was initiating and acting as a source of support to Partnerships that at least in theory were operating as autonomous local entities implementing locally agreed development plans²⁰. A.D.M was thus acting as an advocate and support agency for the local Partnerships while also acting as an agent of the E.U. and central government with responsibility for ensuring the groups adhered to its centrally imposed funding disciplines.

As discussed local development programmes place considerable emphasis on the process through which programmes are planned and implemented. The ABR reflected this emphasis. After the designation of the areas the formation of the local board was seen as an early and necessary stage in the programme. The board would be pivotal to the process of partnership; it would agree a contract with the state agreeing to become an autonomous agent implementing a component of national policy. The board was thus a novel and untried arrangement, a non-governmental body, intended to occupy a pivotal position in relation to the way that the programme was to be worked out at the interface between the local and the national, between different local interests, and between private interests and the local state. It was anticipated that the boards would facilitate new thinking in relation to questions of local policy and local development. They would provide a forum where statutory agency personnel at senior level could interact with each other, local employers and unions and also local community groups. Thus it could be argued that the partnerships were a precursor to the

¹⁹ Interim and final evaluations of the programme were conducted by the Combat Poverty Agency. However ADM retained all responsibility for financial oversight and monitoring.

²⁰ At a board meeting of Waterford Development Partnership held in 1996 the ADM staff member who acted as liaison with W.D.P referred to this role as having to wear two hats. His “facilitating” hat and his “evaluating” hat “when the plan is submitted I am going to take off my facilitating hat and put on my evaluating hat and assess it from a funding point of view.”

“current rural policy paradigm evident across the globe... (which)relies on an integrated decentralised approach that uses public-private-voluntary sector partnerships to develop policy and to implement local strategies,” (MacAreavey and McDonagh 2010 p. 175).

The formal ideas underlying the partnership approach could thus be said to envisage a threefold sharing or re-organisation of power by the state as outlined in the accompanying diagram (figure 1.1). At national level, the programme was a reflection of the national partnership agreement, an autonomous national board made up of representative of the state and national social partners representing a form of power sharing at the national level. Through this organisation the state was to devolve a considerable amount of the control over the day to day operation of the programme in specific areas to the local partnership boards representing a re-alignment in relationships between the state and specific geographical localities. Within local areas the local partnership board represented an amalgam of local interests, a means through which different actors representing interests could come together to agree a common set of development goals and actions to attempt to achieve them.

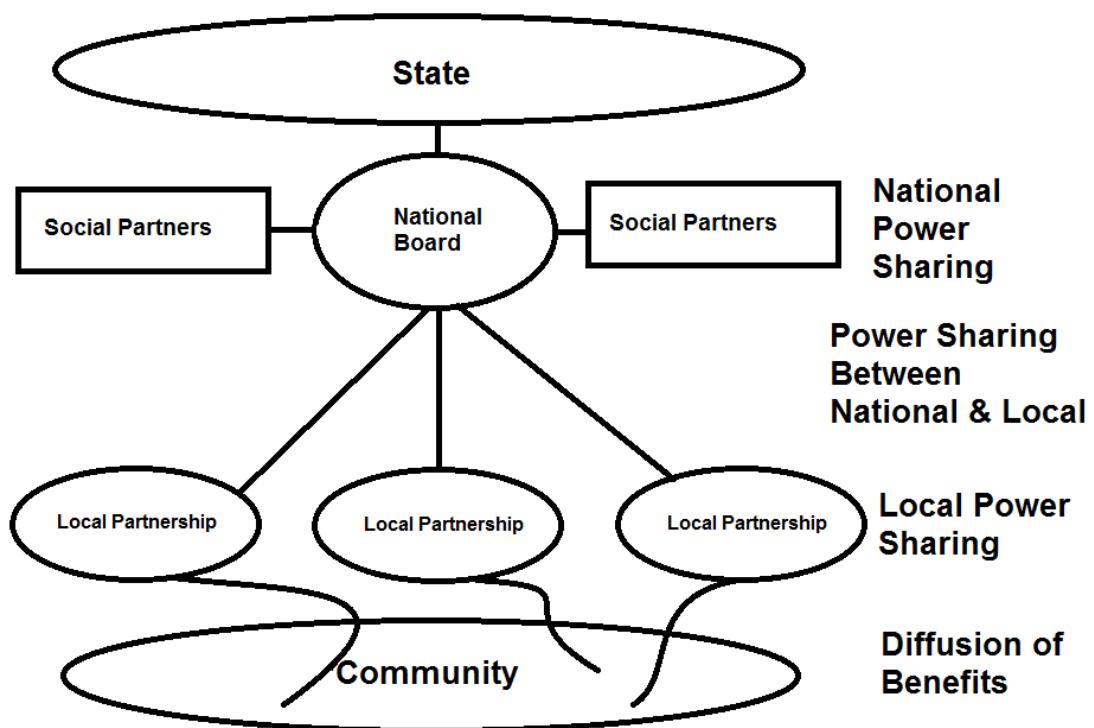


Figure 1.1 The formal structure of the partnership model for local development

The formal structure described above was intended to deliver a local development programme as a series of logical steps from the conception of the programme formation of

the national board through to the implementation and evaluation of measures in a classic policy cycle model (Figure 1.2)

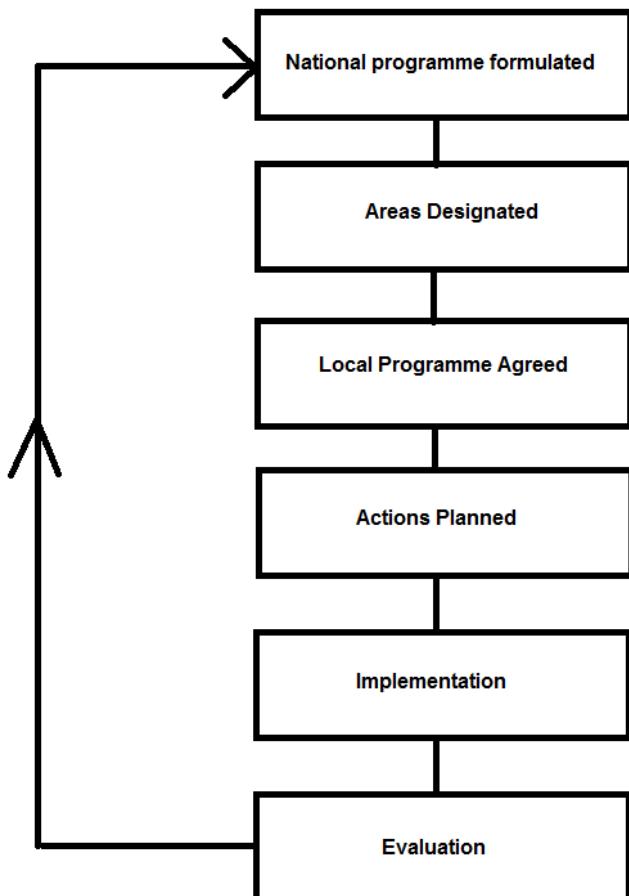


Figure 1.2 The Formal policy cycle

These models represent in simple form the formal structure of local development policy. The model outlines the role envisioned by the state for the local organisation as a whole and for individual local actors in it. It suggests a chain of logical steps that occur during the implementation of a clearly defined programme in which the relationships between the state and communities are to be managed through the creation and operation of certain institutional innovations. Areas are first identified, a local board formed, a plan drawn up and measures implemented and evaluated in an unproblematic and straightforward way diffusing the benefits of the programme widely amongst a grateful community. While the process of partnership formation is depicted as a relatively straight forward one, there are aspects of this model which leave room for ambiguity and local variation. As has been already noted the concept of local decision making itself is largely left unclear. It appears to have been assumed

that local interests could be assembled and would co-operate. The relative influence of the various board members is never discussed either. It would appear to be the case that the model assumes that they will have equal levels of power and influence. However beyond specifying its tripartite composition, the documentation surrounding the initial A.B.R programme gives little attention the way that the boards were to operate in practice. What little detail is available principally deals with the practicalities of creating a body capable of taking on the administrative responsibilities of running a programme. The form that was adopted for the partnerships was that of a private company. Under this arrangement the board itself became the board of a company and its members company directors. As such the partnerships actual legal status was that of a private commercial venture. As such the partnerships were expected to comply with the same legal obligations as any other company albeit that they were almost entirely dependent on the public sector for the resources necessary to maintain their operation. While much was expected of them, it was not the case that the arrangements under which the board was established provided powers to compel any state agencies to redirect resources. Again the means by which the partnerships were intended to influence existing service providers remained unspecified.

It also appears to be largely assumed that once established these boards would comply with the State's agenda, formulating plans that complied with the outline provided by the State. While the State, in a benign and disinterested fashion, could "gift" power to the partnerships, it also appears to have been assumed that the local board could diffuse benefits to the wider community in a fair and equitable manner. Each of these assumptions is deeply significant to the outcome of local development. If nothing else it demonstrates the need for a detailed examination of each of these features of the local development approach.

1.6 Research Questions

The formal models outlined in the diagrams portray the process of establishing and maintaining a development project as a disciplined series of logical policy steps in which specific roles are assigned to specific actors. However a recognition of the degree to which such models are based on assumptions about the expected behaviour of certain participants points to numerous aspects of the local development project that merit investigation. Taking the board as an example it is clear that this forum provides a degree of potential room for

manoeuvre. The manner for appointing significant numbers of the representatives, the lack of clarity as regards the relationship between these boards and the wider community and the manner by which internal agreement is reached are not discussed in detail in the model. While the board may be constrained significantly by statutory guidelines and the contractual arrangement it is required to make with the State, it retains a degree of autonomy in its relationship with the State and even greater levels of autonomy from almost all of the other actors and agencies which it is to engage with. Locals thus have a considerable degree of scope to influence the outcome of the initiative despite and perhaps in spite of the restrictions imposed by the State. At almost every stage in the local development process the potential for human agency to alter the course of the initiative exists.

In order to see how these processes actual play out it is necessary to look at how local development programmes are actually worked out in practice. As a useful starting point to such an investigation this study rejects the formal outlines of the policy project as the basis of analysis and instead advances the idea that development projects can best be understood as open ended and enmeshed social networks which involves a range of actors in encounters during which the meaning of the programme is established. This perspective has the ability to account for the observed phenomena better than some other approaches because it focuses on actual events as they happen rather than analysing them through the lens of a policy model which has already predetermined what features are significant, which aren't and which can be dismissed as externalities or local factors. An in-depth consideration of how these programmes operate allows us to consider how individuals and groups reacted to the introduction of new and relatively novel policy initiatives in their area. In this study this approach is employed to address a range of key research questions which are outlined below.

- How did local development policy emerge as a new paradigm in the 1990's?

The first of these key questions concerns the formal policy discourse itself, of which the ideas outlined above are a part. While it was clearly the case that prior to the introduction of the partnership programme a range of community based initiatives had been attempted. The period discussed in this study is particularly significant as it witnessed a particularly significant increase in the State's support for local development in the shape of the rapid adoption of a number of schemes (See Curtin and Varley 1995) leading some commentators to suggest that this involved the emergence of a new paradigm. It is clearly the case that at

this point the local development discourse emerged as a significant force in shaping national policy. This raises a number of questions, not least the immediate one as to why at a specific point in time a state which had previously been relatively hostile towards local development suddenly adopted the approach on such a large scale and with such enthusiasm. While it may of course be the case that policy makers were subject to some damascene conversion experience, or indeed that the approach emerged out of a rational process of policy research and reflection, neither should just be assumed. In line with the principles outlined above, a more interesting approach to understanding the emergence of this discourse is in the context of the formation and evolution of a policy network in which specific forms of knowledge are developed and employed by specific actors purposively. Policy approaches become popular for a reason and in the case of local development became particularly popular and acquired a certain ideological significance for certain actors. Adopting a symmetrical approach to local development, as an open ended network of actors, allows us to examine the role local development discourse plays in this network. Rather than ascribing it a “special position,” it can be understood as a form of knowledge employed by certain actors in that network. Development discourse is purposive. The first key research question thus concerns the origins, nature and role of the formal development policy discourse, what interests it serves and how it came to be accepted by so many people so quickly?

- How much does space matter?

The second question concerns one of the key claims of the local development approach. The assertion that this approach makes about the spatial element of deprivation and of the potential of an area based approach to address this. The idea that such areas existed and could be identified and thus targeted for such help was a basic and fundamental tenet of the area based approach. The identification of such areas was a vital stage in the formal implementation of the programmes. The second key question addressed in this study thus concerns the spatial dimension of local development programmes. Does an examination of one particular area confirm the role of the spatial as outlined in formal local development policy as both the vector and the unit of action?

- What impact did the new local development organisations have on existing relationships between localities and the state?

As we have seen the local development organisation is a pivotal element of the local development approach, yet there remains a considerable degree of ambiguity concerning how these boards are formed, how they are expected to operate and what they actually do. Indeed even a cursory look at the structure of these boards point to the potential difficulties they faced in meeting the expectations placed on them in local development programmes. This gives rise to a number of potential research questions regarding the role of the local board. The first of these, concerns the relationship between the local board and the state. As we have seen, despite the rhetoric surrounding the claims made for the partnership, it was clearly the case that one of the best resourced actors engaged in the process of building the local partnerships was in fact the State. As has been shown while the formal policy discourse presented the role of the State as a primarily benign one, the status of the A.B.R did not prevent it from developing administrative mechanisms and texts which gave it a significant degree of control over the process. The monitoring unit within the Department of the Taoiseach and later A.D.M. provided the State with a national agency capable of monitoring the local programmes and ensuring that they functioned within the parameters of state guidelines. By contrast the nature of the autonomy of these bodies was expressed in largely vague terms. This prompts a question as to how this process of partnership worked out in practice. What can an in depth analysis of a local programme tell us about the impact of this particular approach to development on the relationship between locally based actors and the State. Was it the case that the partnership was able to facilitate a genuine devolution of power to the local level as the optimists would suggest or is it more likely to be the case that these entities remained the States creatures; a mechanism of central control over local action? Such issues can only be resolved through a careful examination of these exchanges through which such issues are worked out and not through remote speculations based on the analysis of secondary data or organisational charts no matter how rigorous.

- Who controls the partnership?

A consideration of the role envisaged for the local partnerships raises a fourth perhaps key research question. This relates to the formal role of the partnership board in “bringing together a local development coalition” and agreeing a local set of development goals. While it is unclear as to how they were to achieve such consensus the formal guidelines under which the Partnerships were established was very specific as to what the partnership programmes

should involve. They were to operate local development programmes. Formal local development policy emphasises the important role of the boards in building consensus around actions in this respect. Actors on the board were to legally agree a specific set of deliverable goals and to take responsibility for implementing these through a programme that was to comply with a specific set of monitoring and control procedures. This suggests that actors who agreed to participate in the partnership boards had to demonstrate a degree of compliance with the guidelines for that role outlined in the development policy discourse. Again however it is obviously the case that the claims made in this particular scenario are worth investigation. If, as is suggested, it is possible to conceptualise local development organisations as open ended networks then such boards can be understood as specific points or what Long (1989, 2001) describes as “interfaces” in the local development network. If this is the case then the outcomes of specific encounters between actors may have an influence in terms of shaping the outcome of the project. If certain actors are more effective at manipulating the outcome of these encounters than others then it suggests that the relatively benign world of the board as outlined in the policy discourse may not be an accurate representation of their reality. Rather it may be the case that the board’s decisions reflect the interests of the most powerful actors in the decision making process. The next key question in this research thus concerns the way in which these local boards function and in particular the question of the resolution of power struggles within them. As with the previous question this is addressed, through an in depth examination of one such board, with a view to considering what this tells us about the implications of the new local development approach to existing local power structures.

- What impact does development policy discourse have on local power relations both inside and outside the board?

The previous question provokes the further one concerning the issue of how elements of formal local development policy influence local power relations. The concept of partnership suggests a degree of equality between state agencies, social partners and community representatives at local level. However, members of local boards have different interests and experience, and access to different stocks of knowledge. Some for example may be familiar with the knowledge, language and procedures that normally occur in boardrooms. Some may participate on such boards regularly as part of their working lives. Some may be appointed to participate in these boards as the representatives of the organisations that employ them. By

contrast the criteria by which other representatives are appointed may be unclear. In the case of the Partnerships for example there were no clear guidelines as to how community representatives in particular should be elected or appointed, or how they should report to the wider community. While the formal discourse gives the impression of equality between the board members it may not be the case that they are all equally knowledgeable in relation to the local development policy itself. The implications of this potentially asymmetrical power relation need to be examined.

- How does the local development project impact the wider local community?

As has been illustrated the partnership acted as a local body through which the views and needs of the wider local community could be inputted into the development process. Equally it was the means through which the benefits of the development programme. the measures intended to move the locality along the path of a set of agreed development goals could be diffused to the wider local community. A further key question relates to the wider issue of how the development of the local partnership impacted on wider questions of the distribution of local power over and benefits from the local development programme. It may be the case that despite its claims to be able to create a situation in which partners representing the wider local community could meet on an equal basis and work out an agreement on development priorities which reflected the collective interest of all, the formal guidelines and procedures under which the Partnerships were established did not eliminate traditional power imbalances or that it may have brought about unforeseen changes in local power relations. One key concern in this respect relates to the claim of the local development approach to inclusiveness. A key claim of the Partnerships was that they could pull in all those local interests concerned with the area's development and produce a plan that represented a local consensus. In this context the question arises as to what happens to those local actors who either fail, or choose not to become involved in the local development network. In a scenario where a new entity claims to represent a consensus of local opinion it is legitimate to ask what space remains for those who choose or are unable to become part of this consensus. Again in this study an empirical examination of one case is used to throw light on this question.

- How did local actors respond to the partnership?

The preceding issues have primarily focused on the impact of the partnership on localities. In addition to this, a further series of issues arise if the basic research principles outlined above are adopted. This concerns the extent to which local development is entangled within a wider range of local events. Or to put it more simply what influence do localities have on local development? Local development programmes are introduced into the areas as new, and problematic, social objects. Locals' responses to them help to give meaning to these initiatives redefining them as they are encountered. While the preceding questions have featured issues relating to the local development discourse this may be in a sense misleading. For a range of actors the significance of these new initiatives may have little to do with the question of who controls development at all. Development impacts on the life of many actors who may see it as "*a resource, a profession, a market, a stake, or a strategy,*" (Oliviere de Sardan 2004 p 2). Indeed for certain actors it may represent a combination of these things and for others perhaps none at all. It is essential therefore to develop an understanding of the significance of local development in the lives of actors, to abandon any simplistic aggregates of the locality, clients or recipient groups and recognise that for different actors the significance of these programmes may be potentially very different. The final key question addressed in this study thus concerns the way in which the local development programme was incorporated into the life world of actors in this particular area.

1.7 Thesis structure

The thesis structure provides a framework whereby data relating to the design and implementation of the programme could be traced sequentially, taking as its starting point the policy debate at central government level through to the creation and expansion of the programme at the level of specific activities in which individual local actors came into contact with the programme. This is not to suggest any hierarchy or sequence of importance but rather in order to present an overall picture of the programme as a network in which actors in a range of different sites are entangled. The intention is not to suggest that events in different sites are of a fundamentally different nature but to demonstrate their similarities as social processes and trace the interrelationships that exist between them. The next chapter develops some of the theoretical issues raised in this chapter before outlining the basic

features of the approach employed in this study in more detail. This will involve applying some of the features of an actor centred “anthropology of intervention”. It will be argued that such an approach provides a more coherent explanation of the existing data including features of actor behaviour which are not explained adequately otherwise, such as the role of organisational self-interest or the impact of local elites on the shape policies take.

Chapters Three and Four look at the history of local development policies in Ireland and trace the emergence of this approach as a dominant theme in Irish public policy in the late 1980's and early 1990's. In the process the claims made for local development as a new paradigm are examined. Chapter Five examines the spatial dimension of local development policy examining the Waterford area and the decision to designate it as a disadvantaged area with a view to establishing what this tells us about the true significance of the spatial dimension of the programme. Chapter Six looks at the board's formation and through doing this generates data which directly relates to the question of the power between the state and the partnership and within the partnership itself. Chapter Seven and Eight look at the process of consultation during which the partnership came into contact with the wider community with a view to establishing what this tells us about the relationship between the formal process of local development, the partnership and the wider community. Chapter Nine continues this investigation examining the impact of local development on one particular area with a view to examining the extent to which a specific community group was able to reflect the wider interests of the locality it represented allowing a consideration of the role and nature of community participation in the programme.

Chapters Ten, Eleven and Twelve turn the focuses of the study toward the responses of local actors to the emergence and development of this local development project. Such an investigation is necessary if the research is to produce an overall analysis of how such programmes are actually worked out in practice, contributing to the symmetrical quality of the research. In order do so it will be necessary to devote some effort to outlining how the theoretical and analytical tools developed earlier in the thesis can be employed to examine the activities of local people based in the area. This task is undertaken in the first half of Chapter Ten. In the remainder of Chapter Ten these tools are than employed to examine the factors that influence the way in which specific local actors define the socio-economic problems that they encounter in the area with a view to examining what impact these have on local responses to state interventions of all kinds. Having identified the type of factors that

influence these responses Chapter Eleven continues this analysis, undertaking an in depth analysis of the way in which the outcomes of three particular elements of state intervention are shaped through encounters between local actors and the local representatives of state agents. Finally Chapter Twelve concludes this discussion examining how local responses played a role in shaping the claims of the partnership as the responses of actors within the prime target groups of the partnership programme, the unemployed, with a particular emphasis on assessing the impact of the partnerships on the wider income strategies of marginalised groups.

After this the conclusion returns to the questions outlined in this chapter before going on to make some general comments about what this study contributes to an understanding of local development in particular as well as the more general issue of the merits of this approach.

Chapter 2 Old problems with a new paradigm Local Development and the politics of intervention

2.1 The fatal association. Organisational form and the dawn of a new paradigm

This study focuses on the experience of local development as it was undertaken by one organisation throughout the period from 1990 to 1998. West Waterford Development Partnership (W.W.D.P). W.W.D.P was established in 1990 following intensive lobbying from local interest groups as one of twelve area based organisations included in the Area Based Response (A.B.R). This organisation was thus one of a wave of local development organisations introduced in the Republic of Ireland in the late 1980's and early 1990's. As illustrated in the previous chapter, for their proponents, the significance of these new organisations far exceeded the tangible inputs, in the shape of new financial and material resources they delivered in specific areas. They were the embodiment of a new approach to effecting socio-economic change. In each area, the actual programmes were to be locally devised through an independent local organisation, a partnership. For the advocates of this approach the actual way in which these programmes were implemented, their ability to incorporate a significant level of local participation and local involvement in project planning and implementation, was regarded as being of key significance to the ability of these bodies to deliver social and economic development programmes more effectively. Thus perhaps more than any other style of intervention it was the inherent qualities of the style itself which underpinned the arguments in favour of the adoption of local development strategies. Thus it is clear that a strong case exists for incorporating a rigorous examination of the way in which these processes were worked out during the planning and implementation of such programmes. However the previous chapter suggests that this is a particular area in which our knowledge is deficient.

This chapter explores this argument further identifying some of the deficiencies in the current approach. In order to do so the chapter examines the emergence of the new local development approach and with it, a distinct local and community development literature. In particular the claims that this literature makes for the approach are considered with a view to establishing the extent to which they are based on an adequately rigorous analysis of the way in which such projects were planned and implemented. It will be argued that this is not the case and

that in fact the existing analysis of local development is fundamentally flawed. While there is a considerable literature charting the emergence and evolution of new locally based development much of this work has focussed on the analysis of what Whatmore et al (1987, 1994) describes as the morphological features of these initiatives. As a consequence a fatal association has been made in this literature, between the introduction of new organisational forms and the actual behaviours of communities, recipient groups and the professional staff involved in delivering such programmes. Inferences are drawn about the social processes that occur in partnerships and other local development initiatives through an examination of certain visible components of these schemes. Such an approach pays inadequate attention to the role of local events in shaping these new objects. There is a need to pay more attention to such events; incorporating a consideration of what MacAreavy (2006) describes as the micro politics of development and the more general question of how different groups who possess different stocks of knowledge contribute to shaping or “co-producing” (Koutsouris, 2008) the meaning of the new programmes.

Having identified the need for an alternative approach the chapter then outlines such an alternative in some detail. The approach adopted in this study embarks from the position outlined in the previous chapter, that the introduction of new objects such as locally based development boards, local planning and new funding arrangements are events with unpredictable consequences, the outcomes of which cannot be predicted in advance (Murdoch 1995, 2000). This requires a research approach that allows for the open ended and symmetrical interrogation of data generated through direct observation of these events. Such an examination must proceed without any a-priori assumptions as to what are and are not the significant factors in these exchanges. However it is also important that such in depth studies be linked to the wider configurations of power within which such programmes operate. The challenge therefore is to devise an analytical framework that makes this possible. In this chapter this framework is outlined in some detail based on the principles listed in the previous chapter.

2.2 Diversity and local knowledge The “crisis,” in agriculture and the emergence of rural development.

The emergence of the local development programmes in the Republic of Ireland did not happen in isolation. By the early 1980's it is evident that the question of finding alternatives to so called “productionist” policies was generating much discussion in the then E.C. and internationally¹. The E.C. gave practical expression in the form of a number of pilot integrated rural development projects. One such programme operated in Ireland between 1988 and 1990 as the Pilot Programme for Integrated Rural Development or as it became more generally known the I.R.D programme (I.R.D). The I.R.D borrowed from the integrated development approach which had been initially adopted in developing economies. These had emerged out of the growing sense of disenchantment with the capacity of increased agricultural productivity to provide a comprehensive development strategy in rural areas. Such policies had come to be regarded as increasingly inadequate ways of tackling development issues in specific rural areas for a number of reasons. Amongst these were their over reliance on external inputs, knowledge and technology. In addition the sectoral focus of such programmes was increasingly called into question. By definition agricultural policies focused on agricultural issues. However numerous researchers demonstrated that different rural areas experienced particular problems of disadvantage requiring a more targeted and wider ranging response than that incorporated in agricultural programmes. A related area of criticism, which was to acquire greater significance over the course of the 1980's was the question of accountability in policy making. In the E.C these led to concerns over the perceived danger of the emergence of a “democratic deficit” between an increasingly influential E.C. administration and citizens within member states which was ultimately to lead to the development of the principle of subsidiarity.

As the debate over the future course and needs of rural areas progressed, the concerns outlined above found expression in the growing interest amongst researchers in the concept of diversity. This concept recognised the fact that rural areas differed considerably. As priorities in agricultural production moved away from those of simply maximising production, rural policy was entering a new phase in which the development priorities of different rural areas would increasingly reflect this diversity. Former styles of intervention

¹ See for example the OECD document “What future for our countryside,” (1993b), the E.C. White Paper “The future for Rural Society,” (1988) and Shortall (1994)

employed in rural development were no longer appropriate. There was a need to develop new ones more responsive to the diverse nature of rural spaces (Murdoch, Ward and Lowe 1994) . A feature of these arguments was a questioning of the merits of external “expert,” knowledge and support for the use of the input of those living within rural areas into the design and implementation of development policies. Lowe, Murdoch and Ward describe the situation succinctly *“ideas about rural development are being turned upside down. In the past decade endogenous (or bottom up) approaches have displaced exogenous models which conceived the main forces of development as emanating outside rural areas”* (1995 p 87). Former programmes which treated rural areas as a factory floor for agriculture and directed policy accordingly through national programmes geared at enhancing the efficiency of production were opposed by approaches that recognised the diversity of rural areas and adopted styles of intervention that reflected this diversity². A key feature of these approaches was that they championed local participation in the identification of local development issues and the design and implementation of responses.

This perspective added yet another element to the growing critique of that embodiment of “productionist” agricultural policy, the E.U. Common Agricultural Policy (C.A.P). Failing to recognise the diversity of rural life or respond adequately to the wider range of issues facing rural areas took its place alongside issues such as the financial burdens of the policy and its increasing inconsistencies with changes in the wider international food market in the list of its defects (Tovey 1991). Collectively these formed elements of a movement away from policies such as the C.A.P. A wide critique which included the question of safeguarding the rural environment against agricultural pollution and urban encroachment, continued rural depopulation and questions of marginalisation and “peripherality,” of rural areas within the European single market.

² While the idea that such a transition was underway was undoubtedly prevalent at this time, the validity of explanations for this transition as a movement away from the prevailing “productionist,” view in which rural areas were primarily understood as food production spaces or a factory floor is strongly contested. Goodman and Watts for example argued that such a perspective embodied an attempt to impose inappropriate models for explaining change on to rural areas (1994). The crucial thing here is that regardless of whether or not such ideas were an accurate reflection of rural events the idea that they were so was widely prevalent.

By contrast, the integrated rural development approach stressed the importance of local inputs into the design and implementation of programmes. Such approaches highlighted the complexity of rural areas and the varied nature of their ties to local and wider markets (See Marsden and Murdoch 2006). By emphasising the importance of local involvement in identifying obstacles to development and devising strategies to overcome them this approach claimed to offer a more holistic development response with an emphasis on the local. Such an approach to development would be more “people based” with a stress on the importance of building a consensus around development priorities. This approach ran counter to mainstream sectoral policy programmes such as the C.A.P. It supported the creation of programmes which could facilitate the restructuring of rural areas as multifunctional spaces with roles in areas as varied as food production, rural tourism, recreation, biodiversity and new enterprise development (See Potter and Burney 2002, Noe et al 2008, Mac Areavey and MacDonagh 2010).

Such concerns formed the basis for the introduction of new E.C. local development programmes aimed at tackling specific rural problems in rural areas. These initiatives made finance available to member states for programmes that matched these criteria. The availability of such finance was an important stimulus to the introduction of local development programmes in the late 1980’s and 1990’s in the Republic of Ireland. Indeed the majority of Irish local development programmes were to remain highly dependent on E.U. funding and their relative significance in national policy was and remains directly related to the scale of E.U funding these bodies can attract³.

The new interest in local development strategies also neatly dovetailed with the adoption of the concept of Social Partnership that came to be regarded as a cornerstone of Irish public policy throughout the latter years of the 1980’s⁴ and the 1990’s and indeed, remains central

³ It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the significance of funding to Irish local development programmes; the ABR, and Leader programmes were primarily E.U funded as was the majority of other local development initiatives.

⁴ The use of the term partnership has been employed in the Republic of Ireland in a variety of contexts to describe co-operative arrangements between statutory and non-statutory bodies. Muintir Na Tire for example used the term to describe the closer co-operation between the state and their own activities in the 1970’s (Varley 1991). More recently it has come to be more specifically associated with the national agreements reached as a result of macro-political negotiations (for example see Taylor 2003)

to Irish policy making to date. In the Republic of Ireland the term partnership first came to be associated with local development interventions as a consequence of the link between the P.E.S.P agreement and the ABR programme which included W.W.D.P. However the concept was not limited to these companies. In fact all of the local development programmes established in the Republic of Ireland since 1988 were implemented at local level by entities with local boards reflecting to some extent the concept of partnership. While the actual remit of these bodies varied an implicit assumption, that such arrangements are an effective tool in accelerating development, seems to have informed the administrative arrangements under which they operated. As Curtin and Varley put it “*The basic idea behind these schemes is that all the competent actors in the development process will be brought together in a way that will allow them to pool their talents and complement each other over a set period during which, under the stimulus provided by partnership, a cycle of accelerated local development is expected to occur,*” (Curtin and Varley 1997 P 142)⁵. The use of the term partnership is not confined to the Republic of Ireland. Across Europe the term has become popular, widely adopted to describe a particular type of entity engaged in local development activities (Shortall 2004, McAreavey 2010). As in the Republic of Ireland a notable feature of the partnership approach elsewhere is the emphasis on the significance of the actual process of partnership itself in addressing some of the issues that confront specific areas. In the case of Northern Ireland for example Shortall states that “*Local partnerships are often presented as inclusive in themselves because potentially they bring a wide range of interest groups together. In addition they are seen as best placed to address social exclusion because of their local knowledge of social problems and local people*” (Shortall 2008 p. 452) Partnerships are not simply a better mechanism for delivering new development inputs; the inclusive nature of decision making in Partnerships is perceived as one of those inputs⁶.

⁵ See also Curtin and Varley (1994)

⁶ The concept of social capital has been employed by researchers in discussions of the intrinsic benefits of partnership building. Broadly speaking in this context the term relates to the presence of socio-cultural attributes such as reciprocity and the willingness to embrace mutual aid which in turn support good governance and economic development (Putnam 1993, Shortall 2008). While undoubtedly significant the concept is not employed in this study. The concept is founded on a conceptual framework which is based on a-priori categorisations as to the normative value of the actions of local actors.

2.3 Cargo and seedpods; Exogenous and Endogenous approaches to intervention.

The preceding section of this chapter has examined some of the ideas which emerged in the context of policy debates in relation to the future of rural development policy in Europe and Ireland in the 1980's. A key feature of this debate at this time concerned the role of endogenous knowledge and local participation in decision making. Critics of traditional agricultural and economic development strategies were able to show how local factors and knowledge tended to be excluded from policy research and policy making within a model that depicted policies as operating as a discreet cycle of events that followed a logical sequence (Clay and Schaeffer 1984). The classic policy cycle portrays policy as a "cargo" which is designed and delivered in a discreet series of steps from policy research through to design and implementation. The steps occur as discreet activities separated in time and space and following each other in a relatively logical succession within this world view the "*dominant theoretical paradigm of planned intervention espoused a rather mechanical model of the relationship between policy, implementation and outcomes, a tendency in many studies was to conceptualise the process as essentially linear in nature, implying some kind of step by step progression whereby policy was formulated implemented and the results followed, after which one could make an ex-post evaluation to establish how far the original objectives had been achieved,*" (Long and Van Der Ploeg 1994 p. 228). This approach it was argued proposed an ideal model of policy making in which events at any level are linked to those at others in ways which are restricted by the formal mechanisms built into the policy cycle.

Defining policy in this way has implications for the shape both of subsequent analysis of policies and the practices adopted by actors inside the policy process some of which are briefly considered here. A key feature of this perspective is that problems linked to the implementation phase of a programme, for example, tended to be attributed to weaknesses in the implementation mechanism. The approach has the effect of making policy appear to be a managed and technical exercise while at the same time deflecting the extent to which the administration can be held responsible for problems. It "*provides an image of efficiency and manageability, of internal coherence and argumentation, as well as of integration between different organisation levels, and so of effectiveness. The model therefore helps to create trust between the general public and with the funders of the development implementing agency. If*

things go wrong, the model suggests that the causes of the failure are to be found outside the coherent administrative machinery,” (Van Ufford 1993 p. 139). Formal planning and design methods are presented as scientific; end results as the logical outcome of a rational process. In so doing the cycle presents planned change as if it were “*exogenous to the social and political situations which, nevertheless are held to necessitate it,*” (Apthorpe 1984 p. 138), it serves to “*de-politicise what are fundamentally political issues*” (Arce et al 1994, see also Hickey and Mohan 2003).

Another practical feature of this approach is that it tends to proscribe particular roles to research at specific points within the cycle, during the initial planning phase and during an evaluation phase following implementation and tends to channel such research into task based measurements of inputs and outcomes. The tendency is to treat actors as parts of aggregates such as “the community,” “staff,” or “recipients,” supporting what Daly (1991) and Verschoor (1992) speak of as an “essentialist framework”. Reality is reduced to the “expressions of an essence,” individuals and objects are understood only in so far as they relate the elements of direct significance to the policy cycle. While such an approach makes it easier to manage policy interventions, assigning specific roles and responsibilities within the programme to specific actors and objects, it tends to diminish the significance of individual actor behaviour on the way policy is worked out. Indeed classically this perspective eliminates such considerations, clearly defining a specific role for “useful,” research. Individuals disappear to be replaced by idealised characters, which occupy roles and functions within the programme and connections between social life and the policy initiatives are lost.

While the policy cycle stresses the significance of certain formal elements of the policy process, other events are banished to the periphery. For example the role of senior administrator’s own interests and involvement in influencing policy, the impact of events that happen in local settings or the capacity of individual local actors to influence the outcome of meetings with bureaucrats are all relegated to the edges of the analysis (see for example Grindle 1980, 1981, Scokpol 1979, Lipsky 1982). Clay and Schaeffer describe this as the creation of “escape hatches”. By presenting development policy as a mechanism in which actors and organisational structures are attributed specific roles, problems are conceptualised as failures in specific parts of the policy “*many development problems have been identified and explained in terms of the weaknesses of project implementation and not as a failure of*

the development model itself" (Siriwadana 1992 p 23). If the failures of policies are accounted for in terms of weaknesses or deficiencies in the mechanisms of implementation, the solutions that most readily present themselves are alterations and changes in these mechanisms. Policy research and design become questions of social tinkering aimed at altering, repairing and in some cases improving policy implementation. The capacity to question the policy model or the underlying assumptions about actor behaviour on which it is built is diminished. Actors' actions are assessed in line with the role and function attributed to them in the policy model, which is in turn based on assumptions about how actors should behave as "clients," or "staff". A further related outcome of this perspective is what Curry (1993) described as "creeping incrementalism". Once a policy has been implemented as "therapy," the suggestion that just a little more can fix things that went wrong in the first round of a project is infinitely more palatable to policy planners and staff than the bald assertion that the project didn't work. The tendency of those within the policy cycle is to respond to deficiencies in the outcomes with more policy.

Another implication of the policy cycle approach is that it encourages policy makers and staff to choose courses of action that will anticipate and minimise the possibilities of failures of the type described above. Staff charged with implementing projects may opt to work with individuals who they expect will co-operate and exclude individuals and groups who would be likely to cause trouble⁷. At the level of implementation informal behaviour of the staff or "street level bureaucrats" (Lipsky 1982) has an impact on shaping the actual outcome of policies as does the ability of certain "clients" or other groups of local actors to influence the decisions of senior staff and thus "subvert" projects (Schaeffer and Lamb 1976, Scott 1985, De Vries 1992, Arce, Villareal and DeVries 1994, Torres 1997). Furthermore staff working with local organisations may consciously avoid areas of conflict in the early days as they seek to secure state funding only to see those organisations become bitterly divided later as underlying conflicts emerge (a situation familiar to any development worker who has seen a group which worked well during the project planning phase self-destruct once a programme gets underway). In short while there is considerable evidence to support the view that the outcomes of development programmes are shaped by local factors (See for example Masaki

⁷ Peter De Vries study on rural development projects in Mexico provides an illustration of this situation. In it he describes how field workers categorise clients as good or bad based on their willingness to adhere to the programme requirements.

2007) the policy cycle creates the conditions in which such informal practices are simultaneously reduced to the role of externalities (Scokpol 1992). However while the inadequacies of the policy cycle are viewed with jaundiced eyes by academics it continues to offer policy makers a set of useful and workable concepts which have a degree of functional value. Not least, they provide an easily understandable framework through which they can organise practical programmes of work and produce accounts of what they do. In its own small way this is a reflection of the perennial impasse within development sociology (Booth 1991, 1994 Kiely 1995).

The interest in new “local development approaches” represented an attempt to bridge the gap between the deficiencies identified in existing development policies and the needs of policy makers for workable alternatives. In Ireland the concept emerged at a time when the awareness of academics and policy makers of both the failures of existing policies and the potential of local development as an alternative were growing (See for example O Cearbhaill and Varley 1988, O'Cearbhaill 1988, Varley 1989, Faughnan 1989, European Commission 1988). The former policies fell under the remit of agencies which were by and large centrally planned and which administered national programmes. In many instances (particularly in the case of rural areas) they were linked to a productionist paradigm that emphasised the importance of the development of agriculture, as typified in the highly specialised roles of the Department of Agriculture and their counterparts in the offices of Teagasc the farming advisory service⁸. Local development strategies have explicitly and over a substantial period of time, claimed to address the administrative inadequacies of former centralised policies through programmes in which the traditional roles of the central and local state, staff and clients could be reconfigured (See Potter and Burney 2002, McDonagh, Macken-Walsh 2008, Varley and Shortall 2009, Mahon et al 2010). The advocates of these “local” approaches included many outsiders whose views were at odds with those of more mainstream policy makers⁹ and regarded local development as a genuine alternative which could employ novel

⁸ The state backed commercial advisory service providing advice on commercial farming techniques to Irish farmers.

⁹ Although it is beyond the scope of this study there is ample evidence to support the view. The emergence of local development involved a wide range of organisations and individuals who had no previous experience of development interventions or who had previously been “on the fringes,” of policy making. These included organisations that previously held critical views of the state such as the Irish National Union of the Unemployed, The Community Workers Co-operative and the Co-operative Development Society. A

administrative and funding arrangements in order to overcome the problems of previous approaches to development policy. By involving local people in decision making power would be more widely distributed in programmes thus making the development process inherently more inclusive (See Shortall 2008). Local people would have more of a commitment to them, programmes would be made more relevant to local conditions, local staff would be more accountable to their clients and programmes made more sensitive to local conditions. As opposed to so called “top down” initiatives imposing a cargo of development inputs local development measures were depicted as cultivating and supporting a “seed pod” of local potential, with the community as a latent force that with a little nurturing from the state could blossom into a major mechanism of development. By placing emphasis on the value of local ideas and local knowledge the advocates of endogenous development asserted that programmes more in touch with local needs and local aspirations could be developed.

The emergence of local development displayed features which at least in the Irish context suggested that a Kuhnian paradigm shift was occurring (Kuhn 1962). Local development rapidly acquired its own experts and professional discourse where staff described as “facilitators,” “mobilisers,” and “enablers,” built the “capacity” of local groups and individuals to act as “catalysts,” in programmes which were “owned,” by the local community. The importance of ideas such as local ownership and participation are obvious. By contrast with the exogenous approach endogenous programmes were presented as being the product of local inputs thus avoiding the problems that afflicted exogenous approaches in terms of appropriateness to local conditions and relevance. However despite the formal commitments to local input in the design and implementation of programmes incorporating endogenous development the historical emergence of these programmes suggests a much more complex picture one which is considered in the next section where we consider some of the inconsistencies implicit in what came to be understood as the new local development paradigm.

consideration of the effect of the emergence of local development on the position of such groups and individual would in itself be a useful topic for research.

2.4 Trouble in Paradigm? Local development programmes and research 1988-1995

In the previous section of this chapter some of the ideas that informed the academic and policy debate on rural development during the 1980's and early 1990's were explored. This had a bearing both on the actual programmes that came to be introduced and more significantly in relation to the issue examined in this chapter on the way in which researchers sought to interpret these events. The introduction of new local development programmes occurred during a period in which for a range of reasons, traditional approaches to the development of rural areas in Europe were being challenged. The subsequent emergence of local development thus displayed features, which at least in the Irish context, made it possible for many commentators to suggest that the approach represented a new paradigm in development thinking. Yet even a very basic examination of the way in which the concept of local development came to be applied in actual programmes contrasts with Kuhn's notion of a paradigm shift.

The first of these concerns the diverse range of ideas that came to be associated with the term rural development. As it gained prominence in debates on development in rural areas, the concept of local development acted as a lightning rod, drawing a range of very divergent and even contradictory perspectives in support of the new approach. Moreover the piecemeal nature of the various different programmes that came to associate themselves with the concepts of rural, local and community development make it difficult and even perhaps misleading to speak about a local development paradigm. Far from anything resembling the coherence of a paradigm rural and local development became catch all phrases used to refer to a range of programmes with widely varied aims and objectives.

A second and very obvious inconsistency relates to the question of timing. Much of the discussion on the specifics of local development theory and practice which has come to be seen as significant in the emergence of local development in the Republic of Ireland occurred at best alongside the introduction of some of early the programmes. Far from new policies and programmes being the result of a shift in the way that academics and those involved in policy making were thinking, these ideas emerged as a reflection of events on the ground.

A third and very obvious issue is the central role of E.U. funding in precipitating the emergence of local development programmes. It is almost universally the case that the major local development programmes started in the 1990's were initiated with the support of E.U. funding. In instances where the scale of this funding has been significantly reduced the activities of these organisations has been reduced accordingly. Though it is interesting to note that even in cases where this has happened most of the local development bodies established in the period under discussion continue to operate albeit in little more than a shadow form. In many instances therefore we are dealing with programmes in which the driving force for local development was in fact the E.U.

Furthermore and surprisingly given the general level of support such programmes enjoyed amongst academics and policy analysts, the actual experience of local development projects in the early 1990's generated specific inconsistencies which impacted directly on some of the core claims of the local development approach. In practice the introduction of local development programmes generated a range of highly contentious issues which in many cases corresponded to those concerns that the local development approach claimed a particular competence in addressing. Amongst these is the question of local representation on such entities. This was found to be the case in relation to the FORUM project in North West Connemara which identified this as a highly difficult issue (Curtin 1994). This view was also reflected in an evaluation of local development projects initiated under the PESP agreement, which showed that there were limitations in the capacity of the local community to participate as equal partners (Craig 1993) or for these programmes to achieve the redirection of resources initially envisaged (*ibid*)¹⁰ There is also evidence to suggest that the capacity of local development bodies to effectively represent their areas is often questionable (Ruddy and Varley 1991, MacAreavy and McDonagh 2010) Walsh et al (1998) reporting "*allegations that the various local partnerships undermine the status and role of local government structures and of elected representatives, indeed of local democracy.*" (Cited in Moseley et al 2001 p. 179) This echoed the earlier findings of Breathnach (1986) which demonstrated that

¹⁰ "The findings show a disappointing level of change in relation to the redirection of resources to those areas most severely affected by unemployment. Increased provision is not in line with levels of registered unemployment across the twelve areas. This suggests that there is considerable work to be done in this area in 1993 to make substantial impact on the problems of long-term unemployment within the pilot areas.,," (Craig 1993 p. 18)

in Gaeltacht areas it was often the case that the legitimacy of local development bodies was questioned.

Moreover further consideration of the programmes raises other questions. Kearney et al (1994) found that under the first LEADER programme the majority of beneficiaries were private ventures headed by middle aged male recipients, the majority of whom already operated businesses. This raises questions as to the capacity of such programmes to benefit the wider local community, an issue which was also identified by Thuesen in relation to the operation of the LEADER programme in Denmark (2010). A further point of significance is the notable absence in much of this research of any analysis that illustrates the value to those living in the target community of the local and participative dimension of these programmes. Indeed Kearney found that for the beneficiaries of LEADER the availability of financial support was the most important aspect of the programme rather than any feature of its management. The capacity of such programmes to secure better local co-ordination of existing services was also questioned. An evaluation of the original P.E.S.P Area Based Response Programme pointed to this as one of the most difficult aspects of the work of the original A.B.R's (Craig et al 1993, 1994).

The limited evidence available through the reports and studies mentioned above (reports which were on the whole written from a perspective that was sympathetic to the idea of local development and in many cases funded as part of those programmes) suggest that the introduction of programmes incorporating new local development structures do not automatically lead to specific, planned changes in the dynamics of intervention. Indeed the data available suggests that many of those issues which the local development approach was claimed to address most effectively such as facilitating local participation, effectively identifying target groups and encouraging co-operation between existing service providers have proven to be amongst the most difficult problems for local development organisations. Given these facts it might be reasonable to question the almost naive enthusiasm with which local development programmes was hailed as a new "paradigm".

This is particularly so given that such issues have long been recognised in local and community development projects. The role of the professional, the position of local elites, the relationship between expert and local knowledge and conflict between local and national interests are all issues which have long featured in studies on locally based state

interventions. However in the case of these Irish local development programmes there was little discussion as to the precise impact these new entities had on the dynamics of relationships between local people and the state or indeed of the impact of such initiatives on any of the issues mentioned above. Research within these programmes has largely been undertaken as part of evaluation exercises. In many instances these evaluations as well as other research which these bodies have undertaken was carried out with at least one eye turned to the prospect of further funding, The temptation to list the various programme's not inconsiderable achievements was often overwhelming. Moreover it is unlikely to be the case that those who make decisions about the future of these programmes are particularly interested in anything other than a presentation of "bottom line" figures such as the number of businesses set up and jobs created. However the failure to research the processes by which these programmes are implemented is particularly perplexing in this instance given the emphasis in these programmes of the importance of these processes. In the absence of such research, the overall effect of altering the context in which the Irish state interacted with local communities and the dynamics of the relationship between policy makers and their clients remains poorly understood. Instead certain evaluations and other research tended to simply describe the observable features of organisations such as W.W.D.P. and its counterparts in the A.B.R as evidence of what many commentators described as a "paradigm shift". Within this new paradigm the assumption appears to be that establishing such structures is evidence that desired fundamental changes in policy behaviour have occurred.

This tendency of associating these new structures with specific changes in the dynamics of state intervention echoes what Greer (1984) described as "magic phrases". The surge in interest in local development from the late nineteen eighties generated a new vocabulary including terms such as integrated, participation, community, ownership and empowerment. These terms were deployed extensively in discussions about development in relation to the assortment of local policy initiatives, structures and entities introduced since the late 1980's. Yet despite their regular employment in the field there is a lack of data on how these structures and principles operate in practical settings. The tendency has been "*to exploit the charisma of the word for its own sake. In the end it becomes a tired empty slogan, devoid of substance and eventually discarded*" (Greer 1984 p 5). In policy research the tendency to make assumptions about certain phenomena based on certain visible attributes has been described by Harre as involving the creation of taxonomic collectivities which "*equate the observable features of phenomena with structurally different types of phenomena*"(cited in

Whatmore 1994 p. 32). While it is undisputable that the visible machinery of local development policy differs radically from that of national, sector based administered programmes, the assumption that this is evidence that the nature of the policy itself and of the power relations and practices that constitute it have also changed fundamentally is highly suspect. As Whatmore puts it "*the key sets of relations defining groups (of observable phenomena)... ...may or may not coincide with the observable morphological features of the phenomena being considered,*" (emphasis added) (ibid). Simply pointing to the visible characteristics of new administrative structures in local development programmes cannot be taken as evidence of specific changes in the dynamics of social relationships, or as evidence that changes that have occurred are the intended outcomes of the visible administrative elements of the initiatives.

This point is particularly pertinent considering the historical experience of state policy towards community bodies both in Ireland and more generally internationally. The literature on local development has regularly highlighted the tendency of the state to incorporate formerly radical discourses associated with community self-help and organisation into programmes that are intrinsically linked with the interests of sections of the state (Reynolds and Healy 1991, Varley and Curtin 2002, 2006). State funding has in the past been found to limit the autonomy of local groups as they seek to maintain compliance with the guidelines under which they receive state finance (Kelleher 1986). This again raises an issue which is by no means new or unique to Ireland but is in fact a core dilemma in local rural and community development which has its roots early in the emergence of the approach ¹¹; this is whether it is possible to effectively engage with the State without yielding control to it. Both internationally and in Ireland the experience has been that regardless of the original motivations underlying the formation of such groups, by becoming involved in state programmes community groups become at best junior partners in programmes with an agenda set and dominated by the State and development professionals (Curtin and Varley 2002, 2006). Practitioners have found it difficult to implement state sponsored local development in ways that are truly inclusive (De Vries 1992) leading some researchers to argue that such objectives are unrealistic (Kumar and Corbridge 2002). In essence these critiques all point to the longstanding problem in local and community development of reconciling the interests of the state and existing local elites with programmes that claim

¹¹ For a historical context see for example it Baldock (1977), Vass (1979), Abeyrama, T. and Saeed (1984)

heightened degree of local autonomy. Here we encounter another of the paradoxes that seem to beset local development. While local development programmes claim to recognise the value of the local “endogenous” knowledge of local communities, it necessarily involves a cadre of professionals who employ a degree of formalised “expertise,” which is by definition exogenous in seeking to engage in the locality.

In summary, there is now over two decades of experience in the Republic of Ireland of programmes that to varying degrees represent attempts by the state to incorporate local development into policy. These all involve varying efforts to embrace an “endogenous development,” approach. While local development has come to be regarded as an established style of intervention and it is clearly evident that the new local initiatives introduced in Ireland involved the creation of new organisational forms, the emergence of the local development approach was a piecemeal event rather than being the culmination of an informed and rational debate. It appears that to a large formal policy discourse and indeed academic research has played catch up responding to events as they occur. The tendency has been to point to the physical infrastructure, programmes in place, entities established, new boards and committees as evidence of the dramatic progress of local development as a policy approach. Less attention has been paid to what these actual events meant in terms of real change in the dynamics of state intervention. It appears that researchers were satisfied to simply point to the existence of local structures as evidence of how these dynamics were worked out. The responses of the various actors involved to the introduction of new initiatives has remained little studied and questions of how control and ownership, power and decision-making are worked out in such scheme are not addressed directly. The failure of Irish researchers and policy makers to explore this in depth is all the more interesting particularly given the emphasis placed on these processes in local development programmes and the availability of a wealth of international research on such issues. If Irish local development programmes have lived up to their billing, then they have succeeded in overcoming what are in many instances obstacles that have dogged local and community development approaches across the globe over decades. If not then the question of how these programmes actually do function needs to be considered in considerably more depth than has been the case in the Republic of Ireland to date. With the benefit of hindsight the enthusiasm with which these new initiatives were greeted and the emphasis placed on their potential to fundamentally change the way that the state approached the development of rural areas appears to be grossly simplistic and potentially counterproductive.

2.5 Endogenous V Exogenous: A false dichotomy

The previous section of this chapter looked at what was described as the new “local development paradigm”. It drew attention to conceptual weaknesses underlying the emergence of the local development “paradigm”. In particular it illustrates the variation that appears to exist between what are on the one hand, the claims made about capacity of local development programmes to alter the dynamics of state intervention and on the other hand the lack of any clear analysis of these programmes impact on these dynamics. This observation generates some serious questions about the way in which local development operates. The 1995 N.E.S.C report referred to above again provides a good illustration of this situation. Notwithstanding the frank recognition that this document contains of the potential weaknesses of the local development. The document goes on to recommend a specific local development strategy which is referred to as “Area Integrated Development” (A.I.D). This strategy proceeds through a series of progressive stages from “pre-development,” through to self-sustaining and on-going development (NESC 1995 pp. 217-228). The emphasis is on the importance in this process of developing a consensus amongst those involved which is reminiscent of Schmitz and Musyck’s notion of a coalition of those who can positively to an areas development (Schmitz and Musyck 1994). In this instance the model envisages that endogenous development bodies are to be engineered by exogenous forces. Through “pre-development” inputs people are trained how to become involved in state sponsored local development in a sense they needed to learn to be local.

The document illustrates the role that development policy can play in depoliticising issues. The idea that local consensus around the goals of development is attainable, desirable and manageable through local development coalitions is a central element of the proposed approach. Yet the questions that these programmes address are highly contentious. What interests are to be viewed as pivotal to development? How are these interests to be represented? What particular actions will be given priority? Such questions necessarily involve conflicts of interest. However suggesting that such conflicts can be resolved through pre-development or training inputs reduces them to technical matters.

This raises what is perhaps one of the most critical questions addressed in this study, the idea that local coalitions can be engineered is central to the entire canon of thinking on local

development in the Republic of Ireland. In practical terms it has been manifest in such developments as the creation of “pre-partnership groups” in areas newly designated for inclusion in such programmes and in the requirement that most of the bodies established through the various local development programmes undertake consultations in the planning of their actions. Yet the historical experience of such programmes in Ireland and internationally suggests that actual course of events is far more complicated than is suggested in this model. There is evidence that the ability of some groups to “represent” their communities is often contested and of the tendency of such programmes to favour local elites. The degree to which the community sector has been able to participate as full members of local coalitions has also been questioned and studies have highlighted a degree of conflict in local development programmes¹². As has been shown, where such problems are identified the tendency of those involved in the analysis of these programmes has been to blame these problems on defects in the implementation process or other mysterious externalities which lie beyond the control of the programme itself.

In short, it is ultimately the case that as with their more overtly “exogenous” counterparts, within local development a range of experts are still very actively engaged in employing the kind of “expert knowledge” associated with mainstream “exogenous” development programmes. Policy makers and staff present this in technical terms as discreet processes which would in fact “enable” local people to decide on their own development projects. However regardless of the professionals’ claims to neutrality the social world still seeps in. Schaffer and Clay (1984) amongst others suggested a different approach, in which policy making and implementation are understood as parts of a single process (Schaeffer and Clay 1984, Van Ufford 1994) that involve a range of actors working towards their own objectives. They involve *“political struggles over access to and distribution of certain critical resources. And above all normative struggles over the definition of development and the role of actors,”* (Long and Van Der Ploeg p. 239). Here, the relevance of Nuitjen’s contribution is clear pointing to the possibility that the organisations such as the partnership are best understood as emergent configurations of social action and types of discourse within a specific social context (2001, 2003). This entails an analysis which focuses on what people do and abandons the formal categories presented in development discourse as an analytical

¹² See for example Commins (1985, 1991), Varley (1991), Varley and Ruddy (1994), Curtin and Varley (1992), Varley Curtin and O’Donohue (1990), Shortall (1994), Breathnach (1986), O’Cinneide and Walsh (1990).

framework. Rather it treats such frameworks as but another resource employed in the social processes through which the programme emerges. As Nuitjen puts it “*official representations of organisations may also offer valuable information, though not in ways we expect them to*” (Nuitjen 2001 p. 145).

In the Republic of Ireland local development programmes are a paradox through which the state and its policy designers induce a certain form of new intervention which are expressions of formal local development policies. As such, and despite their claims to the contrary, they retain many of the features of traditional national policy programmes. Like all forms of state intervention such programmes are by definition initiated by external actors and utilise external resources. Just as in exogenous programmes, they incorporate forms of expert knowledge and specific types of implementation mechanisms, management structures and staff practices. They also continue to involve external expertise. As with other programmes operated by the state they are represented as a finite cycle beginning with design through to implementation, involving the delivery of a discreet series of measures and concluding with monitoring and evaluation. The idea of a policy cycle in which the various components of policy are organised in a rational way is retained. Rather than posing a challenge to traditional forms of intervention they are explicitly intended to run alongside and complement “exogenous” programmes. Supposedly “local” development programmes embody a mix of exogenous and endogenous features; they are hybrids. One response to the emergence of this hybrid has been to re-define local development programmes as examples of what Ray (2002, 2006) describes as neo-endogenous development which combines a “bottom up development trajectory,” (the endogenous component) with manifestations of the “non-local” (the “neo” component). As with previous classificatory schemes therefore the identification of certain activities with neo-endogenous development rests on the outlining of an inventory of the features of such programmes which also includes maximising the benefits of the programme in the locality and emphasising local participation in the process of local development (Ray 2006). In effect therefore the approach seeks to replace previous classificatory schema with a new one which again focusses on the morphological features of programmes albeit redefined in a more sophisticated analysis of the relationship between local wider networks (Ray 2002) this adds little to an understanding of the processes which occur when such programmes are introduced. Beyond drawing a cloak of analytical respectability to a description of the status quo it is difficult to see what is to be gained from locating programmes on an illusory point between the ends of a hypothetical endogenous-exogenous continuum. Although it is notable

that by suggesting that neo-endogenous programmes support “the integrity” of the “bottom up dynamic” the approach retains the practice of portraying the role of the state in rather benign terms. It is more meaningful to suggest as this chapter does that such programmes can only be understood through research that focusses on what actually happens when they are designed and implemented.

Thus while it has been suggested in the literature that the emergence of local development programmes since 1988 in rural and disadvantaged areas in the Republic of Ireland represented a paradigm shift, one of the ironies of local development in Ireland is that while it has claimed to be more responsive to local needs and sensitivities, little if any effort has been made to test these assumptions by looking at how these programmes actually work in practice. Even a cursory consideration of the historical emergence of these programmes suggests that the real story of local development in Ireland is radically different to that portrayed by those who speak of a “paradigm shift”. Indeed the notion of a dichotomy between supposedly “top down” exogenous development programmes delivered through national programmes on the one hand and supposedly “bottom up” endogenous programmes delivered locally is unhelpful. In dealing with local development programmes we are, in fact, still in the main dealing with the delivery of programmes that are conceived and implemented “exogenously.” While in the case of the programmes discussed in this study some elements of the cargo are new, particularly those linked to the delivery of programmes through local entities, the discourse that underlies them continues to conceptualise policy as a sequence or “cycle,” made up of discreet stages. In the preceding discussion it has been argued that in reality, rural development programmes are processes through which *“emergent forms of organisation develop that are made up of formal and informal elements which are not in the control of one agency,”* (Nuitjen 2001 p. 142). Programme outcomes are not given from the formal aims and objectives of the programme nor necessarily from the factors and processes that are formally expected to generate them. Frameworks for research must therefore enable researchers to examine how policy is actually created on the ground.

2.6 Conceptualising development; Towards a research method

The previous section concluded by focussing on the role of the policy cycle in limiting the researchers’ ability to examine the reality of local development programmes. In part such

problems were a result of epistemic underpinnings of these approaches; these restrict the researcher's ability to adequately investigate the way in which development programmes are worked out in practice. In the remainder of this chapter an attempt will be made to outline an alternative research approach, one which analyses local development programmes in a more exacting manner.

Traditional policy analysis focussed on the policy cycle and related models are based on a theoretical perspective that distinguishes a self-aware researcher from the world of objects (Howarth 1998, 2002). A particular episteme based on specific forms of scientific knowledge has the effect of reducing aspects of social reality to specific ideas or conceptual essences (Laclau and Mouffe 1985, 1987). At the same time any subjective link between the researcher and the world they observe is deleted (Law 2004) Once a researcher identifies a certain idea or element as being the key to explaining a phenomena their research focuses on this and as a result "*Social phenomena are analysed not in terms of their specific conditions of existence and their effects in regard to other social relations and practices but rather as more or less adequate expressions of essences,*" (Hindess 1977 p. 95). Such approaches have a philosophical point of unity in essentialism; the reduction of observed phenomena to a conceptual model, or essence (Daly 1991) thus imposing a conceptual grid which privileges certain observers and imposes a certain form of reality on the observed (Latour 1988). In other words they provide the basis for representations of development situations in which the significant variables for analysis are predetermined. While such approaches are described as scientific ultimately they are based on metaphysical (unscientific) beliefs. Put simply the researcher has to make a call as to what he or she thinks is the essential element or idea. If a theory presupposes that the economic is the key to determining social behaviour then the analysis will produce findings which focus on the economic sphere.

Amongst the beliefs underlying such perspectives is the idea that programmes involve a structure established to fulfil a specific function. Such approaches also pre-suppose ideas about actors in the development process. They are located in the process in relation to the performance of specific functions. Analysis based on the policy cycle is likely to explain things in such terms. For just this reason it was argued in this late 1980's and early 1990's that the practice of project planning and implementation had become conceptually atrophied in the modernisation and structural functionalism perspectives that underlie the policy cycle (Bradley & Lowe 1984) or as Van der Ploeg colourfully describes them wedded to the laws

of natural science (Van Der Ploeg 1991). In a review of Irish rural sociology published in 1991 Tovey linked this tendency to the employment situation of the small community of Irish rural sociologists primarily in statutory organisations and allied entities. Giving rise to an over commitment to problem driven research to the detriment of any series long term examination of broader theoretical issues (Tovey 1992). Regardless of its many flaws the policy cycle gives researchers a clearly defined administrative role. As a result and despite its limitations it forms the basis for much of the work of rural sociologists.

This episteme (Marglin & Marglin 1990) takes the form of an expert system. It has the effect of privileging certain facts and points of view at the same time as it invalidates others (Van Der Ploeg 1991, 2003). The practice of policy research design implementation and analysis entails the “*capture and exercise of power*,” whist at the same this is “*justified as being professional and scientific and on that count socially and politically and altogether unproblematic*,” (Apthorpe 1986 pp. 377-389). Such concerns fuelled a wide-ranging debate on what is variously described as the professional episteme, epistemic community, development discourse or question of expert knowledge and the role of knowledge in development programmes. In particular the role of knowledge in questions of power and conflict in policy interventions has been examined extensively (Long et al 1992, Long and Van Der Ploeg 1988, 1994 De Vries 1988, 1992, 2003 Cernea 1984, 1985)

Some researchers have challenged the grander forms of social theory that inform development policies as meta-narratives (See Mert 2008). Such narratives tend to suggest a degree of consensus has been achieved while simultaneously obscuring or reducing the significance of other narratives. A particular element of this process is the suggestion that scientific reason underlies the dominant narrative (Howarth 1998). These narratives provide researchers with a huge level of control over “*the matter of admissible and inadmissible evidence, structuring of argumentation and the prescription of prescription which ensues*” (Apthorpe 1986 pp 377-389). What are needed are alternatives to these meta-narratives highlighting “*the significance of evidence and argumentation which has been excluded in development studies*” (*ibid*). Another approach has to been to focus on the process of dialogue within policy making, proposing new approaches to policy research and design more sympathetic toward other voices in the development process. Healy for example speaks of a selective radicalisation of scientific principles (2000). This would involve allowing

information to flow as freely as possible to minimise restrictions on competent participation in policy making.

Another alternative is that offered by actor oriented research. Researchers who have adopted this approach largely agree with the criticisms of development discourse and of expert knowledge referred to above (Nuitjen 2001, 2003 offers a particularly clear presentation of this position). As an alternative they utilise an approach that recognises the diversity of views within real development settings and consider the impact of local events on shaping development outcomes. One feature of these approaches is therefore the attention that they give to the study of actors and the minutiae of social life (Cleaver 2004) in order to get some insights into the “*micro-physics of power*” (Foucault 1977 p. 26). Attention is paid to interactions between actors at the level of programme intervention and the impact of interactions between those responsible for the day-to-day delivery of such programmes reminiscent of Lipsky’s “street level bureaucracy” (1981). Such work has examined policy interventions in western and non-western settings (Hill 1993, Schaeffer and Clay 1984). The actor oriented approach places significance on the point of intervention or the “interface,” between development organisations and their clients (Long et al 1989, 1992, 2001) describing it as a “critical interstice of power,” at which policy is ultimately made through interactions between different actors who possess different forms of knowledge. Alongside a recognition of the role of actors has been the “rediscovery of locality” a recognition of the importance of the local social and cultural contexts of interventions.

Researchers in the actor oriented tradition have heavily criticised applied policy research as theoretical weak or as contributing to the continued role of a particular set of ideas about policy making, a form of “dominating knowledge,” (Marglin and Marglin 1990). For their part those involved in applied work can point to deficiencies in the approaches adopted by their critics to produce theories that can be applied in actual development settings. This gulf between theoretical and applied work in development is the basis of what Booth (1985) called the impasse in development studies. Efforts to overcome the impasse focussed on attempting to develop approaches to rural development which were neither theoretically sterile nor irrelevant to practice (See Arce 1993 p 3-6). Ironically much of the work written on both sides of this debate was highly complex focussing as it did on theoretical issues. However the theoretical and methodological material reviewed here points to some useful ideas that can be incorporated into a conceptual approach which, it is suggested here makes for a more

effective analysis of local development programmes. Of prime significance amongst these are ideas concerning epistemologies that presuppose the important factors in development. These approaches placed the researcher in a position of privilege and create conceptual closure around those objects that are considered to be significant in relation to development programmes. The implication is that an analysis that is open-ended taking into account the wider range of factors that may impinge on policy is better able to produce an accurate picture of development interventions. Research should avoid assuming what the important or determining variables are in advance. This reflects what Callon (1985,1991,1992) and Law (1994, 2004) describe as a symmetrical and modest sociology which does not embark from a-priori ideas about what is or is not important in development settings but rather enables analysis to take place on the basis of what is observed in the course of research. In other words this is a modest approach to sociology in which it is assumed that the researcher knows nothing about the world in advance, everything requires explanation and does so in the same world and on the same basis.

The question then is how such a “modest,” approach works. The first element of this approach is that it involves applying a certain form of data interpretation. In order to do so the data needs to be generated in a way that avoids a-priori judgements about what the important facts are. In the case of this study data was generated through a range of methods, however as the theoretical ideas outlined above may suggest the emphasis was on an open approach through which direct observation of the empirical reality would allow the researcher to identify how the actors involved understood and responded during the design and implementation of the local development programme being examined. Ultimately this data makes it possible to understand how these actors contributed collectively to the programmes structure. This approach implicitly rejects the notion that any one set of interactions between certain actors in any particular site are of necessity more significant than any others. No key variable can be identified in advance as having the capacity to explain the phenomena under examination. Rather such explanations can only emerge through a comprehensive empirical examination of the research setting. For this reason it was desirable to accumulate as much data as possible without, in so far as was possible, generating additional artefacts in the form of survey questionnaires or interview sheets. This data concerned the actions of actors in a range of sites all of which had significance to the shape that the intervention took. It also included a comprehensive consideration of both the historical, physical and socio-cultural context in which these events took place. Once accumulated such data would make it possible

to build up a comprehensive picture of the range of factors, events and ideas which collectively came to shape the programme. Thus the primary forms of data generation employed in this study have sought to build up such a picture. In order to do so they combine an examination of formal policy documents and public statements relating to the introduction and implementation of the new local development programmes, factual secondary data concerning the demographic, physical, historical and socio cultural context in which these events took place and most significantly ethnographic observations of the events that occurred in relation to W.W.D.P during the period in question. Such an approach by definition required that the researcher spend significant periods of time living within the research area gaining an understanding of the way in which the organisation operated, recoding events as they happened and gaining a knowledge of the views and understandings of the various actors involved in the events that occurred during the implementation of this programme.

For just these reasons the primary research strategy employed throughout the bulk of the study was that of participant observer. This method made it possible to gather direct first hand observational data on how this particular project was worked out. Here the researcher confronted the habitual challenge of gaining suitable access to the research area over a sufficient period of time. In this case however to this problem was added an additional challenge. While many studies have focussed on local actors within the “target groups” of local development programmes and others have focussed more specifically on the interface between those actors and the field officers of development organisations, it was clear that simply focussing on those events would not lead to a balanced understanding of how this programme worked. In addition to understanding how events in these sites occurred it would also be necessary to investigate events in other sites most notably those involving the staff and senior board members of the Partnership and between them and other local organisations and state agencies. Finally any picture of how this organisation worked also requires an examination of the relationship between the local Partnership organisation and the national and indeed E.U. organisations with which it was required to work. While access at local level involving junior staff and local actors is in itself challenging such problems are significantly increased when seeking to observe the inner workings of organisations, including of course the state agencies, which may have a greater concern with, and experience in, limiting the extent to which such events are accessible to outside observers.

In this respect the researcher was fortunate in being able to gain access to the area for three considerable periods of time. Twice doing research while employed by W.W.D.P itself and once doing research while employed by another local organisation that was involved in local development in the area. In what Long describes as “*true participatory spirit*” it was thus possible for the researcher to act as “*candid camera*” (Long 2010 p. 10) on the project by virtue of being involved in the programme as part of the development team over what was an exceptionally long period of time from early 1993 to late in 1997. Not only did this make it possible for the researcher to spend considerable periods of time based in the research area during which a number of crucial events in the life W.W.D.P occurred. An important feature of this lengthy period of time was that it allowed for a research strategy in which it was possible to take the time to build up a considerable “research network” (Torres 1992). The long period of time made it possible for the researcher to build up a rapport with a wide range of actors over a considerable period. This included the beneficiaries of various Partnership schemes including unemployed people, entrepreneurs, tourism operators, fishermen and farmers. In addition however the researcher was able to establish a research network which included the staff and manager of the partnership itself, staff and members of commercial and voluntary organisations with which the partnership was in contact, the staff of state agencies and other development organisations which the partnership encountered and also senior staff of national organisations and agencies with an interest in local development programmes. A final note in this respect and one that is perhaps of particular interest was the fact that the lengthy period of time involved also made it possible for the researcher to establish contact with groups of non-participants. That is people who for a variety of reasons chose, failed or were otherwise excluded from the Partnership. Such excluded groups seldom feature in studies of Irish local development programmes yet during this study it rapidly became clear that such groups existed and that their views offered an important insight into the way that W.W.D.P operated.

The first period of research lasted from May 1993 to December 1993 during this time the researcher was employed as a student on placement with the organisation. This period represented a crucial phase during the life of the partnership, it was in the process of completing the programme of actions for which it had originally received funding and was on the point of beginning a planning exercise which would it was hoped result in the organisation securing further funding from one of a number of new programmes which were in the process of being launched at the time. In addition this was also a significant period in

the relation to local development in Ireland as a number of new national local development programmes were then being launched. The researcher was part of the team that was responsible for undertaking the planning exercise on behalf of the Partnership. As a consequence, throughout this period the researcher was directly involved in events during which the staff of the partnership planned and implemented a series of meetings with community organisations across the county. This brought the researcher directly into contact with these groups. In addition as part of this process the researcher was directly involved in internal staff meetings within W.W.D.P itself, meetings between the staff of W.W.D.P and other state agencies which were active in the area and also in events during which W.W.D.P staff interacted with the representatives of other local development organisations and national bodies. In addition to this work the researcher was also given responsibility for drafting an action plan which the organisation subsequently employed in applying for further funding providing access to senior decision makers both through first-hand experience, the second hand accounts of senior decision makers themselves and also through reviews of the substantial quantity of written information that became available concerning the way that new local development programmes were being administered at local, national level and E.U level. Finally during this phase of the research the researcher was also involved in working with staff responsible for the delivering the Partnership's services to enterprise, tourism and the unemployed. In addition to being able to gain first-hand knowledge of how all of these services operated it was also possible to gain an insight into how those actors who attempted to avail of these services viewed the Partnership.

The second period of research lasted from late May 1994 to December 1994 during which time the researcher was employed by another organisation which was also involved in local development in the area. This period involved something of a hiatus for the Partnership. The programme for which it had originally received funding had formally concluded and no decisions had been made concerning the new funds for which the partnership had applied. During this period the Partnership was primarily dependent on some interim finance to keep going while it worked on securing longer term funding. This second extended period made it possible for the researcher to re-establish contact with and further develop the research network which had been initiated over the previous period of field work. During this period the researcher had less direct access to the partnership itself. By contrast this new position did provide the researcher with far greater access to other organisations and actors whose interests had been affected by the partnership. This included organisations and individuals

who, for a number of reasons, were not supportive of W.W.D.P. One of the features of this period of the research was that the drawback referred to above, that is the reluctance of certain actors to criticise the partnership in front of someone who was employed by it, no longer applied. As someone who was no longer regarded as an insider people tended to be more forthcoming in their criticisms of the partnership. As a result it was possible to gather considerable information about the way that other organisations and excluded groups regarded it. It was during this period that the researcher became fully aware of the concerns that other organisations and individuals had concerning the partnership; something which in turn pointed to the importance of paying attention to the views and experiences of excluded as well as included groups during the research.

The final research period was the most extensive lasting from the end of July 1995 through to September 1997 in addition to carrying out in depth research during this period the researcher was extensively involved in a number of significant events within the life of the Partnership. The first of these was the introduction of the Local Employment Service (L.E.S) a new programme intended to provide a tailored programme of support to job seekers. The researcher was asked to draft a plan for this programme in the process meeting and speaking with the wide range of actors affected by the introduction of the proposed scheme. This again included some of the same staff, state agency employees, community group representatives and partnership board members the researcher had been in contact with since 1993. Thus the LES planning process again gave the researcher access to a range of events at which a variety of actors were involved in exchanges which shaped the meaning of the partnership. In addition however during the initial phase of this research from July 1995 until March 1996 the researcher lived and worked in Passage East, one of the most deprived communities in County Waterford. In this area lived locals with livelihoods and socio-economic status that varied significantly. So too did their attitudes towards the partnership ranging from those who supported it strongly to those who regarded it as a considerable threat to their way of life. Spending time here made it possible to gain an insight into the socio-economic life of some of those marginalised groups experiencing problems of the type that the local development approach sought to address. This period also saw the emergence of a number of issues in the village which created a degree of conflict concerning the question of local development priorities and the relationship between communities, local development organisations and the State. An examination of the way in which these issues played out allowed for a particularly close examination of implications of the introduction of a local development programme into

an area and also of variation in local responses to such programmes. Throughout the remainder of the research period the researcher continued to accumulate data in relation to events in Passage East and also to maintain contact with others who were incorporated into the research network. In addition throughout this period the researcher's responsibilities within the partnership itself expanded to include overall responsibility for the organisation's services to enterprise and services to the unemployed as well as the LES, a situation which effectively provided the researcher with access to a wide range actors connected with the partnership as well as key events occurring at different sites within the partnership and also to national events which had a bearing on local development programmes in Ireland.

At various points in the study the nature and quality of the data available to the researcher has not always been the same. Some of the events examined occurred before the research began while there was no access to others. In order to attempt to provide as full an account of these events as possible this study employs the full range of available information. Wherever possible this takes the form of first-hand accounts of events at which the researcher was present. Where this was not possible the researcher has made use of second hand accounts and where this has been done it is indicated in the text and figures in the interpretation of these accounts. In addition however the fact that the researcher was employed by W.W.D.P afforded access to a huge volume of written and statistical material. This material ranges from basic statistics on the area through to local and national policy documents and action plans. Perhaps uniquely in the case of many of these documents the researcher had access both to the final documents and, as will become clear later, to the social process that resulted in their production. This data is also employed both to fill in the gaps where direct and indirect accounts of events are unavailable and also in order to triangulate the observational findings.

Being involved in the local development company as an employee gave the researcher particularly important access to events as they happened and also to a range of actors in a variety of contexts. This included one to one meetings with certain actors, encounters involving the field staff and members of the programme target groups, public meetings relating to the partnership and other local development programmes, internal staff meetings involving the staff of W.W.D.P itself, W.W.D.P board and subcommittee meetings, meetings and between the staff of W.W.D.P and other organisations and meetings involving representatives of the partnership and their counterparts in other local development

organisations, senior civil servants and the staff and board members of some of the national organisations involved in local development programmes. Most notable in this respect was the opportunity that the researcher had to gain an insight into the relationship between W.W.D.P and A.D.M as well as its contacts with government Departments including Agriculture and Social Welfare.

As outlined above the idea underlying this research was that, in so far as was possible, to allow the empirical evidence to guide the research. The first period of extended field work thus assumed the form of an exploratory period, observations and contacts that were made during this period helped to inform the routes that the research took in the later stages. During this first phase of the research the significance of three key points became clear. Firstly that local events are important. Different local actors responded to local development programmes in ways that varied, sometimes radically, with that suggested by policy models. A range of factors external to the policy itself informed their responses. Questions of identity, personal interest as well as the varying ability of local people to adapt to the programmes were significant. There was an element of unpredictability about these events, different people in similar situations responded to development initiatives in very different ways. The idea that actors behaviour is an important issue was not simply relevant to the recipient or “the target group” but to all actors in the process. For example staff applied supposedly “rigid rules” about eligibility, differently in different contexts. Programmes were implemented in different ways in different locations. It was also the case that there were striking similarities between the behaviours of actors occupying different roles. For example, the results of encounters between senior staff from different state agencies took place in very different contexts to those between members of a local tourism group and while the consequences of those actions varied, much of the actual behaviour of the actors involved appeared to be of a similar nature, involving similar skills and similar types of action. If as seems to be the case actors regularly deviated from the roles anticipated for them in policy models it would appear to be more sensible to regard such behaviour as a significant, integral factor in a programme rather than starting out with a model that presumes such events are external, peripheral occurrences.

The second question was to a certain extent the reverse side of the first. While it appeared to be the case that there was a large degree of variation in the way programmes operated in practical day-to-day settings, it was still the case that overall relationships tended to be reproduced. Decision making power tended to rest with the same people and institutions over

time. While policy involves the numerous actors operating in ways that vary radically from what is expected of them, they somehow manage to participate in a process that retains a general shape. While events and action differ radically from what is outlined in a system or policy cycle model the structures that are described as being part of the policy cycle are reproduced.

The third thing that seemed to recur in the data was the importance attached to knowledge and its use in the development process. The idea that policy is grounded on scientific knowledge remained a powerful one. Those with expertise base the justification of their actions on their access to and control of such knowledge. Yet while the control of such knowledge appeared to be important it was the case that such knowledge was employed flexibly. In different situations the concepts of policy “science” or expertise manifest themselves in very different forms of action. In some instances, such as for example where staff justified actions to members of the “target group”, their control of technical knowledge was deployed in an almost totemic way, while in other situations staff appeared to base their decisions on a variety of factors, besides those suggested by the logic of policy expertise. Questions of local and inter agency co-operation and/or rivalry, budgetary issues, future funding possibilities and even personal likes and dislikes all influenced decision making. A second point was that in development situations expert knowledge was not simply taken as given; it was often contested by those people who had very different knowledge and understandings of the situation.

These observations inform the analytically modest approach which was employed in the subsequent course of this research. The first element of this approach was that the framework should avoid in so far as possible making assumptions prior to entering the development setting. Rather than a rigidly marked out hypotheses such a framework should map out the basis on which enquiry can proceed. A second point was that it should focus in the first instance on actors. This suggested the use of an actor-oriented approach. By following actors through their engagement with a policy over time it would be possible to gain insight into how they participate in and by so doing help make the project. A third point was that any framework must also be capable of taking account of the apparent permanence of certain types of social continuities and in particular the reproduction of power over time. Finally it was clear that the question of knowledge was central. What was required therefore was a framework, which while focussed on the actions of actors was capable of accounting for the

role of power in giving a sense of permanence to policy and taking account of the role of knowledge in this process. This led to the adoption of a framework combining three elements these were actor oriented sociology, social network theory and discourse analysis.

2.7 Actors

The first element of this approach is that of the importance of actors. The actor oriented approach embarks from the premise that actors “*actively engage (though not always at the level of discursive consciousness and under circumstances of their own choice) in the construction of their own social worlds*” (Giddens 1984 p 16 in Long 2001 p17)¹³. In doing so they make use of their own understandings or knowledge to interpret objects and engage in courses of actions. Actors can be understood as being purposive, they define interests and pursue them. Actors thus have both the “*capacity and knowledgeability to assemble discursively a world of their own,*” (Verschoor 1992 p. 180). They interact with other equally knowledgeable and capable actors; they are involved in social relations and in doing so they develop shared understandings of the objects that they encounter. Social action is thus vested in social and cultural significance, actors constitute society through in the social relations in which they are embedded (Callon 1991). An effort to understand how society works must consider how it is constituted through these activities. Such actions are fluid, the interests of different actors in similar situations may differ while over time actor’s knowledge interests and objectives change. Different actors may vest different meanings in objects while the same actor may vest an object with different meaning at different times. Research should thus consider the flow of events during which actors very literally “make sense” of the world, giving meaning to the world around them as they interact. Rather than showing how events are determined by some underlying “*law of motion*” the focus is on how actors create the conditions in which they happen. Society is constituted through the interaction of purposive actors contingently as they pursue their own goals. The meaning attached to objects and each other become the ground over which actors engage in constituting the world. As Law (1994) puts it “*selves, are constituted in social relations, andthey negotiate their way through social relations constituting and reconstituting as they go,*”(p. 97).

¹³ See also for example Varennes 1993.

Within the actor oriented approach, interventions can be conceptualised as events in which actors are presented with a new set of objects which carry a range of potential opportunities and threats. In engaging with interventions they encounter other actors with different interests. During encounters the actors' attempt to define the intervention in a way which suits them. Intervention is a "*a transactional process involving negotiation over goals and means between conflicting or diverging interests and not simply the execution of a particular policy,*" (Warwick 1982 in Long 2001 p 31). During encounters actors with different understandings and interests establish a common framework of meaning about the intervention. They are active participants in (re) defining policy.

Within this approach the socio-cultural context in which intervention occur are highly significant, since it is this context that forms the basis of the actor's interpretation of an object. When speaking of interests for example it is not necessarily the case that pure economic rationality defines an actor's interests, rather activities are "*interwoven within a complex network of local social, political and cultural contexts.*" (Verschoor 1992 p. 173). This perspective is one that leans towards an open ended approach in which the imposition of limits on the elements of actor behaviour is avoided. As Arce demonstrates in his 1993 study, we cannot simply reduce human intentions to the role of functional cogs in the developmental process rather they are an integral component of the rural development (Arce 1993). Whilst within development discourse the tendency has been to reduce the actor to a component of the system "*it is absurd for donative discourse to protect the protagonists from themselves, for people to appear only as 'development workers, development researchers or members of target groups,*" (Apthorpe 1986 p 388)

2.8 Networks

A particular focus within actor oriented studies has been the interface, at the point of intervention at which encounters between staff and recipient groups occur. In such situations, the ideas underlying the actor oriented approach are in particularly sharp focus. We have clear instances in which actors with different life worlds are confronted by new objects over which they struggle to establish meaning. However policy involves a complex range of events that occur in different contexts or locations of which encounters between frontline staff and those they work with are but one example. Policy involves encounters that occur in

different contexts or, as Long et al describe them, arenas (1989), ranging from meetings in local community centres to national management meetings. While studies have highlighted the role of actors in shaping development policy in different contexts, such as in national policy making, debates between senior and mid-level bureaucracy and the interface between clients and local staff workers (Long et al 1989, De Vries 1992); what is missing from these studies is any overview of how the separate sets of actors' practices in different arenas interrelate.

Within rural development it is possible to identify configurations of administrative practices (Arce, De Vries and Villareal 1994) which are maintained over time and which link various actors operating in different arenas. Actors' involvement in development on a regular basis brings them into contact with the same people and objects on a regular basis. These regular sets of practices relate people in different arenas. While the actor oriented school highlights the capacity of all actors to shape the meaning of development programmes, there is also a need to understand how events in different arenas are linked over time. One approach to the analysis of this process is to conceptualise complex social phenomena such as policy programmes as what following Callon and Long we can understand as open ended networks of both human and non-human objects (Callon 1986,1991 Long 2001). In pursuing certain goals actors enter into on-going interactions with others. In order to do so they must share some level of understanding with other actors as regards the meaning of objects which they encounter. That is to say they become involved in networks of actors linked around specific social objects by a common frame of meaning. In order for such networks to exist it is necessary that the actors involved share a degree of understanding of what the network is about. Such meaning is conveyed through the exchange of certain meaning bearing media or what Callon describes as intermediaries which include money, skills, people and artefacts. Such intermediaries are also textualised; transfers of money for example convey specific meaning and specific roles to people within networks. A common frame of meaning not only defines what a particular network concerns but also the various roles of the actors and objects in it.

Actors pursue interests and seek to enrol each other in line with their interests by having others accept the meaning that best reflects their interests, a process Callon describes as "translation". This process is on-going as actors continue to attempt to invest the objects in the network with a meaning that reflects their interests. Networks are thus dynamic, involving

complex patterns of definition and redefinition through which actors attempt to ensure the dominance of different ways of understanding the network. Thus social networks are not regimented structures; they are dynamic frameworks of shared meaning.

Rather than the regulated and orderly process depicted in formal policy discourse, policy making can be conceived as occurring in evolving networks in which actors pursuing different objectives which involve “*complex networks and groups bargaining towards political resolution,*” (Yearly, Baker and Milton 1994 p 67). Different individuals and groups attempt to impose conflicting translations on the policy networks that reflect their own interests. This occurs in different settings on an on-going basis. From the point of view of this research this approach recognises the open ended and unpredictable nature of action as identified in the actor oriented approach, yet still allows for the recognition that networks of actors are organised around policy. Thus, making the question of how order is maintained and reproduced over time a central element in policy analysis. The concept of networks allows the analysis to be extended beyond the formal organisational hierarchy of a policy cycle in which functional roles forms the basis of linking different levels, to include informal contacts and networking that also link actors in the policy process.

This approach also makes no a priori assumptions about the nature of interactions that occur at different levels in the policy cycle. Rather than presupposing for example that the nature of interactions between senior civil servants and politicians are qualitatively different to those which occur between an unemployed person and a social welfare officer “*We must rather understand larger or more global sites as specific intersections of practice which are granted the status global because of the number of sites which they reproduce or repeat as objects,*” (Whickham 1986 p.171) There is no a-priori basis for treating events in different points within networks as separate types of event; the kind of social processes that occur in cabinet meetings are not necessarily different from the type of exchanges that occur in local cattle marts. In both cases actors engage in negotiation and struggle over meaning. Understanding the implications of the outcomes of these processes involves “*The vital reflexive connections between the local and the global, rural and urban,*” (Whatmore 1994 p 36); that is the practical observable question of the articulation between these sites. The social practices that occur in cabinet are not essentially different to those that occur elsewhere but they are articulated with a wider range of sites.

From a practical research point of view the value of the concept of social networks is that it allows us to trace the development of policies focusing on how this is achieved through interactions between actors which help to shape the network without presupposing what is and is not significant "*following the actors through the network as they build and shape its contours and we cannot specify in advance where their efforts will take them,*" (Murdoch 1995 p. 753). In this particular piece of work the questions that are of interest relate to the development and introduction of a problematic new social object, in the form of a development intervention. Such an intervention involves the creation of a new social network of actors and objects. They also involve the use of knowledge in communication as actors attempt to enrol others. The intervention is evaluated, and interpreted by different actors as they encounter it and they respond to it in ways that are informed by their interests. Such networks thus involve encounters between actors whose conflicting interests lead them to attempt to vest it with differing and sometimes opposed frames of meaning. In this context, it may not be the case that all interactions or all aspects of the various actors' frames of meaning are particularly significant. Indeed it might be the case that ninety nine per cent of the time the actors involved have shared understandings of the objects in their life world. The crucial issues in this research concern those critical moments when actors engaging the network have conflicting interests and are involved in struggles or negotiations over meaning. It is these contested spaces that are of most interest to this particular study.

2.9 Discourse

The actor oriented approach points to the inherent fragility of the social world, actors behaviours differ and the outcomes of these ever varying behaviours determines the shape of development programmes. However it is also the case that such interventions involve groups of actors linked together in networks. If this is the case then an additional consideration concerns how inherently unpredictable interactions between actors in social networks maintain a degree of stability. Within network studies a crucial role is attributed to knowledge and its role in enabling actors to establish at least a degree of agreement on the nature of objects within a network. Actors are, as Law (1994) would put it at least partially enrolled in a common frame of meaning. The continual working out of this common frame of meaning is the key to how networks are constituted. Networks are sites of conflict and consensus of shifting ideas and interests as various actors vie for control. This involves using

texts and utterances to convey ideas to others in the networks. Researching the way that networks are formed and maintained over time involves seeking to identify and study actors as they attempt to do this. It thus concerns knowledge. It is in this context that the concept of discourse is useful.

The concept of discourse has expanded to embrace a widening variety of ideas. Broadly speaking the term relates to a field of study concerning the means by which knowledge about objects is organised and communicated. Amongst the many approaches to idea those inspired “Archeology of Knowledge,” (1972) and the later work of Michel Foucault is perhaps the most relevant to the approach to the concept employed here. *“Discourse, Foucault argues, constructs the topic it defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. It governs the way a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about. It also influences how ideas are put into practice,”* (Hall 2004 p. 346). To Foucault the term relates not simply to knowledge about the world but also the means through which socially meaningful objects are generated. As actors come into contact with each other in relation to a specific social object they must communicate in relation to it and establish a level of common understanding about the nature of that object. Different actors possessing different interests compete to have the validity of certain ideas about an object accepted by others. In other words actors employing discourses attempt to pursue their interests by having certain ideas about them accepted by others. Thus discourse involves both knowledge and power. Actors who come into contact in relation to specific objects assess and negotiate an agreed frame of understanding. These negotiations involve conflicting stocks of knowledge. It is discourse which gives structure to the actors’ knowledge of objects and a means of communicating these ideas to others.

As a concept discourse has generated complex and often unproductive theoretical debates. In some cases the result has been a rigid conceptual model. Foucault for example appears to give discourses a function as a unifying force or law of motion. In speaking of the archaeology and genealogy of discourses he gives us the sense that ideas exist and evolve independently of relatively powerless actors (Boyne 1992). The concept of discourse itself becomes a totalising discourse. Laclau and Mouffe (1985) use the concept of discourse in a way that emphasises the relationship between practice and meaning. For them discourse is related to all forms of action and in a sense everything is discursive¹⁴. They describe a world

¹⁴ Howart (1994) discusses this aspect of Laclau and Mouffe’s work in greater detail.

in which actors select elements of discourses in order to assemble new ones giving the impression of actors consciously picking and choosing from them like colour schemes. Such a perspective does not gel with a fluid and contingent picture of the social world in which actors react relatively spontaneously to new events and objects. In other perspectives the idea of discourse has generated complex frameworks in which discourse takes on a multiple role being used to describe a range of distinct processes. Take for example De Vries who relates discourse to four separate sets of issues; patterns of public debate, the various accounts and interpretations of actors, as a conjuncture between power and knowledge and as a practice by which a particular problematic is made more intelligible (1992).

The almost limitless variations on the theme of discourse stretch the concept to the point where it almost loses its explanatory force. Nevertheless trimmed of some of its postmodern excesses discourse analysis is a valuable conceptual tool. Even a common sense view of the world suggests that it is possible to identify bodies of written and verbal material that are seen as constituting knowledge of specific subjects. Common sense also suggests that within specific social networks people utilise these bodies of knowledge to support their particular point of view. Thus discourse relates both to a substantive phenomenon and to a set of social processes in line with Milton's observation that it is a term with both a "*processual and a substantive meaning, in the first sense it refers to the constitution of social reality through communication, in the second it refers to a field of communication as defined by its subject matter or the type of language uses*" (Milton 1993b p. 23 See also Milton 1993a). Substantive discourse is clearly present in everyday life on the form of specific bodies of knowledge about specific objects. We also see the processual use of discourse in the strategic deployment of elements of substantive discourse as actors attempt to enrol others in a specific frame of meaning. Actors draw on "substantive," discourse in encounters during which they contribute to the social construction of objects i.e. during processual events. It may perhaps better to describe such processes as "discursive practices", during which actors employ elements of substantive discourse in encounters with others.

If as I have already suggested networks can be understood as involving chains of human and non-human objects, linked through complex patterns of definition and redefinition, then the value of the concept of discourse in developing understandings of how actors make use of knowledge to exercise power in networks is evident. As actors attempt to ensure the dominance of different ways of understanding the network they employ discourse. It is those

discourses that come to be seen as the most significant as regards the understanding of an object that have the most important role in shaping the frame of meaning attached to it. They play an important role in helping to hold networks together by providing actors with the means of establishing the validity of certain frames of meaning. In the case of local development, access to control over a professional discourse of development that claims to be founded on an objective scientific rationale is a powerful tool for certain actors over others. It allows the policy implementers and designers to claim legitimacy for their frame of meaning and thus control over the process, how it is structured, who should be involved, how the process is carried out and evaluated. Apthorpe refers to the existence of such power when he describing how administrators employ specific forms of knowledge concerning development to present certain courses of action as objectively necessary and therefore self-explanatory and unproblematic (1986). However while the professional development discourse is powerful it is not all powerful. It competes with a range of other discourses in wide ranging and complex power struggles in which knowledge plays a central role.

Discursive practices are defined here as the ways in which substantive discourse is employed in such power relations. Amongst the important features of such practices is problematisation (Callon 1985), through which people utilise discourse to define issues or problems that need to be addressed. Problematisation is an inherent feature of development policy discourse. By definition such activities involve professionals identifying the problems facing communities and prescribing solutions. Indeed the entire policy cycle can be seen as a certain form of problematisation. A second practice that has been identified in relation to the role and function of expert discourse is deletion whereby the importance of certain issues and activities that occur in a social network is minimised. As Law puts it in the case of a senior laboratory scientists "*They tend in particular to delete the work of subordinates: to assume that low status work gets done automatically, as if people were programmable devices,*" (1994 p. 131). These practices tend to obscure certain issues as they bring others to the fore and thus establish "*pattern of enfranchisement and disenfranchisement,*" (ibid p. 111) in the case discussed the impact of such practices is that they help to depoliticise development. Such practices along with the language and written texts that constitute discourse are of critical importance. It is through these that power is established and maintained within networks. Discourses can be reproduced and maintained over time and support a specific frame of meaning. They thus give those who control them, a resource that can be employed to

reproduce a specific frame of meaning in a network as John Law describes it, it gives the network durability.

2.10 Conclusion

What the above outlines is the basis of the approach that is taken in this thesis. Firstly actors constitute the world they live in. They are purposive in doing so, that is their action is strategic in the sense that it intended to fulfil goals. However while empirical work undertaken by actor oriented sociologists has illustrated the idea of diversity in local settings and is rich in providing evidence of such phenomena as contingency, conflict and resistance it has been less effective in dealing with what Benda Beckmann (1989) refers to as the reproduction of social discontinuities over time. In the course of development projects actors enter into on-going social relations with other actors and objects. They become part of networks which are organised around specific issues such as, in this case, policy interventions. Social network theory points to the existence of sets of social relations which are reproduced over time providing a means for theorising and examining the development of policy in different arenas. However it also exhibits weaknesses in relation to power preferring to “follow the actor”. While it may be the case that we cannot know “*where actors efforts lead*” (Murdoch 1995 p. 753). The solution suggested here is to look to discourse shorn of some of its post-modernist pretensions. Discourse provides a means of conceptualising the use of knowledge by actors in networks to establish durability i.e. to enrol other actors in their frame of meaning. Law (1994) sees this process as involving the creation of specific modes of ordering, combinations of discourse and practices that convey a specific form or pattern of order on networks. Such as the efforts of development professionals to introduce and gain acceptance for specific discourses and behaviours associated with the “local development paradigm”. This holds true for other groups engaged in development initiatives. For example, at a very early stage in this study it became clear that certain well placed locals were able to compete with and indeed outperform the development professionals in the struggle to control meaning in the development process. This pointed to the fact that alternatives to the professional development discourse existed. Indeed in some instances it was the case that far from enrolling them, the professionals found themselves enrolled in line with the interests of local groups and individuals. Underlying all the elements of this study therefore is the question of power in the local development process; which actors have power,

how do they wield it and what are the outcomes of power struggles between actors on the wider network in which it is played out.

In methodological terms therefore this thesis uses the framework outlined above to provide a set of conceptual tools that can be employed in order to guide observation and once gathered to interpret data in a way which is, in explanatory terms, open. Rather than establishing which specific facts are to be gathered this approach concentrates on how to go about gathering data in a way which does not predetermine what may or may not be significant in the world views of the actors involved. The preceding discussion suggests that this approach involves three elements. Firstly development projects represent new social objects. Knowledgeable actors living within their own life worlds encounter them as they go about the business of getting on with a meaningful social life. Their responses to such interventions are shaped by their own socio cultural context and reflect their own interests and projects. During encounters with other actors some common understandings of the objects concerned are established. In the process the actors contribute to shaping the intervention, they socially construct it. Thus understandings of development initiatives involve examining how actors incorporate them into their life worlds and in the process construct them.

The research attempted here thus begins by observing actors as they construct the initiative in encounters with others and also on how their own life world and knowledge contribute to this process. Not only should observation focus on actors as they encounter development initiatives but also on the wider context in which such interventions take place. The generation of such data involves gaining insights into the actors in their own lived in situation and also to doing so on a basis that allows for in depth observation of actors. For this reason this thesis contains a good deal of “thick description”. In practical terms this process was made easier by the uniquely extensive degree of access the researcher had. For a substantial period of the time spent doing this study it was possible for him work with the organisation as a development officer. In this capacity the researcher had access to a wide range of the actors and events most closely related to the implementation of the programme in particular the researcher had a significant degree of access to the staff themselves as well as to senior decision makers and state employees who came into contact with the project. The descriptions of events that occurred in encounters involving these actors, as well as those involving the clients are described in depth in this study. However a crucial feature of this approach is that in so far as possible the behaviour of actors in these settings is treated in

the same way as that of actors in other settings and most notably the behaviours of clients. No a-priori assumption are made about which particular encounters or indeed which particular actors are of the most significance in determining the shape that the programme took. It was only at a late stage in this process that the merits of this perspective became wholly apparent to the researcher. Initially the behaviour of programme staff for example suggested that in many instances their actions were at wide variance with their formal job descriptions. Indeed evaluating their actual behaviour in terms of the project cycle would provide an interpretation in which much of what they did would appear meaningless or at best be defined as informal or unimportant. Later in this study it will be demonstrated that it was only when their activities were examined as the behaviour of actors attempting to respond to the threats and opportunities that new objects in the development network posed to them, that much of their behaviour made sense. By abandoning any preconceptions about what role any of the actors played in the policy programmes and examining it instead in terms of the strategic behaviour of actors within a network the behaviour of staff and senior players in the process can be understood.

Secondly the objects and encounters of actors in any given location are only part of a wider range of encounters involving actors in separate sites whose interactions also comprise elements of policy networks articulated in complex power relations mediated through knowledge. New initiatives involve the development of new networks or the modification of old ones, during which actors encounter each other and attempt to enrol each other in a specific frame of meaning. The problematic new social object, in the form of a development programme as encountered at any specific point or arena is but part of a larger network through which local events are linked to events occurring in a variety of different sites. Development policy is the result of the combined labours of a variety of actors during which the meaning of the policy is negotiated at different sites or arenas. Actors' engagement in any aspect of the initiative thus involves them in this network and in the process those actors shape the meanings attached to those elements of the policy they encounter.

In terms of the research presented here this indicates the need to pay close attention to the way that the various different actors involved in the process contribute to the creation of this network. The observation of specific events in certain arenas as actors compete to enrol each other in a common frame of meaning may be useful in developing an understanding of how specific situations are worked out. However simply examining these incidents in isolation,

charting the way that objects are shaped in these encounters is inadequate in itself. To fully research development policy it is necessary to trace the relationships between arenas seeing how they are articulated through frames of meaning that are transformed in different locations through the involvement of other actors. In other words we can understand policies as the outcome of separate encounters involving different actors at which continued negotiations occur concerning the meaning of the policy. While these separate encounters relate to a specific object there is no simple mechanism or linkage between them. Ideas that may appear to be straightforward and clear cut in one arena may be the subject of intense negotiation at other levels. Even in those arenas considered in hierarchical models to be subordinate specific actors have the potential to significantly influence the outcomes achieved. A second element in this study involves examining in some detail how the various different encounters between a range of actors contributed to the shape that this network assumed.

For this reason researching local development in any specific location needs to be placed in the wider context. Tracing the evolution of ideas through different arenas provides a means for investigating the formation of the social network around this policy from senior levels of the administration through to interfaces between frontline staff and clients. In practical terms this task is made more challenging because the quality of access afforded to any individual in these different settings is rarely likely to be the same. Senior public servants are particularly unlikely to provide anyone with the level of access necessary to produce a thick description of their behaviour (though there may be some entertainment value in asking them!). Inevitably therefore, the nature of the data available varies relative to the observers' location within the network. Thus in this thesis much of the data in relation to the locations within this network occupied by senior policy makers is in the form of documents and historical records about changes in formal policy arrangements; it relates to substantive discourse. This data is presented in the form of a narrative outlining how substantive discourse within the state relating to the role of local approaches to development in public policy has evolved. This is done for two main reasons. Firstly changes in substantive policy contributed to the creation of the boom in local development in the 1990's. This is not to suggest that these processes are by definition substantively different to the processes that occur in encounters between individual actors in some of the other arenas examined later in the study. It is simply that in this instance we are dealing with encounters to which we do not have direct access. The data at hand in the form of primarily documentary records detailing the outcome of encounters

between actors in the form of substantive discourses which, in the words of Foucault formed the conditions in which the emergence of certain policies could occur. Secondly this approach makes it possible to identify those elements of this discourse that later became resources within the policy network.

The third dimension of this methodology concerns the fact that while social networks are subject to the influence of a variety of actors, networks are maintained over time in observable and predictable patterns. Understanding how networks are produced and reproduced by the actors over time must also be central to any analysis. The use of discourses as a means of ensuring the practical work of maintaining order within networks is central to understanding how knowledge is employed by actors to establish and maintain power. The policy “expert’s” discourse for example gives the impression that policy involves a cycle in which an apolitical and technical policy instrument is intended to generate participatory development. One feature of this discourse is that it outlines a range of roles into which those involved be they designers, implementers or beneficiaries are expected to fit. However other forms of discourse are also present in the policy process and these sometimes contradict the enrolments prescribed in the professional discourse. Thus studying discourse makes it possible to develop an understanding of the working out of power relations in development.

Thus we can understand the process of policy formulation and implementation as a process through which a network of actors located in different arenas and linked through their involvement with the policy, promote what they understand as their own interests through constant encounters in which knowledge is utilised to enrol others through a process of negotiation and bargaining. Actors use the various discourses at their disposal to define the policy interventions in ways that reflect their own interests. The key to power within networks involves the ability of certain actors to achieve a degree of acceptance of a specific frame of meaning by others. The above discussion suggests that this dominance is only ever partial. However while there is a degree of observable variation in the way that programmes are worked out it remains the case that over time the certain asymmetries endure. Power may be in some ways contingent, however it remains the case that over time there is a tendency for the same power relationships to be reproduced. A feature of the analysis presented here therefore is that it seeks to throw light on how the issue of power is worked out during encounters within the development network, with a view to understanding how such contingent power asymmetries endure.

In order to gain some understanding of this process what is proposed in this thesis is a three sided methodology, the first element of which is the thick description of encounters between actors possessing different stocks of knowledge, the second of which is to trace the linkages between separate arenas and the third of which is to consider the use of discourse in this process.

In this perspective the emphasis is on a theory of enquiry rather than a theory of explanation. Methodology and epistemology take precedence over the ‘higher level,’ theories which seek to account for structures and causality. Instead the research methodology provides a framework of enquiry which allows us to examine events as they happened in order to produce a narrative which explores such issues in more depth and increased specificity. This approach has significant implications for theory building this model theory building is radically different to theory building in the natural sciences. Whilst in the case of the latter, theory is subjected to test via experimentation the very nature of the material that this study deals with means that it is contingent and unpredictable. The aim of the research is to focus on identifying the processes that underlie intervention and predicting how they operate in practice. However in the case of social phenomena like local development interventions, in separate cases the same cause, such as the introduction of a project can lead to very different effects or outcomes. It is the researcher’s task in this study to explain how one set of variable outcomes came to occur in one specific instance, thus demonstrating the interpretive validity of the approach employed. We are dealing with things that are inherently dynamic and they require dynamic forms of analysis or what Law describes as a sociology of verbs rather than one of nouns.

In this chapter the case for developing a new conceptual framework for understanding local development has been outlined. In the first half of the chapter deficiencies in existing approaches to analysing local development programmes were outlined. It was argued that not only did such frameworks fail to adequately understand how these programmes worked but also that they contributed to the problem, by creating a fatal association between the formal structures created as part of the policy making process and the changes that it was anticipated would occur in the dynamics of relationships between different groups of social actors. Such approaches ignored the central role of actors’ behaviour on influencing the outcomes of policies. What was proposed instead was an approach to studying development programmes

that focussed on what actually happens as programmes are worked out in detail. This involves a thick description of the activities of actors involved in the formation of social networks around these policies. However such networks also involve other objects and discourse which actors may employ strategically in a range of locations within networks in pursuing their own strategies. In this context stripped of their privileged status formal policy discourse is an important resource; one which is both the result of encounters between actors and which is employed by actors involved in development programmes. The next two chapters of this thesis turn to an analysis of this discourse.

Chapter 3 The Footprints of Agency: The Archaeology of Rural Policy

3.1 Introduction

During the period examined in this study a number of local development programmes were introduced in the Republic of Ireland as we have seen their adoption was accompanied by a period of vigorous academic activity concerning the merits of local development. The first and second chapter examined some of the commentary that was produced as a result of this activity. The new local development programmes were largely welcomed by academic commentators. Indeed from the late 1980's onwards a particular narrative concerning the emergence of the local development approach in the Republic of Ireland emerged. It became fashionable to present these new programmes as part of a fundamental shift in policy thinking; a response to, and rejection of, the weaknesses of traditional approaches to development. The previous chapters suggested that this narrative was somewhat simplistic. Despite the claims of a number of commentators that local development represented a new paradigm, the conceptual frameworks adopted to account for the emergence of these new local development programmes retained at their heart established ideas about how policies are made and implemented. The analysis focused on the morphological features of local development programmes as the product of a policy cycle or linear process involving a sequence of clearly defined steps. This perspective incorporated specific ideas about the role of certain groups of actors and certain inputs at particular points during the design and implementation of a new local development programme. In doing so it also distinguished between those factors that were internal to the policy cycle such as policy research, legislation and implementation structures and those considered to be external to this cycle. The former are then duly considered to be relevant to the question of how such policies and programmes are developed and implemented while the latter are regarded as lying outside the confines of the policy process. This approach tends to reduce policies to their formal essence isolating them from the wider social context in which they emerge and operate. There is also a tendency within this approach to look in particular at the role of forms of formal policy argumentation through which ideas are formulated and exchanged by senior decision makers in accounting for the emergence of certain policies at certain times.

The previous chapter pointed to the pitfalls of utilising this approach to researching policy. By restricting the analysis of a policy to those features and practices that appear as part of the formal development policy discourse "*the whole of policy as uttered is seen as equivalent to an actual achievement of what it supposes ought to be, can and will be done,*" (Apthorpe 1986 pp. 381-382). In reality, it was argued, the way in which events occur is never as straightforward as this. As Grindle puts it a range of factors "*frequently intervene between the statement of policy goals and their actual achievement,*" (Grindle 1980 p. 3) the texts and formal aspects of policy making processes cannot be divorced from the wider social context in which they emerge. Approaches to the study of local development policies that are based on a conceptual framework which only focuses on certain aspects of policy practice have the potential to exclude or reduce the significance of other factors that shape new policies and the programmes introduced to facilitate their implementation. The formal discourse relating to local development provided a very specific account of how the new programmes emerged. They were portrayed as the result of a paradigm shift or even as a revolution in thinking on development policy. However if this was a revolution it was not one that was undertaken by revolutionaries. These new programmes were introduced through the same state agencies and indeed with the support of the same civil service and political leadership that had supported previous policies. Furthermore the formal discourse surrounding local development retained many features of previous forms of policy including of course the tendency to treat the introduction of such policies in isolation from the wider context in which they are introduced. Indeed doing so made it easier to portray the introduction of the new local development programmes as a break with the past the result of a rational process of policy formulation that was undertaken in isolation from the broader policy making context in which it occurred. Given these facts and also given the concerns outlined above regarding the perspectives that underlie formal accounts of the emergence of local development programmes. A critical question emerges concerning the extent to which this narrative presents an accurate account of how this process occurred and the equally important question concerning the interests and purpose which this particular narrative serves.

Further significance is added to this question when the recent history of local development entities is considered. Changes in E.U funding together with changes in the macro-economic environment in which local development programmes operate have meant that more recently the defining features of some local development programmes have receded in significance.

There has been a reassertion of the Irish State's tendency towards retaining central control over policies through increased monitoring and supervision of the new programmes¹. This appears to again confirm the point made in the first chapter that the claim that local development policy represents a new paradigm is somewhat dubious. It may instead be the case that, far from representing a paradigm shift, local development represented little more than a short term departure from the tendencies towards centralisation and the pre-eminence of economic concerns which have long been associated with Irish Public Policy.

These observations again point to the importance of paying attention to the wider context in which new programmes emerge and to the importance of locating specific formal accounts as part of rather than an account of, the social processes through which such programmes are produced. In the previous two chapters it was shown that local development programmes can be understood as complex social networks. Such networks are produced and reproduced contingently through interactions between specific actors in a range of sites. During these interactions forms of discourse, including the formal elements of such policies as developed by senior policy makers and researchers are employed by certain actors during attempts to define such programmes in ways that support specific projects. Such forms of formal discourse may in fact be particularly important resources for these actors, while they may not in themselves determine the shape of local development initiatives the narratives produced by actors in what could be described as the national policy arena have significant implications for events in other sites, influencing the way in which new programmes are conceptualised, designed and implemented. Furthermore there may also be a possibility that such narratives may be employed strategically by actors in support of specific projects. What such narratives say about the emergence of local development may not be as important as the strategic purpose they serve as discursive resources employed by some actors in exchanges during which they attempt to enrol others in networks that supported their development project. There is a need to re-contextualise the formal components of policy discourse examining them not as the reified product of a rational policy research and design process but rather as

¹ There has been a significant alteration in the more recent rounds of local development funding with concerns being raised about the implication of these changes on the autonomy of local groups (McKeown and Haaze 2003). More recently E.U. LEADER rural development funding has been "mainstreamed" with a greater emphasis on consistency in approach amongst leader groups and a reduction in local autonomy (Dargan and Shucksmith 2008).

one of the numerous elements which collectively contribute to the emergence of local development programmes and to the shape that they take.

This chapter begins the task of examining the relationship between formal discourses concerning local development programmes and the reality of how these programmes came to be adopted and implemented. It does so by reviewing the historical development of public policies towards rural areas in the republic of Ireland. Having done so an attempt will be made to identify what if any role previous policies towards such areas had to creating the historical conditions in which local development policies emerged. It should then be possible to assess the extent and nature of the role played by previous policies in creating the conditions of existence of the new local development programmes. In undertaking this review the approach adopted here is broadly in line with Foucault's archaeological approach in that it seeks to understand the "*social, historical, and political conditions under which, for example, statements come to count as true or false*" (McHoul and Grace 1993 p. 29). This is done in order to gain some insight into the process through which various types of policy approach come to be seen as self-evidently valuable and legitimate at certain points in time. It is important to stress that in doing so no a-priori claims are being made as to the primacy or dominance of the particular sites in which local development policy are formulated or about the nature of the events that occurred in these sites. Nor is it the case that this approach assumes that relationships exist between former and current approaches to the development of rural areas the idea is to investigate the possibility that elements of this historical context in which the new programmes emerged may have had an impact on the shape of these programmes. The desire is to gain insight into the way such forms of discourse come to be formulated through events in which behaviours and strategies of actors may or may not accord with what is suggested by formal policy discourse. In doing so it is hoped that the footprints of agency can be detected in this process.

In attempting to examine these events an obvious methodological problem needs to be addressed. Senior levels in the formal policy making process are generally more difficult to access than is the case with other sites. In order to address this problem the researcher attempts to play with the hand he was dealt, making use of indirect evidence in order to gain an insight into the policy practices which senior policy makers employed. In this chapter therefore the data primarily takes the form of historical and documentary evidence of the

changing ideas about and approaches to rural and local development in Ireland, together with the changing administrative structures that emerged to implement these.

The bulk of this chapter takes the form of a historical overview which examines previous policies that have affected the development of rural areas in Ireland. This review is undertaken with a view to building up a more comprehensive picture of the historical context of Irish Policy making towards rural areas. In order to do so a number of significant developments in Irish policies towards rural areas are considered. This is done with a view to identifying the type of policy practices and forms of discourse which have been developed by the State in responding to the challenges facing rural areas at specific points in time. In addition the wider factors that influenced the shape these policies took at the time are also considered. From this review it should be possible to build up a comprehensive idea of the internal factors which have influenced the shape of the State's policies toward rural areas. Such as, for example, patterns of administrative practice and policy discourse that have influenced the process of policy making. In addition it should also be possible to identify how external factors such as wider changes in the political or socio-economic environment have influenced the way in which policy is formulated and implemented. While an exacting history of rural policy is beyond the scope of this study, the researcher has attempted to identify and consider pivotal points at which significant changes in policies towards rural areas occurred and to identify the role of internal and external factors in causing these changes. Amongst those identified are the introduction of the 19th century introduction of the New Poor Law and subsequent Land Reform measures in the latter half of that century. Following from this attention is paid to policies affecting rural areas in the period immediately following independence and to subsequent changes that occurred after the election of the first Fianna Fail administration. Developments in the voluntary sector during this period area also examined as these are of importance in understanding the policy approaches the state adopted. Later events that are considered include the efforts to introduce a regional element to the economic plans of the 1960's, the impact of E.C membership on rural policy, the introduction of training and employment programmes during the 1980's and the first combat poverty programme.

The chapter concludes by considering what if anything this review reveals about previous patterns of policy making in relation to rural areas. In particular it will attempt to consider if it is possible to identify specific forms of policy practice which contributed to the shape that

the new local development programmes took. Consideration will be given, for example, to the question of whether policy makers adopt specific types of practice in response to certain types of circumstances and events. The findings of this review and in particular any observations concerning forms of policy practice should make it possible to revisit some of the questions posed in this introduction. Firstly concerning the extent to which the assertions made by the formal local development discourse regarding its relationship to previous policies are accurate. Is it in fact the case that, as the narrative surrounding local development suggests, these new programmes were introduced in the manner depicted in the policy cycle or did other factors play a role in their development? Secondly, if it is the case that the introduction of these new programmes was influenced by other factors then what was the nature of the actual relationship between these policies and former approaches to the development in rural area and what does this tell us about the processes through which new policy initiatives emerge.

The purpose of this chapter is therefore primarily investigative. It seeks to test some of the claims made by formal development discourse empirically by examining the extent to which they depict the situation prior to their introduction and also how accurately it accounts for the emergence of these programmes. Finally the findings of this review concerning the processes that actually did contribute to the shape the new programmes took together with what this reveals about the relationship between these processes and formal discourse concerning these programmes will be discussed. Subsequently, in Chapter Four these observations will be employed in examining in more detail how such practices contributed to the emergence of formal discourse that was supportive of local development in 1980's and 1990's and also in examining the relationship between formal texts and statements produced in policy discourse and the actual policy practices which occurred during the introduction of these programmes.

3.2 Irish Development Policy - Historical origins

The focus of this thesis is on the local development policies which the Irish state began to introduce in the late 1980's and the early 1990's. While these policies were often described as a new departure in public policy in reality policies concerning state intervention in rural areas as specific spatial entities possessing their own problems and requiring specific measures across a range of policy sectors are not unique to this period. Indeed it could be

argued that the first Irish poor law report of 1830 represented an early attempt at a planned intervention based on social research and the recognition of the need for an integrated and local dimension in public policy. The commission outlined its purpose as the “*prevention of destitution*” (Burke 1986 p. 25) and on this basis outlined a “*bold plan for economic development,*” (*ibid* p. 284) would have introduced measures to provide; employment, increase productivity, improve housing and agricultural techniques. Social welfare measures included institutional care, assistance to charitable organisations, credit provision and health care. These measures, (many of which would hardly look out of place in recent local development programmes) were to be implemented by local volunteer boards with a civil service group at national level determining standards and allocating public funding. The local poor law unions proposed were to be responsible for the collection of local funds to be matched by central government. In many ways these proposals put forward over one hundred and eighty years ago mirror some of the features of more recent events. Here a group of policy makers argued a case for special policy responses for particularly deprived groups. The proposals stressed the need for the local programmes to have a multidimensional character and to involve locals in each area in the administration of the policy and in gathering matching funds.

In the political climate of the 1830's the principle of economic non-intervention dominated and this plan was never implemented. A second report proposed a more punitive system of indoor relief as embodied in the principle of the Workhouse test². While it would of course be facetious to suggest that the poor law debates of the 1830's have anything but historical interest in the context of modern rural development, these events do throw interesting light on aspects of policy making and administration. For example it suggests a similar case to that described by Foucault in his work on the clinic and on punishment (Foucault 1973, 1977). In the Poor Law we see the movement towards the adoption of expert knowledge systems as the basis for a system of governance. We also see in the rejection of the original report and the adoption of the second the extent to which research and policy making are interlinked. When the first report didn't gel with the political interests of senior politicians and civil servants a

² Under this system it was assumed that should conditions in a workhouse be better than those of the least well off outside, the workhouses would attract the idle and indolent. The workhouse test asserted the principle that conditions within should thus be harsher than any found outside. The very fact that a person would apply to live in such conditions was taken as proof that they were in fact destitute to the point where such relief was justified.

second, reaching conclusions that were in line with decisions that had largely already been made was produced.

The land reform measures introduced from the 1870's onwards as a response to the land reform agitation of the time also had a significant role in shaping the future of Irish rural policy discourse. While not instantly transforming Irish land holding patterns, the series of pieces of legislation facilitated the transfer of land from landlords to small holders. At the same time the establishment of the Congested Districts Board represented a tacit recognition on the part of the authorities of the need for some action to address the problems facing specific rural areas (Byrne et al 2001). In the process a system of land ownership by small farmers who owned the land they lived and worked on became indelibly linked with national consciousness and instigated a process of transfer of ownership that continued into the second half of the twentieth century³ (Varley 2004). While the emergence of this ownership structure was actually a novel development in the Irish context, the image of the small Irish farm became a dominant one in Irish political discourse. Consequently this idea was to have a significant bearing on the future shape of rural policy in Ireland following independence.

3.3 Post Independence and the rural way of life.

In the introduction it was suggested that an historical review of policies that affected rural areas may make it possible to identify certain ideas or practices that influence subsequent policies towards rural areas. In the previous section a key feature of the policies considered was the adoption of programmes that were supportive of small holdings. A key feature of these programmes was that they resulted from public agitation they were in a sense a concession to popular, if not populist, sentiment that had been stirred up by political leaders. One of the consequences of these programmes was to firmly establish the central role of the small farmer in the popular imagination. The concept of landholding assumed an ideological importance which was to have significance in relation to the long term. Even a brief review of the period following the signing of the Anglo Irish treaty in 1921 indicates that land ownership and ultimately agriculture had become important political symbols in the years

³ Following 1923 the Land Commission superseded some of the responsibilities of the Congested District Boards and became the government authority with responsibility for supervising land division.

immediately following independence. To cite Curtin and Varley "A significant segment of pre and post-independence Irish nationalist opinion favoured small scale economic activity based on farming and manufacturing industry dispersed throughout the country side" (1991 p. 100). While populist ideas about small scale production may have been significant in the thinking of policy makers in this period, so too was the situation in international food markets and the demands of larger agricultural operators. These had significant influence on the State's agricultural policy many aspects of which either explicitly or in practice operated in favour of larger producers (Jacobsen 1994). The first post-independence government operated in a context where export revenues were dependent on the live cattle trade to the U.K. This involved the maintenance of low production costs (Jacobsen 1994). In addition to the emphasis placed on agriculture, the centralising tendencies of government that were present prior to independence were also maintained. Policies were centrally devised with control vested in government departments based in Dublin. It is also worth noting that even in the 1920's while the main pre-occupation of policy makers focussed on commercial agriculture, the state also felt compelled to pay specific attention to the needs of disadvantaged rural areas, particularly the Gaeltacht which it targeted with a range of special measures to counteract the low incomes and poor agricultural performance. Ventures encouraged by the state included encouraging craftwork, harvesting of seaweed and measures to improve the fishery in these areas. The practice of introducing specific measures to deal with the specific problems of marginalized rural areas alongside mainstream agricultural policies has been a feature of public policy since the state's foundation.

The election of a Fianna Fail Government in 1932 is generally regarded as marking the point at which the populist ideas mentioned above gained growing significance. While in social affairs this government was particularly informed by the emerging ideas of Catholic Social Teaching, which affirmed the principles of private ownership, vocationalism and subsidiarity, such views were easily digested by politicians with a degree of antipathy towards the idea of state intervention (Jacobsen 1994). The State's policies reflected this, promoting voluntarism and a non-interventionist approach in social policy and, according to Curtin and Varley, contributed to policies that promoted a rural economy involving small scale, petty capitalist production on the family owned farm (1991). Agriculture was to remain the primary focus of the State's rural policy. Fianna Fail's election platform in 1932 contained proposals for policies including the expansion of the numbers settled on the land, the dispersal of industry and the promotion of self-sufficiency (Jacobsen 1994). The image of

an Irish rural landscape consisting of small owner occupied farms, a central theme within political rhetoric (Jacobsen 1994) now came to have a much stronger bearing on policy practice as Fianna Fail gave substance to elements of this populist agenda. Despite the concerns voiced as early as 1932 about the long term sustainability of the policy, land subdivision became a principal aim of policy in rural areas; indeed the acceleration of this process was later regarded as a major “success,” of this administration (Varley 2004).

Significant as it may have been during this period, populist ideology was but one of a number of factors that shaped Irish rural policy. The move towards the mixed farm was also viewed, and presented as a progressive goal. The mixed small holding was regarded as the most “economic,” form of agricultural unit, a response to a range of practical issues that confronted the state at the time. Among other things it offered a solution to the continued practice by which much land was still held in exceptionally small scattered lots, the consolidated small holding was also seen as the means of effecting the positive redistribution of land formerly held in large estates. In the 1920’s and 1930’s concepts of autarchy and the significance of the rural idyll held considerable appeal internationally for governments across a wide spectrum of ideological perspectives⁴. Seen in this context the Irish drive to increase the class of small holders involved in mixed farming was very much in keeping with the less open global economy of the interwar period has resonances in the ideological promotion of the rural idyll in a number of states at this time. A more prosaic consideration also shaped rural policies during this period. This concerned disputes with the U.K. over the question of land annuities due to the British government under the land acts which emerged in 1932. This issue prompted both countries to introduce tariffs and other anti-competitive measures which significantly reduced the level of agricultural exports to the U.K. Of necessity this period saw greater levels of diversification in Irish agricultural and industry as national producers moved to fill the void created by restrictions on U.K. imports.

A further significant point also needs to be borne in mind, while the principle of supporting the “small man,” (Curtin and Varley 1991) became an important ideological goal of land reform and rural policy. In practice the populist ideas outlined in the Fianna Fail election platform were considerably watered down. It is notable that the policy of accelerating the subdivision policy and creating more smallholdings was carried through on the most

⁴ See for example Short (2006) p 142, Barry (2009)

substantial scale in the west of Ireland, due mainly to the fact that in the west there was more land to be subdivided. Populism thrived in areas where it was possible. The agricultural diversification that did occur, failed to change the dominant pattern of agricultural production which continued to be linked to beef and dairy production with the south producing calves, the west store cattle and sheep and the east cattle for export. This was a pattern that had more to do with the realities of the export trade than ideology, populist or otherwise. The best profits in this trade were in the production of cattle for export while the keeping of store cattle, the least profitable, was concentrated in the west the area with the smallest farm and the poorest quality land (See Barry 2009). Populist ideals did not affect the overall structure of agricultural production or the pre-eminence of beef production. If anything one of the most significant outcomes of land reform policies at this time was to exacerbate the situation whereby the Irish state was left with an unusual farm structure involving extensive pastoral farming on small holdings (Varley 2004) In the 1930's populism in Ireland attempted to do the impossible "*adopt a large farm style of agriculture on small family holdings.*" (Kennedy, Giblin and McHugh 1988 p 216). Despite its involvement in measures aimed at making fundamental changes in patterns of land ownership the states attitude towards existing patterns of trade and income distribution and economic development remained largely non-interventionist.

A number of apparently contradictory features can be identified when the policies concerning rural areas during this period are considered. The first is the continued support of the State for certain ideologically significant, if somewhat impractical programmes such as those concerning land division while also pursuing economic policies which continued to favour more substantial commercial agricultural concerns. For much of this period the state thus had a foot in two camps promoting the formation of small holdings and pursuing economic policies that made it difficult for these holdings to remain viable. Another and equally significant feature of national policy at the time was the tendency for the state to favour the retention of power at the centre and to focus primarily on the economic sphere. Local government was severely curtailed and input into policy making was restricted to the mechanisms of central government.

3.4 Catholic Social Teaching and the Voluntary Sector

Besides the developments in agricultural policy discussed above other important features of public administration at this time can be identified. Amongst them was the consolidation of the primacy of central government. Through the Department of Finance the state maintained tight control of public spending. The responsibility for allocating resources and formal policy making continued to be vested in public bodies organised on a national basis (Lee 1988, Jacobsen 1994). Regardless of his ideological significance a wariness on the part of senior policy makers to other sources of power ensured that outside of national elections the small man remained locked out of the policy making process. The power and influence of local government declined as successive governments adopted policies limiting their power, and considerably curtailing their functions⁵ (Barrington 1976, 1991, Callanan and Keogan 2003).

Another feature of national policy at this time was the states adoption of a limited role in the field of social policy. However in this respect the State's hesitancy was balanced by the ongoing enthusiasm of other institutions to maintain their role as major players in the provision of services in the areas of health, education and welfare. At this time the States position was in keeping with the views of many of these institutions including a wide range of voluntary and religious organisations which were deeply involved in delivering a range of social services. Many of these institutions were at that time deeply opposed to the extension of the role of the state beyond the economic sphere. For this reason the range of legislative and voluntary arrangements relating to social policy which the new State inherited were largely left in place and indeed expanded to strengthen what was a significant voluntary sector engaged in a wide range of activities. In many cases these organisations explicitly rejected the idea of state intervention. This was a tendency which was strengthened by the emergence of the concept of Catholic Social Teaching a doctrine which explicitly opposed state intervention. Such was the position exemplified in rural areas by Muintir na Tire (MnT)⁶ and the Credit Union movement (See Curtin and Varley 2002). As voluntary self-help initiatives both are viewed as a significant pre-cursor to current local development organisations. MnT

⁵The act of 1948 established the position of county manager a non-elected position with substantial powers of decision making (and spending) over wide areas of local authority responsibility.

⁶Literally the people of the land, an Irish rural community organisation which embraced many features of Catholic Social Teaching.

in particular promoted the idea that communities could initiate their own development independent of the state and initially opposed state intervention (Commins 1985).

In a brief historical survey it is not possible to provide in depth analysis of every twist and turn in public policy. It is at best possible to make general observations of trends within public policy which may offer some insight into the history of certain aspects of public policy. It is also possible to shed light on the wider issue of how policy making processes in general have operated in the past. Based on what has been presented above some observations about the course of public policy can be made. Firstly in this period, there is little evidence of any significant interest in the notion of State sponsored local or rural development policy. Words such as integrated, stakeholder and partnership were not employed. Voluntary bodies at the time received and indeed sought limited support from the state and jealously guarded their autonomy, nor did they press the State to expand its involvement in their areas of interest. Secondly it is clearly the case that the emergence of a specific ideological concept, that of the rural small holder engaged in mixed farming was of significance along with its practical expression in the shape of the policy of land subdivision. However there was nothing uniquely Irish about the small holding model, nor was it the case that such a policy was justified on the grounds of its economic sustainability or desirability in Ireland. Indeed the reality was that as early as 1932 there were doubts as to its economic viability. Concerns over the long-term viability of small farming had been raised from the policy's inception in 1932 and were again raised as in a 1938 government report on seasonal migration (Jacobsen 1994). There is nothing self-evident or rational about the adoption of this model for the organisation of agricultural production, rather the significance of the populist discourse of the small Irish farm arose out of the purposive activities of significant players in the political process who were at least partially successful in enrolling other actors in this project. A third point is that, significant as this ideological construct may have been, it did not arise and develop in isolation. Its emergence as an important policy theme drew on ideas that provided a range of supporting arguments to those who wished to promote the populist project. Fourthly despite its ideological significance the populist agenda was only partially implemented. The extent to which the policy of land redistribution was carried out was determined by practicality. Other related populist policy aspirations such as those relating to industrial dispersal were never seriously attempted. The drive towards increased self-sufficiency could be seen as much as a pragmatic response to external factors, and was at any rate only partially achieved.

Thus it is possible to distinguish the emergence of specific ideas relating to aspects of public policy which serve a role which are in some respects independent of or at the very least distinct from the reality of what occurs during the design and implementation of programmes. Of importance in this period was the growth of a concept of rural Ireland which came to shape ideas about such areas and the role of the State towards them. Though in the mid nineteen thirties there is little evidence that anyone depicted these events as a paradigm shift, as was the case with the later emergence of local development policies. The emergence of the populist agenda was presented as a major challenge to existing ideas and policies (Curtin and Varley 1991, Jacobsen 1994). Indeed in terms of its overall impact on the shape of future developments in rural Ireland, its effects on the landscape and on socio-economic relationships this was perhaps a much more substantial transition than that precipitated by the introduction of local development programmes in the 1990's. Even a brief consideration of this transition reveals a picture of how policies are made and changed which bears little resemblance to formal policy making models. It is possible to identify events during which certain actors succeed in enrolling sufficient others in supporting the emergence of a new dominating theme in policy discourse. In this case the theme is initially vested with a considerable degree of ideological value. Once the positive ideological merit of this theme is established positive arguments that strengthen and enhance this narrative are accepted while negative points are downplayed, a form of confirmation bias appears to come into play. Significantly, this appears to be the case even when the reports are produced by experts. In fact it would appear to be the case that the accuracy and reliability of reports such as that of the 1932 Finance Committee document referred to above are less significant than the question of whether or not they are compatible with the current dominating theme. In the case of the mixed farms there is evidence to suggest that this was presented as a practical solution to the problems of rural Ireland. A modern and equitable response to the problems facing rural areas, it was also an idea in keeping with international trends in economic policy at this time. Thus the primarily ideological goal of land subdivision was given a pragmatic rationale even while creating a system of agriculture with a questionable long term future.

While some researchers have pointed to the emergence of voluntary organisations and in particular Muintir Na Tire as precursors to more recent local development programmes, it is clearly the case that the most compelling result of public policy on the shape of rural Ireland was to establish patterns of agricultural practice, economic activity and state intervention that were to dominate the rural policy landscape up until the late 1950's. The problems this

pattern generated for small holders in certain areas was evidenced towards the latter end of this period. In 1952 a scheme of grant assistance to support agricultural improvement in designated areas was introduced. (Curtin and Varley 1991, Barry 2009). This scheme at least recognised that the development of all rural areas did not proceed evenly and that certain locations required additional state intervention. However the capacity of this policy to positively operate in favour of these disadvantaged areas was largely negated when following political pressures the scheme was extended to other areas of the country. Here we see another element of the Irish Policy Process that has a bearing on later efforts to introduce local development programmes; the tendency for targeted programmes to be extended to benefit more clients than was originally intended.

3.5 The shift to planned national development 1958-1970.

By the 1950's it was increasingly recognised that allowing agricultural production to proceed as it had done during the 30's and 40's was not delivering significant improvements in the national economy or indeed in the wellbeing of small-holders. While agriculture was still the country's most significant source of exports, following the Second World War the trade with the U.K. never again reached the levels it had achieved prior to the economic conflicts of the nineteen thirties and towards the end of this period the country was experiencing economic stagnation (Whittaker 1985, Kennedy, Giblin and McHugh 1988, Lee 1988). It was the pragmatic recognition of this failure that prompted the emergence of proposals that were to challenge the dominating narrative of policies that had been pursued since 1932. The year 1958 is often cited as a watershed in Irish public policy marking a shift to planned national development. According to T. K Whittaker (1986), one of the principal architects of this change in policy, this transformation was based on a recognition of four basic facts. These were that;

- 1- Protected manufacture for the home market would not increase employment.
- 2- Protected manufacturing could not maintain employment at acceptable wage rates.
- 3- Industry must be geared for export to create employment.
- 4- This could best be achieved through a free market and modernisation policies.

These factors contributed to a decision to move towards planned economic development policies. Protectionist policies were to be abandoned and a policy framework for the modernisation of the economy developed. The mechanism through which this was to be achieved was a series of economic plans of five years duration. These involved a re-orientation of state policy to allow for substantial state intervention to promote the growth of export oriented industries. The principal instruments of the new policies were to be fiscal and monetary measures, a combination of wage restraint, tax incentives and industrial investment controlled and managed by the Department of Finance. Decision making was rooted at national level with economic growth as the key objective, a fact reflected in the academic ideas the strategy drew on⁷. In terms of its impact on the shape of public administration the dominant trend in policy making supported the consolidation of the administrative practices of the past. New initiatives were planned and operated by government departments or national agencies. Where new bodies were established these tended to follow the centralised model, the Industrial Development Authority (I.D.A.) which was to take responsibility for the implementation of a large portion of industrial policy being the prime example.

There was also an obvious and clear difference between the political statements on rural life and emphasis on populist and protectionist policies that dominated in the 30's 40's and 50's and the agricultural modernisation programmes adopted during the 60's. If the principal feature of the previous period was a failure of policy to follow through on the sentiments expressed in political discourse; increasing the number of small farms in only certain areas and failing to ensure their economic sustainability, the modernisation programmes that were implemented from 1958 were driven by a new vision for the country. Agriculture was to modernise, specialise and ultimately rationalise while a larger proportion of the population would be employed in industry. Under the first five year plan the modernisation of agriculture to create a more productive, commercially geared agriculture formed the basis of state policy towards rural areas. It was perceived that price control policies then in place would in the long run place unacceptably high burdens on state expenditure (O'Hara and Commins 1991). Thus measures aimed at improving farming efficiency were proposed, through agricultural extension programmes and support for on-farm improvement. An

⁷ In Chapter 7 of his seminal work "Ireland, 1912-1985: Politics and Society," presents an in depth analysis of the limited market for ideas outside of economics in Irish public life (Lee 1988 pp 511- 687).

important aspect of this policy was to be the expansion of the cattle and dairy sectors. An increase in the production of beef for export was one of the principal results. Other significant achievements included the consolidation of the fragmented dairy co-operative sector and the introduction of a range of new technical innovations. Employment on farms declined as the minimum viable farm size increased throughout the 1960's.

However while the thrust of state policy was to encourage farming to become more commercial in many respects the approach adopted towards rural areas continued to reflect the tension identified above between ideological and pragmatic goals. While minimum viable farm size did increase and older farmers were encouraged to retire the extent of this transformation was limited. The state still attempted to keep a foot in both camps and to pay due homage to the farming household. Specific debates relating to rural development policy emerged in the 1960's (Commins 1985, 1991, Commins and O'Hara 1991, Varley 1991) as the changes in agricultural policy made it increasingly clear that agriculture alone would not meet the needs of rural areas (Commins 1985, 1991, O'Grada and O'Rourke 1996). In part such measures can be understood as the states response to the negative impact of its drive to commercialise agriculture on rural communities. The move towards a more commercially geared and export oriented agriculture put more pressure on small producers whose marginal position meant that they lacked the capacity to compete with larger producers. The emergence of rural development as an issue, particularly during the periods of the second and third economic development plan thus coincided with a period when the tension between agricultural modernisation and small farming was being increasingly resolved in favour of the former. Rural development and the creation of alternatives to conventional farming were presented as potential solutions to the declining fortunes of smaller farmers. However it was very much the case that the main thrust of national development policy continued to place emphasis on the importance of commercial agriculture (Daly 2002). Modernisation programmes that inevitably led to rationalisation in the farming sector were introduced and rural development began to be discussed as a means of addressing the problem of rural decline in this context (Reynolds 1993).

In 1962, an interdepartmental committee on rural decline was established. The committee recommended the creation of development groups at county level. It was thought that as part of teams, devoted to addressing issues in the county the staff involved in different agencies would feel a greater sense of commitment and a greater level of co-ordination could be

achieved. This led to the initial formation of county development teams (C.D.T's) in 1963 with the informal establishment of teams in a number of western counties. The teams included the County Manager, County Council Chairman, County Engineer, and relevant officials of other agencies. It was further proposed that County Development Officers be appointed, as executives to the CDT seconded from the Department of Finance (Reynolds 1993). Whilst they had a general brief to oversee and co-ordinate development initiatives in their counties the C.D.T's were granted no powers to direct the work of agencies in their area. The emphasis was to be on fostering greater co-operation and co-ordination of existing agencies. The C.D.T's thus had limited powers. Their capacity to implement a co-ordinated local development strategy or effect horizontal linkage between the activities of different organisations at county level was limited.

In the second national plan launched in 1964 rural development enjoyed increased prominence meriting its own chapter albeit that plans for rural development were framed in the context of agricultural restructuring (Commins and O'Hara 1991). Under the umbrella of rural development this plan called for measures in rural diversification such as rural tourism, and raised the minimum size of holdings desirable to 45 acres. It also provided measures to encourage older farmers to retire in the hope of freeing land for use in improving farm structure. In the 1964 plan rural development was still very much seen as an adjunct to agricultural policy. The principal body in rural development policy was to be the Department of Agriculture. However the recognition of a need for a rural development policy did lead to the C.D.T's being placed on a formal footing. A Central Development Committee was established in the Department of Finance charged with co-ordinating the county teams. The committee also had responsibility for the administration of a new Western Development Fund. The fund was to be allocated by C.D.T's in the form of grant aid.

Whilst the C.D.T's were expected to contribute to the development of their respective counties and to encourage other organisations to co-operate at county level, however their powers were limited. Even the staffing of the post of county development officers suggests the potential for dilution of the CDT's role. The County Development Officers were employees of the Department of Finance and as such they had different terms of employment to those of county council officials. While the CDT's were to encourage better co-ordination, there is little evidence to suggest that they were successful in achieving this. Instead the CDT's were to become additional bodies comprised of representatives of the local state

established in parallel to existing organisations. The C.D.T's became new players whose main role in local development was to allocate grants in isolation from other organisations.

3.6 Economic Growth and Regional Development

In addition to the introduction of the County Development Teams the second plan also proposed a movement towards a regional industrial development strategy. This was a partial recognition of the fact that national programmes had failed to deliver evenly distributed industrial development. In 1965 the government attempted to implement this strategy, designating, Galway and Waterford as new industrial growth centres. The third plan proposed a further move towards regional development and in particular to western development. However the aspirations of the third plan were never fully carried through into a regional development policy. Thus while both the 1964 and 1969 plans incorporated a regional dimension, in practice the government implemented what Curtin and Varley described as a dual approach (Curtin and Varley 1991), attempting to attract foreign investment to designated centres while increasing the number of centres so designated. The reason for the expansion in the number of centres was primarily related to local political demands. It is interesting to note that while the state retained central control over the instruments guiding development policy and appears to have remained reluctant to replace existing arrangements with regional or local bodies, the policy process remained open to the political influence of elected representatives at national level. While the state avoided devolving substantial powers to sub national bodies the political context allowed for involvement of political representatives in the way policies were implemented, further extending the scope for national politicians to exercise patronage. The perception that new developments could be in the gift of elected representatives reinforced their position at constituency level.

In 1968 a report entitled "*Regional Studies in Ireland*" (Buchanan 1968) was drawn up in an attempt to address some of the regional disparities that arose in the previous five year plans periods. This document, which came to be known as the "Buchanan Report" after the consultant who drafted it, argued the case for a small number of regional growth centres. However as previously noted the state opted to retain a dual approach claiming to implement a regional development policy whilst increasing the number of regional centres to the point where the policy became meaningless. Those advocating a more planned regional approach

met stiff opposition from existing agencies, politicians and public servants hostile to the potential weakening of central authority and their position (Curtin and Varley 1986, O’Cearbháill and Varley 1988). While regional strategies are characterised by horizontal linking between different policies at the regional level and the delivery of higher inputs to areas suffering under-development (Cappelin 2002), neither the second or third plans proposed a major effort to diffuse decision-making. Indeed at its very best the recommendations of the Buchanan Report would have introduced a system of planned regional investment under central control. The principal mechanism through which this would be achieved was to be the I.D.A. which would supervise the dispersal of industry across a number of locations. Despite its promise as a means of addressing spatial inequalities in the pace of development by fostering growth in the smaller cities and towns together with their rural hinterlands this particular attempt at regional development was limited to being a component of national industrial policy.

3.8 False starts and broken promises.

The events discussed in the previous two sections occurred during a period when five year plans were operated by the State as it endeavoured to introduce a new economic policy based on planned programmes that would open up the economy, promote international trade and foster economic development. In essence the state adopted a new modernising national project. As the previous section suggests the aims of these plans was at least partially achieved. In practical terms while the adoption of policies in which some concept of rural and/or regional development was included in the national plans discussed above, they were not carried through on a large scale. Even those limited initiatives promoting rural and regional development in the 1960’s were watered down (O’Hara and Commins 1991). Attempts at local and regional development introduced during this period were primarily alterations to elements of national development programmes. Regional policies were not matched with the introduction of regional mechanisms to allow for the integration of different sectoral programmes into a regional, local or rural development effort. Initial plans for the strategic focussing of resources in selected locations became a generalised effort to disperse new industries over a host of areas. Thus a key feature of attempts to introduce regional and local development policies in Ireland during this period was a lack of proposals for organisations with genuine power at sub-national level. Local authorities continued to

have limited power and the central thrust of government policy focussed on broad national goals.

Since this study primarily focuses on the field of local development there is an almost inescapable tendency to overstate the significance of those elements of former programmes that sought to address these issues. However in practical terms it is probably fair to say that the significance of such activities during this period cannot be understated. This was a period of increased economic growth and industrial employment during which levels of immigration were reduced and the volume and value of agricultural production increased. While in more recent times the presence of "uneven development" and the question of generating sustainable rural alternatives to the type of decline associated with growth in national agricultural productivity form part of the basis for arguments in favour of a new alternative rural development paradigm. The specific difficulties of marginalised rural areas at this time were largely interpreted as the inevitable side effects of national policies that were aimed at achieving greater national productivity, a necessary outcome for those working within a modernisation perspective. In the 1960's regional and rural development policies emerged only as an adjunct to the states adoption of a modernising agenda. Where applied at all notions of regional development principally applied to the dispersal of industry (Curtin and Varley 1986). The concept of rural development was adopted in referring to a range of measures to complement agricultural modernisation or to ameliorate some of the "collateral damage" caused by agricultural modernisation policies (See for example O'Hara and Commins 1991). While numerous commentators have noted the moves made towards regional and local development policy the period promised more than it delivered, efforts at regional and rural development policy remained on the margins with limited scope and resources.

In relation to the questions addressed in this study the significance of the way in which these policies were worked out lies in the light that an examination of these developments throws on the way in which policy discourse developed over a critical period during which fundamental shifts in the formal elements of economic and social development policy occurred. As in the early 1930's the shift toward planned development has been generally billed as a highly significant moment in the evolution of Irish Policy. Adopting the five year plans has been outlined in detail elsewhere and while it is not the purpose of this chapter to examine them in detail there are a number of points of relevance to the question of how

policies come to be adopted. Firstly it is clear that certain events in the late nineteen fifties created conditions which made such a change possible. As in 1932 there was a broad level of political dissatisfaction with the status quo. The new dominant theme of planned economic development entered policy discourse as a pragmatic response to accumulating economic pressures. It was these practical issues which underlay the removal of earlier policies which emphasised the small farm and protected domestic industry and their replacement by policies that placed a new focus on enhancing national competitiveness and economic growth, boosting industrial employment and dismantling trade barriers.

Sweeping as these changes were, almost as significant were the things that didn't change. Firstly it is clear that though new policies which were introduced, the primary mechanisms for delivering these programmes remained under tight central government controlled. The work of redirecting public policy fell primarily on those departments and agencies which had been responsible for implementing the previous policies and much of the pre-existing administrative infrastructure remained in place. Where new agencies were created they generally adhered to this pattern and were almost universally established as national bodies. Thus despite the fact that the new policies introduced at this time involved significant changes in national economic and agricultural policies a key feature of their administration was that control was retained at the centre. Indeed this period is often cited as one during which the State's prestige and competence to steer economic and social development was enhanced. The State, in particular the Lemass government and a small group of public servants have historically been credited with instigating changes which were instrumental in "modernising" Ireland (See Whitaker 1986, Lee 1988, Murphy 2003). Regardless of the accuracy of this view, there can be little doubt that it succeeds in presenting their role in a positive light. While it may be true that the consequences of the planned economic development programmes resulted in significant growth in the level of industrial employment, agricultural output and urbanisation these changes were instigated in reaction to a worsening economic situation in an effort to stop an on-going decline that was reaching crisis point (O'Grada and O'Rourke 1996). The alternative to adopting these measures was viewed as further decline.

Throughout this period the State appeared to be caught between a desire to boost national growth and the important ideological goal of distributing the benefits of growth to the rural hinterland. Initiatives such as the C.D.T's and regional development strategies were intended

to promote a better geographical distribution of new economic activities. Yet their introduction occurred at the same time as other policies were being pursued which had objectives that ran counter to those of these programmes. Attempts to introduce regional development strategies at this time and the experience of the C.D.T's also appears to indicate the presence of other tendencies or indeed policy habits that were present in relation to previous policies affecting rural areas. One of these is the tendency of the state to limit the degree of local autonomy over development programmes. Regional development strategies were for all intents and purposes parts of national economic development programmes while the C.D.T's were staffed by employees of the department finance, had few powers and little influence. Noticeable too was the states tendency to succumb to political pressure by increasing the areas covered by these spatial programmes until they became what were effectively national programmes. As in previous periods the main emphasis on policy remained fixed on producing national solutions to national problems and while there were some very limited efforts to address some of the issues that would later become the focus of local development programmes. Such measures were generally of a piecemeal nature running alongside national policies with at times conflicting goals. While the second and third five year plans in particular outlined such proposals these were not effectively implemented for this combination of reasons.

Despite what were regarded as significant successes in achieving national growth during this period and the State's limited efforts to introduce some element of regional development, subsequent events indicate that there was a growing level of dissatisfaction with the State's performance in relation to the specific needs of marginalised areas in the emergence of the Gaeltacht Civil Rights Movement (GCRM). The GCRM reflected growing levels of discontent amongst the Gaeltacht population with the policies being pursued in relation to both Gaeltacht development and the treatment of the Irish language. Having reorganised itself through the formation of community councils MnT also began to voice demands for additional support for its activities. Speaking of its relationship with the State in terms of a "partnership" and calling for state support for its brand of what it was now beginning to call community development. The activities of MnT gained a degree of recognition with a 1971 proposal to support the formation of local development councils (Varley 1991). This and earlier proposals by the state allowed for recognition and limited assistance to be made available to such councils. This measure was taken up only on a limited basis and the degree of state support afforded to local councils (in effect local MnT groups) was minimal. The

increased activites of MnT and the emergence of the GCRM suggest this period remained one in which proposals for local development founded, leaving little more than a paper trail of false starts and broken promises. At best they appear to have functioned as a band aid measure which never challenged the dominant theme of planned economic development. Indeed such measures as were introduced ran alongside these national programmes. Ideas about local rural and community development remained peripheral to the overall thrust of Irish public policy. With these exceptions there was an absence of movement toward state policies that embodied or encouraged local participation. The planning processes pursued during the 1960's came to an end with a change of government in 1971 and was effectively abandoned (Lee 1988). International economic conditions worsened reducing the scope for growth and improvements in living standards based on expansionary policies. Of more significance however to the area of rural development was Irelands entry into the then E.E.C. in 1973 an event that was to have a pivotal impact on State policy towards rural areas in the republic of Ireland.

3.9 Honeymooners ?- E.E.C Membership and the common agricultural policy 1973-1980.

The literature on E.E.C has expanded exponentially ever since Irelands accession and with it the analysis of the effects of membership, both good and bad have become ever more labyrinthine. However despite the increasing complexity of the views expressed on this subject, there is little doubt that in 1973 for rural areas the single most important impact of E.E.C membership was the introduction of farm income supports as part of the Common Agricultural Policy (C.A.P). These provided a range of price supports, forced farm prices upwards and improved levels of farm income. The existence of C.A.P incentives provided the impetus for an accelerated drive toward agricultural modernisation. This strategy was adopted with the broad support of farmers and those involved in agricultural policy design and implementation. During this time the C.A.P and other E.E.C supports came to be seen as the principal means by which rural issues were to be addressed (Commins and O'Hara 1991). It is scarcely surprising that, initially at least, in this context the idea of rural development remained very much a side issue. The primary policy strategy in rural areas became that of enhancing farm efficiency to maximise the production of certain products for which the E.E.C guaranteed prices. A virtuous circle linking the interests of farmers, the Department and Agriculture, farm advisory services and the credit institutions emerged. There can be

little doubt too, that despite the retrospective critiques of the C.A.P, it was at the time regarded positively by many of the actors connected to the field of agriculture as an effective policy, something that often appears to have gone unrecognised by later researchers and policy as they have added to the post facto chorus of condemnation that surrounds the early years of the C.A.P⁸.

Amongst the major impacts of this policy regime was the increase in capital inputs in farming (NESC 1995). In the 1960's the expressed aim of policy was to achieve a fundamental shift in Ireland's agricultural base, altering the mixed farm model through the consolidation of agricultural production in larger more productive and less labour intensive specialist units. However despite three five year plans, in 1973 Irish agriculture remained dominated to a significant extent by small holdings albeit with some trimming of numbers and an increase in average farm size. In one sense therefore the C.A.P could be said to have added significant impetus to the movement to increase productivity by providing incentives for farmers to invest in and increase production of certain commodities. However the fact the C.A.P did this through a price support mechanism that meant that even smaller farms could continue to operate in these sectors. Thus the C.A.P price supports created a dilemma for policy makers. The subsidies rewarded productivity, favouring larger and more efficient farms on better land (Breen et al 1990). Simultaneously smaller producers became increasingly dependent on subsidies as a source of income. The C.A.P had the effect of sustaining large numbers of small farms in agricultural practices that were unviable outside of the price support structure (Shortall 2002, Crowley 2003). Thus the C.A.P enabled the state to maintain, albeit temporarily, the practice of large scale farming on small holdings.

⁸In this regard we can speak of the many researchers who put themselves in the post-modern and post-productivist camps or otherwise argue that rural areas have or are undergoing a transition and can no longer be regarded as a factory floor for agriculture. This is a recurring theme in the literature (See for example NESC 1995, McDonagh 2001, O'Connor et al 2006, OECD 2006). In fact it could be argued that it is one of the most consistent features of debates about the nature of development of rural areas over the past thirty years, a major feature of which has been the sundering of the rural from agricultural studies. A common feature of much of this work is its stress on discontinuity, the idea that things have changed and that this constitutes a significant break with the past. Van Der Ploeg, (1992, 1993, 2003) has done admirable work in contesting these views challenging the “newness,” of many post-productivist ideas about rural areas, as well as questioning the validity of the idea that farm production ever corresponded with the productivist “factory floor,” conjured by many researchers.

For the Irish administration the tendency towards centralisation in managing rural affairs was not initially altered by EEC membership. Most of the supports administered under the CAP were the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture and it alongside other national bodies controlled the allocation of E.E.C funds⁹. The responsibility for administering the price supports under the CAP was vested nationally in the Department of Agriculture. National policies were dictated by a desire to track the requirements of E.E.C and later E.U. policy in order to maximise draw-downs of CAP funds.

In a context in which the availability of price supports were perceived as a means of maintaining farm income, it is perhaps understandable that wider rural development issues and concerns over sustainability were submerged. Thus in a period when wider economic policies effected overall increases in wealth nationally any nascent interest in regional and local development issues appears to have receded from the interests of policy makers. Measures to counter the disparities in economic performance at regional and local level that were proposed in the 1960's were either weakened or discontinued. The I.D.A. persisted with its policy of encouraging inward investment into locations outside of Dublin and Cork but such investments failed to generate wider regional economic growth. Some aspects of policy with a local development component did emerge as exceptions to the policy rules of the time; however they remained relatively peripheral aspects of overall policy. For rural areas the early years of Ireland's involvement with the E.U. constituted an extended honeymoon period. The price support regime introduced under the common agricultural policy effectively assured significant year on year increases in farm income and safeguarded the earning potential of smallholders. In these conditions any nascent interest on the states part in extended rural development was significantly reduced.

⁹ This situation enabled successive Irish Governments and state officials to pose as strong supporters of regionalism in the E.U. while maintaining centralised control over E.E.C and later E.U programmes in the “region,” of Ireland.

3.10 Reform and Recession and the Unemployment Crisis

While the period between 1973 and 1980 saw little movement in relation to rural policy. The early 1980's saw substantial changes in the economic and political situation which led to a significant expansion in the sector. Chief amongst these factors was a significant decline in the economic position in the Republic of Ireland with a severe recession which substantially increased levels of economic hardship. Unemployment reached what were popularly regarded as crisis levels, the effects of which were experienced in particular urban and rural localities. Demands for action on this issue grew. In addition political and economic factors were turning against the expansive interventions embodied in the C.A.P. As the decade pressed the calls to reform the C.A.P grew. The sum effect of these events was to create a demand for programmes to address the various problems facing different localities. Such demands were manifest not only in formal politics but in the emergence or increased activities of community organisations. Besides established bodies such as the GCRM and MnT this included a number of new and sometimes more radical voices drawing on the ideas and experiences of British community work. As a result this period saw a considerable growth in the nature and extent of community activism. As O'Cinneide and Walsh suggest this was a period of multiplication and division as a number of initiatives were introduced by a range of State bodies supporting an increasingly diverse community sector in both urban and rural Ireland (1990). As will be seen a pivotal role in this process was played by the availability of E.U. funds.

Among the many programmes three sets of interventions are discussed here these are the introduction of Udaras Na Gaeltacht, The first Combat Poverty Programme and Employment and Training Programmes funded through the European Structural Funds (E.S.F).

Udaras Na Gaeltacht

The ongoing campaigning of GCRM finally bore fruit in 1980 with the creation of Udaras Na Gaeltacht (UnG). This body was intended to assume the role of Gaeltarra Eireann the body responsible for directing development in the Gaeltacht. Udaras was a partially democratic body with a thirteen member board including six representatives of statutory organisations and seven representatives elected directly by the Gaeltacht's inhabitants. This revised board

structure assumed the Role of Gaeltarra Eireann and was also given some of the functions undertaken by the Government Department with responsibility for the Gaeltacht (Roinn Na Gaeltacht).

From the outset this revised structure for handling Gaeltacht affairs assumed a wide socio-economic development role concerning not only economic development but also a range of social and cultural issues. At least in theory UnG was positioned to co-ordinate development activities as an integrated package addressing a range of development issues both economic and social. It was also empowered to support local development organisations in the Gaeltacht areas. It could be argued that UnG, featuring as it does local participation in decision making, responsibility for a range of social and economic activities and a commitment to community based development embodied many of the attributes later associated with the new local development paradigm. However the actual experience of UnG's operation in the years after its formation suggests that its success in this regard was questionable.

The relationship that UnG enjoys with other forms of local organisation in the Gaeltacht community has also been ambiguous. By the beginning of the 1980's and partly as a result of the introduction of UnG, the campaigning strategies of the GCRM were being replaced as the basis for community activity in Gaeltacht areas by local development organisations with the formation of development co-operatives and associations. While both Udaras and the Department indicated a commitment to local development and offered financial support to the new co-operatives and other entities their relationship with community based groups has not always been harmonious (Breathnach 1985, Varley 1991, Walsh 1998).

The outcome of two forms of assistance offered to such groups in the Gaeltacht area was examined in an analysis carried out by Tony Varley (1991). These were; the administration and grant scheme operated by the Department of the Gaeltacht and the Community Development Competition run by Udaras Na Gaeltacht. While Varley found the Departments grant scheme to be an "exemplary measure" which had a decisive impact in fostering the development of local organisations, he contrasts it with the Scottish grant system concluding that the latter with its more extensive range of supports went further than the Gaeltacht scheme which was principally restricted to the provision of financial support under strict guidelines. In relation to the community development competition run by Udaras Na

Gaeltacht, he drew attention to a boycott of this scheme in 1981. Varley highlighted what he considered to be a major underlying cause of this protest. A lack of clear Udaras policy for the Gaeltacht co-ops', neither their capacity for practical action nor their ability to represent their communities was given any recognition by the state (Varley 1991). This dissent indicated that the presence of a directly elected element on the Udaras Board had not proved successful as a mechanism for encouraging local input into development. As early as 1986 a study by Breathnach showed that sixty three per cent of those interviewed didn't feel that the local representatives on the Udaras board had any power while only ten per cent felt that Udaras had more power to influence local development, than its predecessors. The findings of this study indicate that the majority of the population in the areas studied associate Udaras solely with its industrial development role (Breathnach 1986).¹⁰

Outside of Irish speaking areas other set of state sponsored local development initiatives existed in little more than shadow form. The C.D.T's remained in existence commanding only limited resources and no real powers to promote the co-ordination of services. Their main role continued to be that of allocating grant aid. Boylan and Lynch found that during the period 1981-1985 the grants became increasingly discretionary in format, the boards concentrated on smaller allocations of funding that could be made without referral to the central development committee (Boylan and Lynch in Varley, Boylan and Cuddy 1991). C.D.T. grant assistance increasingly came to be seen as a fund for very small enterprise projects. Over the period 1981-85 1,147 projects were funded of which the county development teams claimed that 828¹¹ were still in operation in 1986. Approximate estimates based on the C.D.T's own information indicate that the overall administrative expenses incurred in running the programme far outweighed actual grants. In the period examined £2.8 million was allocated in grant assistance or just over £41,500 per C.D.T. while the cost of administering the scheme was £3.1 million in the same period. Even when this expenditure is included the total spend on CDT's in this period was just over £89,200 per C.D.T. a tiny fraction of overall state expenditure.

¹⁰ Only 6% of those interviewed indicated an awareness of its function in relation to the Irish language and culture in the Gaeltacht region

¹¹ No evidence was presented to indicate that the survival of these projects was due to CDT finance.

The first Combat Poverty Programme

While E.E.C membership impacted primarily on the economic sphere, the E.E.C did provide funds for an anti-poverty programme. In Ireland this initially took the form of the first Programme to Combat Poverty. The programme was launched in 1976 with the initiation of a number area-based projects. Each employed a team overseen by a board which incorporated local interests and representatives of statutory bodies and was given resources and the scope to design and implement anti-poverty initiatives. The teams were to conduct extensive monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

The staffing of these projects included researchers and staff from outside of the traditional public service. Many of those employed were familiar with the Community Development Programme undertaken in the U.K. While rural locations were included, the bias in the first Programme to Combat Poverty was towards smaller areas in the larger cities, in particular Dublin (CWC 1991). Nationally a group was established with responsibility for collating the results of the projects and identifying possible policy applications this unit was also based in Dublin. As in the case of the U.K. C.D.P programme the first combat poverty programme rapidly found itself in a dilemma. While funded by the E.E.C. and government, some staff became involved in research which was critical of the State and its policies. Tensions emerged between the desire to encourage a critical awareness of policy issues in communities and the need to engage with the state to achieve practical results. While this programme was widely described in evaluations as being successful in raising the level of awareness as regards poverty amongst policy makers after the E.E.C ceased to support the project financially the initial response of government was to suspend the programme. One undoubted effect of this programme noted in the literature was the establishment of a new body of community workers and researchers who developed a distinct approach to community development in urban Ireland. While rural community organisations had generally functioned outside of an overtly ideological framework, the field of urban community development drew on the experience of the British CDP and action research theory, with greater emphasis being placed on ideological issues and the need to influence policy.

The Youth Employment Crisis: AnCO, FAS and the YEA

By the beginning of the 1980's as economic conditions worsened a perception began to emerge that the Republic of Ireland faced an economic crisis requiring additional state intervention in the areas of job creation and local development. The early to mid-1980's thus saw the piecemeal emergence of a number of training and employment schemes launched as a result of concerns over high unemployment in the early 1980's and what some commentators later described as the accompanying "moral panic"¹² around the question of youth unemployment, with consequent demands that the state be seen to respond. In 1981 concerns over the rate of youth unemployment in particular led to the introduction of a youth employment levy and the creation of the YEA (youth employment agency)¹³. Along with AnCO, the national organisation with responsibility for industrial training the YEA developed a number of initiatives aimed at providing training and employment opportunities to the unemployed. Some explicitly required the participation of community based groups in the role of "sponsors," of programmes of what were chiefly small scale amenity projects and public works. These included such programmes as the Community Youth Training Programme (CYTP)¹⁴ which placed young people as trainees on projects and the YEA's Community Enterprise Programme. This scheme provided assistance to voluntary groups to develop economically sustainable projects and create employment.

¹² A number of economists have argued that the panic over the levels of unemployment amongst under twenty five year olds at the time didn't justify the level of disquiet expressed. They have questioned both the efficacy and policy rationale underlying the special measures introduced then (Walsh 1985, 2004).

¹³In response to public concerns about the scale of youth unemployment a 1% levy on income was introduced by the government. The funds obtained were used to fund the new youth employment agency. This agency was to introduce specific measures to combat youth unemployment. The agency staff included a number of people with experience of local and community based programmes.

¹⁴This programme was intended to provide training for young people in a practical setting; local organisations could apply to have projects supported under the scheme. FAS paid an allowance to young people to work on the scheme whilst the community paid the wages of a foreman or supervisor and also paid for the materials used in the project. In the main the projects undertaken through C.Y.T.P projects involved a construction or restoration project although the scheme was also used to support projects involving theatre, art, tourism and heritage.

In 1988 AnCO, Manpower¹⁵ and the Y.E.A. were amalgamated to form FAS, a new organisation with responsibility for industrial training, employment placement services and a number of employment programmes. Many of the initiatives started by the YEA and AnCO were continued in the period following amalgamation and FAS continued and indeed extended upon the role of its predecessors. While the scale and exact nature of this involvement changed substantially over the years FAS was to become perhaps the most significant player in local development in this period. Among the most significant schemes operated by FAS was the Social Employment Scheme (S.E.S) which later became the Community Employment Scheme (C.E.). At its height this programme involved in excess of forty thousand participants. As with the CYTP this scheme involved a project sponsored by a local group. The schemes introduced were not primarily intended as community development initiatives but rather as an attempt to deal with large scale unemployment. They were also eligible for support from the E.E.C under the umbrella of the European Social Fund (E.S.F), as training schemes or social measures. Despite the very limited role that community development formally played in these schemes, the emergence of these programmes led to the formation of a significant number of community organisations to act as scheme sponsors. In addition to which they contributed significant state resources through the provision of labour and funding to community projects. In more recent times the C.E. schemes have been used as a means of supporting the staff of projects with a more specific local and community development focus. These programmes were thus great significance in terms of both rural and community development during this period and were instrumental in establishing a precedent of widespread state involvement in local development¹⁶.

Regardless of these programmes this period saw little in the way of formal attempts by the state to promote or initiate local development policies. In relation to rural areas in particular, any concerns relating to rural development had been largely superseded by the overriding significance of the C.A.P. The Irish State continued to concentrate its efforts on promoting a style of agriculture which was increasingly commercialised and for the smaller holders increasingly unsustainable outside of this policy structure. Other issues did stimulate a growth in local development initiatives, in particular the emergence of a range of schemes

¹⁵Manpower was established in 1971 and was the state employment service tasked with responsibility for placing people in jobs or training.

¹⁶ Following controversies over funding irregularities the government announced its intention to dissolve FAS in 2011

that arose in response to increased levels of unemployment. Rather than a co-ordinated local development policy a situation emerged in which ad hoc measures were introduced as a response to the unemployment “crisis,” tailored to match the criteria of E.S.F. funding emerged. These criteria were thus pivotal in shaping the way in which these activities were undertaken.

While the 1980’s undoubtedly saw an increase in the level of community activity State policy in this area retained many of the features of previous eras. The programmes continued to be implemented alongside other policies with radically different objectives. They were introduced in a piecemeal way as temporary responses to specific external push and pull factors. There is little evidence of a desire to develop coherent local development policies and the state maintained the practice of retaining power in the centre. While UnG appears to have been an exception to this rule it was just that, an exception. Indeed during a decade that saw a significant rise in the level of local development activity the fact that this was the only body that was granted substantial powers and a statutory role exemplifies the limited commitment the state displayed towards the sector.

Taken as a whole and despite the wide range of policies and interventions introduced the history of the State’s approach to the development of rural areas has been remarkably consistent. In the main policies concerning rural areas have focussed on the economic sphere and in many cases more specifically focus on agriculture. In most instances such policies have been formulated at national level and implemented through national bodies with control retained at the centre. Equally the states attitude towards local development is also consistent. When attempted they have been consistently denied power and under resourced. The consideration of policies affecting rural areas outlined in this chapter thus reveals features of these polices recurrent characteristics which appear to reassert themselves in different policies. The final section of this chapter seeks to identify these patterns with a view to establishing what if any role they may have played in the later introduction of local development programmes.

3.11 Local Development Past and Present

This chapter has presented a brief overview of the historical context in which the emergence of local development strategies in rural areas in the Republic of Ireland is situated. The reason for undertaking such a review is not simply to provide additional information about the historical involvement of the Irish State in local development issues but also to identify the processes through which the admissibility of certain forms of policy discourse are made possible. In this final part of the chapter attention is given to what this historical data indicates about the practices through which those involved in the policy making process contribute to creating the conditions in which certain forms of discourse emerge. While it often appears to be the case that interpretations of the development of policy evolve in a specific “policy space,” in which debates and decisions are driven by specific policy considerations (See for example O’Connor et al 2006), it is clearly the case that when considered as evidence of underlying social practices the data presented above suggests that policy is constructed in broader social fields which incorporate both formal and informal ideas and knowledge (Nuitjen 2003). Moreover as time progresses the categories employed in policy discourse to demarcate specific issues and objects as the province of a specific policy change, such as for example the re-designation of distinct rural and agricultural development policies (Van Der Ploeg 2003). One issue that can be identified in the review outlined above is the distinction between styles of policy which have favoured the development of Ireland’s rural areas through land re-distribution, support for the small farmer, dispersed industry and other policies which have focused on the need to encourage modernisation and free trade. The existence of these conflicting tendencies has generated contradictions in the Irish state’s approach to rural areas. This has in turn led some researchers to speak of an “unresolved tension,” between two perspectives on Ireland that of rural development and productionist agriculture (O’Connor 2006). In the period immediately following independence the new state supported policies of land reform that stimulated the development of more farms as was manifest in the 1923 and later land acts¹⁷. However land reform policy did not initially affect the existing shape of trade. The emergence of Fianna Fail as a party of government is widely viewed as having resulted in the growth of a populist dimension in Irish public policy as this government adopted the ideologically driven policy

¹⁷ This act made possible the compulsory purchase for subdivision into small holdings of remaining leasehold land (Kennedy, Giblin and McHugh 1988).

goal of supporting the creation of more small, mixed farms. While the policies of the pre-war and emergency Fianna Fail governments fostered the creation of small farms they failed to ensure their sustainability. As early as 1952 a programme to provide grant assistance for farm improvement was introduced, initially targeted at specific areas. The beneficial effects of this programme were diluted when under political pressure the programme was extended to a larger number of areas. Amongst the outcomes of the promotion of this style of land ownership was that it vested the small farm with a deep ideological significance despite concerns being raised as regards the future economic well-being of rural areas.

The introduction of the first of a series of five year economic plans in 1958 saw moves towards a more commercial agriculture. This meant reductions in farm numbers and a greater degree of exposure to market forces for those employed in industry. The context in which rural development policies were proposed during the nineteen sixties, was one in which there was a recognition that this new modernised agriculture would have negative implications for numbers of farmers (Commins and O'Hara 1991). The rural development initiatives which emerged did so in tandem with, rather than as an alternative to policies geared towards agricultural modernisation. Indeed taking the CDT's as an example the resources allocated to such initiatives were small when compared to the levels of expenditure on the principal policy agenda of modernisation. Another feature of development policy at the time was that attempts at regional development largely failed as the regional features of these policies was diluted as a result of political pressure.

Following Ireland's accession to the E.E.C. the policy response was to embark on an agricultural policy which focussed on boosting agricultural production. With the presence of the C.A.P price support regime, ideas about local development became regarded as largely peripheral to the overall thrust of government policy in rural areas. Amongst the most significant events relating to local development policy occurring during this period was the emergence of a variety of employment and training schemes introduced in a piecemeal fashion in response to rising unemployment. In many cases these had the effect of stimulating higher levels of community activity through the formation of local committees which acted as sponsors on various local projects supported through FAS managed employment and training programmes. Of note here is the tendency for community groups and state officials to respond in an opportunistic way to the introduction of new funds

resulting in what appears from the perspective of those involved in policy debates to be a piecemeal and uncoordinated array of programmes (See O'Cearbhaill 1991, Bond 1994)

What this evidence suggests is that in formulating policies in relation to specific areas it is possible for the State to pursue a variety of separate and possibly even conflicting policy objectives. One consistent feature of State policy towards rural areas has been the maintenance of a sharp demarcation between mainstream agricultural policy as overseen by the Department of Agriculture and other policies affecting the development of such areas. The Department of Agriculture concentrated on the development of commercial agriculture in relative isolation from wider social and economic issues affecting rural areas. By contrast the initiatives in the broader field of local and rural development have only been attempted haphazardly through a patchwork of measures attempted on an occasional basis in response to particular emergent policy "crises".

In addition it is also clear that in large part and regardless of whatever claims were made on the part of the various small regional, local and rural development programmes that have been sporadically introduced, the Irish State has tended to adhere to the practice of implementing such initiatives through national bodies. With rare exceptions such as the C.D.T's neither local government nor local communities groups have been looked upon as potential mechanisms for the administration of state development policy. Indeed even in the case of the C.D.T's the state went to considerable trouble to ensure that the control of this programme was retained at the centre with the introduction of a national committee with oversight over the local teams. In addition or perhaps as a consequence of this, issues relating to economic sectors have dominated policy rather than issues relating to the problems affecting geographical areas.

In some respects the review undertaken in this chapter confirms some of the claims of those who described the emergence of new local development programmes at the end of the 1980's as constituting the emergence of a new paradigm. Previous state initiatives in the field of local development were small in scale and limited in ambition. They were implemented in a piecemeal way by different departments and often as adjuncts to other policies. As such it is difficult to interpret the various efforts to introduce rural and local development policies as anything other than at best intermittent attempts to respond to specific issues, or in the case of some later programmes opportunities as they emerged. The main point is that such policies

emerged as contingent responses to events. There is little in the way of formal documentation to suggest that these policies have contributed to an incremental body of institutional learning on local development policy a problem exacerbated by the fact that at no time have such policies operated under the supervision of a single department. The kind of formal feedback mechanisms most emphasised in the policy cycle are absent, and there is little in the way of observable patterns of policy formulation or continuity, a fact that is exacerbated by the tendency of policy makers to isolate such measures within separate departments and policy categories.

These considerations have played a role in the way in which research has portrayed the historical development of formal policy discourse towards local development. One approach to examining Irish policies towards rural areas over time has been to relate explanations of rural policy to the presence of a populist tradition in Irish rural policy. The presence of this concept within Irish political thought has been well documented (Curtin and Varley 1991, 2006 Jacobsen 1994). Curtin and Varley address the question by identifying three characteristics that can be associated with such policies; a commitment to popular participation, an emphasis on small scale production and a dispersal of economic activity. Using these three principles as a yard stick they conclude While certain policies, such as support for smaller businesses and decentralisation reflect elements of a populist ideology this has never been established as a coherent ideology and Irish policy has never been dominated by a populist agenda (See Curtin and Varley 1991).

While populist themes such as the significance of the small holder appear to have symbolic significance in Irish political culture, the correlation between populism as a political philosophy and populism as policy practice is more ambiguous. Policies embodying concepts closely allied to the populist tendencies referred to above were introduced alongside other policies with radically different aims. It has already been argued that policies can be viewed as the contingent and historically situated effects of practices undertaken by actors in the policy making arena rather than as the product of the formal apparatus of policy (Grindle 1980, 1981). Or as De Vries, puts it the emergent objects or effects produced as a consequence of strategic agency (De Vries in Long 1992, Long and Van Der Ploeg 1993). For this reason it may be useful to consider initiatives in the wider policy and political context in which they occur. This makes it possible to include issues and events that are not considered as being part of formal policy (Verschoor 1992). While not always dominant in

Irish public policy, concepts that have been linked to a populist ideology are present in a range of policies and, it could be argued, may be influential in policy making processes as part of the strategic repertoire of certain actors while not always being reflected to the same degree in the actual polices pursued.

One approach to the question of how such ideas do influence policy making in certain societies is that of the ideological programme suggested by Quick (1980). In examining the relationship between political discourse and policy practices he considered the impact of the political ideologies of post-colonial elites on policy making behaviour. Quick defines certain policies in post-colonial societies constitute ideological programmes, born out of the post-colonial political leaderships general idea about how the society should be organised. Such a perspective results in the formulation of goals for policy which are transformative, being aimed at attaining a new, often more developed, situation in line with national aspirations. Such goals tend to be lacking in detail and visionary as opposed to pragmatic, intended to achieve multiple ends within a relatively short period of time (Quick 1980). The goals of such programmes are related to the far future rather than to immediate issues of concern. An important feature of Quick's observations are that while the main business of government may be mundane, policies that constitute ideological programmes are highly politicised with specific approaches to particular issues tied to the interests of political parties and interest groups within new national administrations (Quick 1980). Other features Quick associates with such programmes are the principle of self-sufficiency, a tendency towards an emphasis on the spirit of community and a combination of measures aimed at a generally improved situation and redistribution.

Amongst the practical implications for those charged with carrying through such polices are that such a scenario "*make(s) rational implementation difficult because there is no logical way to set priorities. Since inaction is ruled out by political pressure, the implementers will rely on political criteria in setting priorities and concentrate on short-run measurable results,*" (Chan p. 55). In the absence of clarity as regards the final outcome of these policies there is a tendency for those charged with formulating and implementing policy to transform rhetoric into attainable formal targets rather than attempting to achieve the overall visionary objectives of the policy. Pressures to achieve progress in the implementation of ideologically driven programmes can lead to a numbers game producing numerical evidence of progress as the outcome of policy above considerations of the wider effects of policies. While ruling

elites identify certain policies being part of an ideological programme and advocate such policies, a distinction can be made between programmes that have an ideological flavour and other policies adopted by the same administration. In other areas, where policies are considered as being less relevant to these ideological concerns, policy makers may adopt objectives that are significantly at variance with these ideological goals. An examination of the role that the recurrent theme of the small farmer, the local community and voluntary effort have played in Irish political discourse, their role in policy practice and how such ideas and the policies they inspire, relate to other policies reflects some of the characteristics of such an ideological project. Three features of this concept appear to have particular resonances in the Irish context. Firstly those referring to the nature of the political rhetoric that informs policies, these include a generalised vision of a new society, the transformative nature of proposals, vague multiple goals, relating to wealth and redistribution (Jacobsen 1994) and resort to traditional community life. The second refers to the challenges of implementation including lack of clarity and the tendency to transform the goals of an ideological programme into attainable targets and pressure to produce results. Finally we see that these programmes co-exist alongside others where the visionary goals of the ruling elite are less prominent considerations in the formulation of policy aims and objectives; indeed we see that in the Irish context the objectives of the latter sometimes run contrary to those of the former. This suggests that despite the attention that some commentators have paid to analysing development in policy as arising out of a rational policy making process or as conflicts between different forms of political discourse (See O'Connor 2006). both the analysis of populism employed by Curtin and Varley and Quick's concept of the ideological project draw attention to the fact that such formal policies are in fact the product of policy practices devised by actors in order to pursue specific interests. In understanding the emergence of such policies the actual practices that occur during the policy making process should be the focus of attention.

As already mentioned the aspirations of the first Fianna Fail governments appear to have at least in part been informed by an ideological vision which was transformative and aspirational rather than grounded in practical concerns. Government policies invoked the idea of the traditional Irish community based around the family farm together with the principle of voluntarism. It is also clear that this area of policy was seen as redistributive. In pursuing this vision the Fianna Fail Government made decisions that ran counter to the 1932 committee on finance and did not address similar economic concerns raised in 1938 (Lee 1988, Jacobsen

1994). In this case the advocacy of small farming continued despite the fact that demographic and economic data argued against it and the experience of the Gaeltacht showed that in certain areas such strategies were not sustainable.

Administratively the development of land policy at the time has some similarities to those identified in ideological programmes. In terms of the policy's goals and the creation of attainable and measurable objectives based on those goals the subdivision of land into small holdings was an attainable and visible target. This was achieved most extensively in the west where the quality of the land was poor and most readily available for redistribution. This strategy undoubtedly enabled those responsible for implementing the programme to provide evidence that the policy was being pursued yet did so where this was easiest to achieve and with little reference to the long term difficulties that this situation would pose. Thus attainable indicators become enshrined in the policy process as the embodiment of ideology at the same time as the goals of this policy as a whole were vague and the expectations unrealistic.

However these ideological commitments were not present across all policies. In so far as the government attempted to implement transformative policies the continuation of the policy of land redistribution appears to be the key area of action. In other areas, policy appears to have been formulated in ways that were not informed by these ideological considerations and indeed ran counter to it, such as, for example the strategy of maintaining and promoting export oriented extensive beef and dairy production. Although Irish land redistribution policy may have incorporated some elements of an ideological programme this policy operated alongside others with conflicting goals. Its outcome outside of the goal of land redistribution was to lock agricultural policy into the support of a farm structure that was not suited to the type of agricultural being undertaken.

Thus it could be argued that the incorporation of an agenda that was supportive of small scale agriculture was part of an administrative response to the ideological demands of politicians. In summary therefore what the discussion of the emergence of various rural initiatives in the republic of Ireland over time suggests, is that when analysed as part of an on-going policy process rather than a policy cycle, policies can be understood as the result of policy practices adopted by actors over time. These historically situated social and cultural factors make up the "conditions of existence," for policies. Thus while the actual shape of policies lack

consistency, it is possible to identify certain habits or recurring features within the policy making practices employed in formulating them. These include the following.

- 1) Irish policy tends to favour the retention of decision making centrally and has not supported the creation of strong local or regional bodies.
- 2) Policies which promote the introduction of local development programmes have gained prominence at times when the overall thrust of national policy has been towards the increased centralisation of production and rural restructuring. Rather than acting as a polar opposite to the overall shape of development policy, such programmes tend to have been introduced to ameliorate the negative effects of national and sectoral policies.
- 3) Policies emphasising the importance of a local dimension have tended to emerge as a result of external stimuli. In the 1930's the deterioration in economic trade with Britain and later the national emergency during the Second World War was significant while in the 1960's rural development policies can be clearly associated with the modernisation policies operating at the time. In the 1980's the perception that a crisis existed in relation to unemployment coupled with the emergence of the E.S.F as a major funding source stimulated a significant number of projects with a community dimension and as will be shown in the 1990's the adoption of local development and anti-poverty projects coincided with declining farm numbers and changes in E.U. policy.
- 4) Programmes introduced with the specific aim of addressing inequality between areas and regions (such as the economic development of non-metropolitan areas in the late 1960's) have consistently been expanded to cover greater numbers of areas as a consequence of political pressures. The 1952 rural grant schemes, county development teams and regional industrial policy were each originally envisioned as measures focused on disadvantaged areas yet each expanded to incorporate a much greater number of areas. In each case it would appear that attempts by government to introduce measures intended to address specific local development issues has been undermined by political considerations.

- 5) Local development programmes have lacked power and continuity in terms of administration and management. While an aspiration of these programmes has been to facilitate better integration and co-ordination of services, it has been in relation to the operation of their own independent projects and in particular the provision of grant assistance that these bodies have been best known. This was clear in the case of the CDT's and Udaras na Gaeltacht. While policy may have supported the formation of new local entities it has not encouraged the replacement of national by locally based structures.
- 6) In terms of management structure, policies for local development have encouraged the creation of new bodies at local level to administer new programmes. This tendency to establish new local structures rather than support existing ones has resulted in the presence of numerous local and regional structures which have different boundaries, responsibilities and powers. One feature of these initiatives is that they have tended to overlook non statutory local groups and establish a variety of organisations that are funded exclusively by the State and operate under the supervision of a centralised body.

A superficial consideration of the use of local development and related approaches in relation to the problems of unemployment and rural deprivation in the Irish Republic presents us with a picture that is piecemeal and inconsistent. It is an approach that features sporadically in programmes which lack substantial resources. Indeed it is easier for those attempting to critically evaluate them to dwell on what they did not do than to come up with a coherent view of what role they did actually play in policy discussions. In this context it was very tempting to treat the emergence of an interest in such issues in the late 1980's and early 1990's as a welcome new departure. However a closer consideration of the Irish State's involvement in local development reveals a number of features which recur over time, these features suggest certain tendencies or habits play a role in how policy is shaped which indicate that local development in Irish policy has tended to be viewed as a crisis option. It has generally been introduced alongside other national programmes under tight central control and with limited local autonomy. Such features arise not out of any ideological position but are a consequence of the administrative and political culture that produces them. In the case of the Republic of Ireland it is a culture which is reluctant to cede control to local or regional bodies. What the analysis presented in this chapter points to is the primary role

that specific forms of policy practices play. While it has been tempting for some researchers to portray policy debates as conflicts between different sets of ideas about rural policy (O'Connor et al 2006) involving processes during which different forces are involved in negotiations about the future of rural areas (McDonagh 2002), when viewed as forms of practice engaged in by actors it is clear that the development of policy is a much more contingent process. Different political and administrative actors conspire to produce policies which are much less clearly defined in ideological or conceptual terms than the historical analysis suggests. A chief feature of this process is the recurrence of certain policy themes which appear to be much more linked to established ways of doing things than they are to the ideological or conceptual approaches to policy.

At its conclusion the previous chapter outlined three concepts that it argued should be central in the analysis of policy; actors, networks and discourse. In this approach the focus is on the practices engaged in by actors attempting to exercise agency and utilising a variety of different resources to do so. In this chapter the analysis has turned to the historical development of Irish development policy. Over the years, new programmes have indeed been introduced, new entities created and a slew of new or reconditioned concepts entered the public policy lexicon. Yet it is clearly the case that despite substantial variations in the ways development programmes were implemented, looking at Irish development policy over time it becomes clear that in spite of the occasional appearance of new “revolutionary,” or “innovative,” programmes, the most fundamental trend in Irish Policy making in this field has been the retention of the established policy practices. This is the context into which the new local development programmes devised in the 1990’s were introduced, despite the tendency for those closely associated with the development of local development programmes in the 1990’s to stress the “newness,” of the concept these forms of policy practice were a significant feature of the context in which they were established. The impact that they had on the new programmes are examined in more detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 An Idea Whose Time Has Come: The local development boom

4.1 Rural Development re-visited 1985-1994.

The previous Chapter shed light on how the emergence of specific forms of policy discourse is made possible at specific points in time. The chapter linked these processes with specific forms of policy practice or behaviour that occur and indeed appear to recur in the policy making process and which, it was suggested, influence the shape that policies take. A consideration of the history of Irish local development policy from this perspective suggests that such forms of practice have a lengthy history. Crucially they appear to involve behaviours or practices which transcend the formal debates that dominate many accounts of policy discourse and relate instead to the specific ways in which policy practitioners participate in the policy making process.

This chapter considers in detail events in the late 1980's and early 1990's during which local and rural development emerged as an important concept in Irish policy debates. During this period a growing body of opinion both within and outside the E.C¹ was becoming more critical of the C.A.P. Politically the cost of maintaining the price support frameworks which this policy contained together with the principle of price supports became increasingly unpalatable. It was argued that the C.A.P promoted inefficiency and overproduction while acting as a disincentive to innovation and diversification. The form of agriculture that had been promoted under the C.A.P was vulnerable to possible changes in that policy; however such changes increasingly came to be seen as inevitable. The likely outcomes of such reforms would, it was believed, be a greater emphasis on economic viability and efficiency resulting in fewer producers in competitive areas of agriculture. These concerns emerged and became part of wider discussions in academic and policy circles in which the role of agriculture in the future of rural areas was hotly debated. As we have seen there was a growing belief amongst researchers that perspectives needed to recognise the heterogeneity of rural areas (Van Der Ploeg 1993) and embrace the wider range of functions that they

¹ The E.C. will be used to refer to the European Community in relation to events up until the creation of the European Union (E.U.) in 1993

served (European Commission 1988). It was in this context that the new local development programmes discussed in this study were introduced in the Republic of Ireland. In chapter one attention was drawn to the responses of many researchers to the emergence of this new agenda in Ireland, the enthusiasm with which it was greeted and with the way in which many of these researches asserted that a new paradigm of locally driven development had been established. Subsequently this enthusiasm has lessened as the experience of local development has matured and the approach been developed and increasingly incorporated into mainstream policy. The adoption of concepts such as neo-endogenous development embodies a recognition that in reality such policies combine endogenous and exogenous dimensions (Ray 2002, 2006). It is however still the case that the events surrounding the emergence of local development are represented as a significant new agenda arguing for a break with the past.

The debates that emerged during this period have had an enduring; indeed it could be argued a defining impact on discussions in relation to public policy in rural areas. Even in its later and somewhat more metred form, the claims of researchers in support of local development programmes embody a specific interpretation of the way in which these programmes emerge as a response to and in part also a rejection of traditional forms of agricultural development in rural areas (See for example Van Der Ploeg 1993, 2003). Indeed this juxtaposition, between a “productionist” tradition of agricultural development and a new “endogenous” or local rural development agenda has itself become a cornerstone of rural policy discourse and has been so for nearly three decades. Indeed it could be argued that since its introduction rural policy has involved choices, conflict and negotiation (McDonagh 2001) between rural development and other approaches to the development of rural areas O’Connor et al for example speak of the “*Unresolved tension between support for commodity agriculture and for rural development*” (2006 p. 145) In these debates it sometimes seems that the new has been new for a very long time and the old certainties have been old forever. This situation provides a specific narrative of its own within which the way in which the new policies emerged are, regardless of the “radical,” or innovative character ascribed to them, very much in accord with traditional ideas about policy argumentation which are consistent with the notion of policy making and development depicted in the policy cycle. To coin a phrase the new arguments advanced by the proponents of rural development come on “in the old style,” to be “driven off” or in some cases incorporated into policy “in the old style”. The general theme of most accounts of events in local and rural development suggest that this period was

marked by a break with the past, and the (re)emergence of alternative perspectives concerning the development of rural areas. However if as Latour (1988) suggested we examine “what is retained,” rather than what is abandoned in examining developments in public policy at this time a somewhat different picture emerges. Not least we see that through this process a specific understanding about how policy ideas develop and are adopted is retained. The significance of certain forms of policy argumentation involving particular actors in the policy process operating in a distinct policy space is affirmed. This was illustrated in the previous chapter. When the way in which certain ideas about public policy became admissible at specific points in time were examined it was possible to identify trends or forms of practice in policy which appear to transcend specific debates about particular policies and recur over time.

These include;

- The retention of decision making centrally with a corresponding lack of support for strong local or regional bodies.
- The tendency for specific programmes with a local or spatial component to be introduced as ancillary measures to ameliorate the negative effects of national and sectoral policies.
- The adoption of certain policies opportunistically or reactively as the result of external stimuli.
- The expansion of area based or regional programmes to cover more areas to the detriment of the stated area based aims of the original programme.
- An antipathy towards measures intended to facilitate or enforce better integration and co-ordination of services with support for the formation of new organisations rather than the replacement or reform of existing national agencies.
- A tendency on the part of policy makers to eschew the input of experts in the formulation of policies.

If as appears to have been the case in the past, such practices are evident in the shape which the local development policies and programmes studied here came into being, then it suggests that they are not simply the outcomes of forms of rational-technical policy argumentation depicted in the policy cycle. Rather they are also shaped by complex and longstanding policy practices in which we can, as in the case of the events discussed in the previous chapter trace the footprints of agency. In this chapter therefore the events which occurred during the development policy boom are examined with a view to establishing how it was that it became possible for these programmes to emerge at this point.

4.2 The Integrated Rural Development Programme 1988-1990

The first evidence of an E.C. interest in the potential for locally driven development in rural areas was with the adoption of the concept of Integrated Rural Development (I.R.D). The I.R.D concept had been adopted in developing countries for much the same reasons as it subsequently found support in the E.C. This related to the perceived "failures" of agricultural modernisation policies to address the specific needs of identifiable rural communities. The analysis of rural areas that informed the I.R.D questioned the merit of such approaches, opting instead for a more broadly based approach to the development of such areas. Within the I.R.D perspective rural areas were seen as socio-economic spaces in which development hinged on support for a range of integrated actions. Development objectives were defined in a broad way. Though economic growth was still seen as an important development goal, IRD attempted to pursue development strategies which were designed to recognise local factors in development. One of the principle features of the concept was its flexibility as it sought to incorporate local interests and a variety of sometimes contradictory development priorities. However this feature of IRD has led to a degree of confusion as to what the approach actually entails, the term "*can be variously interpreted to mean a multi-sectoral, co-ordinated approach to development, the pursuit of growth with equity objectives, participative development or even environmental protection,*" Varley (1988 p. 48).

The European Community's first use of the concept came as early as 1980 with the Mediterranean Integrated Development Project. A similar scheme was also initiated in Scotland (Greer 1984). The projects linked equity and spatial objectives in attempting to

address the experience of marginalised rural areas, co-ordinating action across a number of sectors. As with non-European IRD programmes emphasis was placed on the operation of the scheme in specific localities. Local participation in the programme was seen as central. While these Programmes emphasised the need to diffuse the benefits of development equitably economic growth remained the prime focus of the programme. The significance attached to the economic dimension of development led to the EC programme emphasising the importance of small business, co-operative and community enterprises and self-employment. This reflected the experience in Latin America where a focus on enterprise had been adopted albeit for different reasons². It must be noted that these programmes continued to be a small fraction of E.C. spending in rural areas, agricultural support measures continued to absorb the bulk of E.C. funds. However these programmes did act as a precedent for later E.C/E.U programmes in marginal rural areas.

The reform of the C.A.P and the political structures of the E.C. are widely regarded as the principal factors that led to rural and local development strategies achieving greater prominence in E.C. policy. The negotiations leading to the single market focussed attention on the position of peripheral areas. The cohesion funds were introduced as a compensatory measure for less developed regions of the union providing additional funds to support new development measures³ and to counterbalance the impact of moves to a single market. It was envisaged that these would assist less developed regions to "catch up," with the industrial centres of Europe. The principle of subsidiarity, that measures should be implemented at the lowest practicable administrative level was adopted as a safeguard against a diminution of the position of member states and to address what was even then regarded as a democratic deficit in the then E.C.'s dealings with its "citizens". Under this principle it became policy to ensure that decisions on spending and programme design were devolved to smaller administrative units. These decisions coincided with measures aimed at reducing the extent

² In Latin America in particular reasons behind the adoption of local economic organisation included a belief that large scale agriculture was exploitative and a recognition that the official economy had little impact on the most disadvantaged members of society. In this context I.R.D was regarded as an anti- poverty measure which could stimulate pluriactivity in the formal and informal economy (De Janvry 2000). By doing so Latin American I.R.D also represented a challenge to the injustices of existing economic relations.

³As we have seen The Republic of Ireland was in this instance regarded as one region and as such the entire national territory was eligible for support through the cohesion funds.

of agriculture's dependence on price supports in the context of radical reform of agricultural policy.

The coming reforms in E.U. rural policy were discussed at length in the 1988 document "The Future of Rural Society,"(European Commission 1988). Portrayed as a watershed in European rural policy this document provided an analysis of the problems facing Rural Europe and an outline framework for rural policy in the context of major change. This served as an indication of changes that were likely to occur in the way that the E.U. provided funding for rural areas. The C.A.P was criticised for having encouraging the overproduction of commodities which were subject to price supports and for failing to address the full range of issues facing rural areas. These included declines in rural employment, farm dereliction and environmental problems due to neglect of farm land and further urban growth. The report's authors identified three types of rural areas, experiencing different sets of difficulties these were:

- (a) Areas experiencing difficulties posed by their proximity to urban centres.
- (b) Areas in which agricultural producers faced the challenges posed by maintaining economically sustainable agriculture in a commercial environment.
- (c) Areas which faced the marginalisation due to their peripheral situation.

This analysis placed emphasis on the separate development challenges posed to different rural areas. The document also recognised changing policy concerns or "fundamental considerations," relating to rural Europe including:

- (i) Economic and social cohesion.
- (ii) Agricultural adjustment.
- (iii) Environmental protection.

The policy approach recommended the gradual reduction of price support measures. However the commitments made towards social and economic cohesion under the Single

European agreements also involved recognising that considerable areas of rural Europe were marginalised. The single market would strengthen large scale centralising forces (Cecchini et al 1988) adding to the degree of marginalisation experienced in peripheral areas of Europe. The document proposed the adoption of measures aimed at addressing the specific difficulties facing marginalised areas alongside the reform of the C.A.P. and a move towards a more complex view of rural policy in which consideration is given to issues affecting rural spaces beyond the agricultural sphere.

"The Future of Rural Society," was published at a time when the Irish State's involvement in local and community based development initiatives was at best patchy. In 1986 a second poverty programme funded by the E.U had been introduced and as noted the CDT's and Udaras Na Gaeltacht operated throughout the 1980's. However the sum total of all of these efforts made up a small proportion of state funding and while there was an evident growth in radical ideas about community development, particularly in urban areas, these voices remained on the periphery of public policy making (CWC 1989, C.P.A 1989). However, while there is no evidence of a specific local development theme emerging in policy discourse, a significant and often unrecognised expansion in locally based development programmes had occurred in the form of an array of groups operating a variety of local projects, in most instances initiated and financed as employment and training programmes. The image of a small gang of local men building walls on a FAS scheme became an established feature of Irish rural life⁴.

Thus the early nineteen eighties could be described as a period of unstructured expansion resulting from the introduction of specific projects on an ad-hoc basis in response to a variety of different problems and opportunities. While in some cases the organisations claimed to place emphasis on research and embarked on some level of planning in most instances it is fair to say that these programmes were primarily the result of reactions to events that occurred as part of other policies rather than as the result of the emergence of any specific theme or concept of local development

It was into this patchy, ill-defined and uncoordinated stew of local projects, state initiatives and employment schemes, that the first formal Irish attempt to implement the IRD concept

⁴ Though of course such schemes did a lot more.

was attempted in 1988 (O'Malley 1992). Twelve integrated rural development organisations were launched as what was to become known as the I.R.D programme. The programme was announced in 1988 and was to run until 1990. It was a pilot project based in 12 designated areas, its objective being "*to promote rural enterprise (e.g., agri-tourism) and to benefit to the greatest extent possible from E.U. funding,* (emphasis added)" (ibid) Each group was to appoint a full time rural co-ordinator. This co-ordinator was to assist the local group to establish a development organisation. The groups were to be made up of what were described as key players representing the range of interests identified in the area. In practice these people tended to be professionals, business people and representatives from the farming organisations. Extensive "pre development work," was to be undertaken during which the co-ordinators and groups underwent training in relation to their roles as development agents. The groups were then to identify possible development activities that could be generated in their areas and formulate an area development plan. Under the programme the IRD groups had limited financial resources to support administration and generated additional funds from local donations or private sources.

It was not envisaged that the new IRD groups would act as funding bodies. Alongside the introduction of the IRD groups a new the Small and Community Enterprise Scheme (S.C.E.S) was introduced to be operated by the C.D.T's. S.C.E.S would be a grant scheme aimed at providing small businesses with a source of funding. While the I.R.D. groups had no direct access to these funds it was hoped that the CDT's would take note of IRD groups views in implementing the S.C.E.S. However allocation of funding through the scheme was at the discretion of the CDT's.

4.3 1990's Local Development an idea whose time has come?

The period up until 1988 saw the haphazard growth of an uncoordinated range of programmes which had attempted various degrees of local and regional development. What programmes were in place in 1988 appear to have been primarily introduced in response to specific and immediate issues confronted by actors engaged in implementing a diverse range of disparate policies. There is no evidence to suggest that they formed aspects of a common approach or that at this point they had become part of a local development policy narrative because at that point this narrative had not entered public policy discourse. What initiatives

did exist were sparse, had limited funding and were often not regarded as rural or local development programmes. Introduced in 1988 of the I.R.D programme represented a change in this situation. However while claiming a considerable contribution to employment the IRD's lacked substantial resources. This together with the short time period in which they were expected to complete their work makes the extent of their impact unclear. As with the C.D.T's the I.R.D's were to "foster," co-operation between the state agencies and local promoters in order to encourage people to undertake new projects in their areas. Ironically one of the organisations with whom they were expected to work were the C.D.T's which had themselves been expected to promote better co-ordination between local representatives of the state. However in the absence of any formal means through which this role was to be undertaken and with only limited resources they were restricted to what was at best an advisory role. By contrast, the period between 1989 and 1993 saw a significant expansion in the level of the Irish state's commitment to local development with the introduction of a series of significant initiatives with substantial state funding as part of policies that had the express aim of supporting local development. This period thus marked the emergence of the concept of local development as an important theme in policy discourse, making it possible for the proponents of this approach to suggest that in the early 1990's local development was "An idea whose time has come". It was thus perhaps in relation to the I.R.D programmes vague objective of "maximising E.C funding in an area" that the I.R.D groups were to have the most significant long term impact as these groups participated in planning processes that helped to attract in new funding through these later programmes.

It is possible to identify a number of factors that made possible both the emergence of these programmes at this time and also their association with a new local development discourse. Nationally 1988 saw a return to the kind of national development planning that had not been employed since the termination of the third of the five year plans. Once again difficult economic conditions throughout the preceding decade meant that by 1988, there was a broad consensus that national finances needed to be brought under control. This consensus was to result in the re-adoption of formal multi annual planning with the launch of the Programme for National Recovery (PNR), the first of what was to become a series of such plans. While in many respects these deals bore most of the features typical of previous national wage agreements, they came equipped with a terminology of their own. The programmes were called partnerships, the interest groups involved were known as the social partners. In line with this more inclusive concept the agreements sought to include not merely the

representatives of the employers and trade unions but also farm organisations, representatives of the unemployed and other interests groups. Alongside the central issues of pay, spending and taxation, the partnership agreements also made some provisions for measures to address the issue of unemployment as well as the implications of changes in agriculture. The numbers working on the land has consistently declined since the mid 1970's and by the late eighties it was clear that proposed changes in E.U. agricultural policies would involve further and even more fundamental changes in the structure of Irish agriculture. As in previous eras the need for alternatives to mainstream agriculture was again being raised as an issue by some researchers and policy makers. However unlike the case in the 1960's there was in 1988 substantial additional support for these ideas from the E.C. which was at this time in the process of initiating a number of changes in the administration of the C.A.P. These changes would result in the acceleration of measures aimed at reducing the amounts paid by the E.C as price supports. Such changes would have a negative impact on farm income and the position of small producers in particular. In addition to those features of E.C. policy that had a direct bearing on the farm sector. Other features of E.C. policy presented both opportunities and problems for the Irish Government. Not least amongst these were agreements on the formation of the single market and the introduction of measures intended to foster greater European cohesion in the context of the Single European Act. In the agreements that led to the move to a single market the principles of cohesion and subsidiarity were to see changes in the amounts and manner of distribution of E.C finances. The Government was to be required to submit proposals to the E.C. for its spending of monies under these new arrangements, outlining how such finances would be used to assist countries move towards European cohesion goals. The spending proposals detailed in the 1988 National Development Plan and submitted to the E.U. detailed substantial investments that were to be made under a wide variety of policy headings towards this end.

In addition to requiring the Irish state to comply with a new range of planning disciplines, E.C efforts to implement the principle of subsidiarity created administrative problems as well. Amongst these was the lack of sub national structures capable of implementing E.C. funded programmes, this presented specific issues as a number of measures introduced by the E.C. intended to offer funding to sub-national and non-governmental entities. Amongst them were the community initiatives, programmes designed as pilot programmes aimed at testing responses to policy issues identified by the E.C. collectively. In some cases it was a specific feature of these programmes that they be implemented at sub national level under guidelines

and regulations issued by E.U. Directorate Generals (DG). The anticipated C.A.P reforms, the Single European Act (S.E.A) and the creation of these programmes posed a dilemma for the Irish State. Its limited support for and commitment to subnational bodies, meant that there were few existing organisations with the capacity to avail of some of these funds. Lacking any clearly definable local development infrastructure the Irish Government had to set about creating one. It was in this context that the Irish local development boom occurred

4.4 Local development in the ascendancy the LEADER programme.

Enthusiastic as the response of many of those involved in the initiation of local development programmes in Ireland may have been, one important fact in relation to the emergence of these programmes is clear. This was the pivotal role played by European Community funding instruments in prompting the introduction of local development measures in the Republic of Ireland. Here we encounter clear evidence that far from emerging out of a rational process of policy argumentation the decision of the Irish state to adopt local development programmes was inspired by the availability of finance and other external factors. In this respect the response of the state appears to be largely in line with longstanding opportunistic policy practices. In the much the same way as the State developed policies that sought to maximise the income generated through the C.A.P in the late nineteen seventies and by initiating training programmes that were eligible for support under the E.S.F in the mid nineteen eighties. The adoption of local development programmes corresponded exactly with availability of funds for such programmes under a number of E.C. initiatives. In a way that is reminiscent of the scenario described by G.K. Chesterton whereby “*If there were a fashionable hotel in London which no man could enter who was under six foot, society would meekly make up parties of six-foot men to dine in it. If there were an expensive restaurant which by a mere caprice of its proprietor was only open on Thursday afternoon, it would be crowded on Thursday afternoon*” (2003) this was a period when the Irish Government worked towards the funding criteria of the various local development initiatives funded by the European Community. One of the principal programmes in this respect and one which was to feature prominently in the life of the organisation examined in this study was the LEADER⁵ programme. LEADER followed the I.R.D programme and represented a much

⁵ In subsequent Chapters I shall refer to this programme as LEADER 1 to distinguish it from the second and subsequent LEADER programmes

more substantial attempt by the E.C to promote rural development in member states. The term LEADER was based on the French acronym for the programme which literally translated as “Links between the rural economy and development actions”⁶ LEADER was intended as a scheme to support local rural development projects in designated areas suffering the effects of marginalisation and rural decline. The programme was to be operated through locally based organisations that designed and implemented a plan of actions to respond to locally identified development issues. Funding was to be made available to these local groups from the E.C. to implement a series of measures proposed in local plans formulated by the groups. The measures that could be funded under the programme included a range of activities in the following action areas;

- Technical support for rural development. (e.g. research and group development)
- Vocational training and assistance for recruitment.
- Rural tourism.
- Small firms, Craft enterprises, local services.
- Development and marketing of agricultural, forestry and fishery products.
- Other activities which contribute to the areas development.

The process by which local areas were selected for involvement in LEADER was to be a competitive one. Local groups within designated “disadvantaged rural areas” were eligible to apply for the programme by submitting business plans outlining what was in effect a local investment programme through which local projects would be funded. In addition to the finances provided by the E.C. the plans would also outline how local funds would help to co-finance the proposed local programme. Once selected the overall operation of LEADER spending in any one area was based on this plan and the group’s performance at the end of the programme was to be assessed relative to targets which it committed itself to in the plan.

⁶ The original french term is ‘Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l’Économie Rurale’, English language translations but include ‘Links Between the Rural Economy and Development Actions’ as well as ‘Links Between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy and Links Between Activities Developing the Rural Economy

The terms under which LEADER was implemented were subject to some national variation and from the outset specific unique features of the Irish LEADER programme were evident. One of these concerned the question of what areas of the country could apply for LEADER. While at European level LEADER was intended to target specific rural areas which were particularly disadvantaged, in Ireland no such distinction was possible as the country as a whole was defined as a single region. While this was based on the Irish State's making a plausible argument to the effect that the entire country was disadvantaged. The fact that the entire country was deemed eligible meant in effect that all rural areas in the State could and in fact many did apply. At national level no specific distinction was made between the levels of disadvantage experienced by specific rural areas. In effect therefore in Ireland funds intended to redress the spatial inequalities experienced by disadvantaged rural areas were made available across the board to a range of rural areas with widely varying characteristics. Thus the manner in which LEADER was implemented bore some of the hallmarks of another established policy practice. In this case the extent to which the programme could actually target specific disadvantaged areas was stymied by the states reluctance to identify and restrict the programme to such areas. As a consequence some of the areas included in the first LEADER programme were clearly less disadvantaged than other areas which did not qualify, a fact that was recognised in the evaluation of that programme (Kearney et al 1994) While the first LEADER programme did include some of the most disadvantaged areas in the country, such as South West Kerry, it also included some of the most affluent such as the southern Kilkenny.

The challenge of identifying suitable groups for inclusion in the LEADER programme also posed specific challenges in Ireland. In general the E.C. initially envisioned that the groups to be supported would be active development organisations with a degree of discretion over how monies were to be spent. The exact shape of these groups was never defined and across Europe a range of different types of bodies applied. Ireland, with a tradition of retaining considerable power at the centre, lacked sub national structures with experience in administering such programmes. Anticipating the programmes requirements the Irish Government responded by encouraging the formation of entities that could avail of this funding. Officially the Irish Department of Agriculture sought applications from a range of non-governmental bodies including but not restricted to those that had been established under the IRD programme in 1988. In the event a variety of other groups and bodies applied for this

funding encompassing a range of organisational types and catchment sizes. However through the application and subsequent assessment procedures, which were largely the responsibility of national co-ordinating bodies, a set of common characteristics came to be associated with groups that went on to be successful in their applications. A substantial number of them were new single purpose bodies specifically brought together to apply for LEADER funding. It was generally the case that the groups sought to demonstrate a level of local involvement by the state, local community and the local business community in some form of what was to become known as a “Partnership,” in what has come to be generally, although perhaps misleadingly, termed as the governance of these organisations. In most respects even in areas where the IRD programme had not been in operation the groups established resembled the IRD organisations and indeed many described themselves as IRD’s. Nationally, the 17 groups that were successful in securing funding under the first LEADER programme all broadly complied with this model. This resulted in a high degree of uniformity among groups, suggesting that both the groups themselves and those involved in the national selection process worked towards the LEADER programme, anticipating its requirements and modifying their behaviour accordingly. For the vast majority of the group’s LEADER was to be their sole source of funding, outside of the I.R.D programme most had no previous track record in development. In each of the seventeen areas the LEADER groups were established as companies limited by guarantee, all the groups were run by boards which included representatives of a range of local interests which incorporated at local level many of the features of the national Partnership. Thus in Ireland the LEADER programme provided an impetus to the formation of a new form of local development body the LEADER company or LEADER group. While not unique to Ireland this practice was by no means universal with other countries implementing LEADER through existing entities. It was however consistent with yet another well-established Irish policy practice of opting to establish new entities to implement new programmes rather than granting additional functions to existing ones.⁷

These new LEADER groups had limited resources. As a consequence the first Irish LEADER programme was heavily dependent on local private funding to generate the

⁷ Although in later LEADER programmes the E.U appears to have come to more explicitly favour this model. LEADER Plus for example proposed that leader be run through Local Action Groups (LAGs) “*made up of public and private partners from the rural territory, and must include representatives from different socio-economic sectors. They receive financial assistance to implement local development strategies, by awarding grants to local projects.*”

necessary additional funding required to match the E.C. contribution. This finance largely took the form of private investment in new commercial business projects to match the E.C. funds allocated in the form of grant assistance. This limited the range of ways in which the E.C. investment could be used and meant that despite the emphasis placed on the importance of measures such as capacity building and the provision of technical assistance by the E.C. and the groups themselves, the principal activity of the first LEADER programme was to provide grant aid to support investments by individuals and companies, as well as funding the establishment of the administrative apparatus and staff necessary to implement this programme. Despite the emphasis that the LEADER groups placed on local specificity these constraints together with the tendency of groups to conform to a specific model of LEADER activity, meant that the proposed programmes of action of the first Irish LEADER groups were remarkably similar⁸; each group proposed spending the bulk of its budget supporting individual business projects. As a consequence the success of the groups came to depend on their capacity to allocate the budgets as set out in their plans. Since the disposal of these funds was dependent on attracting matching private funding this led the organisations to focus on attracting and giving grants to local businesses. When the actual disbursement of funds is considered groups displayed an even greater level of uniformity. What local variation does occur primarily relates to what specific projects were funded. For example the group that operated in south west Kerry, put substantial funding into a project to grow foliage to supply to florists. Again in a way which is reminiscent of the experience of previous schemes, LEADER became primarily recognised as a separate grant allocating programme. The consequences of this situation were entirely predictable the majority of LEADER funding went to support projects being undertaken by established business people who were predominantly middle class, affluent and male (Kearney et al 1994).

The first LEADER programme has come to be regarded as an important milestone in the emergence of local development policy approaches in the Republic of Ireland. However while this is the case, the above outline points to the critical importance of making an analytical distinction between what programmes claim to do and what they actually do. While the programme's advocates have emphasised its significance as a new departure in development policy which encouraged more participatory forms of local development, in

⁸ A trait which was in fact consolidated in later LEADER programmes.

reality the first LEADER programme involved the introduction of a new set of relatively small bodies with limited resources and objectives. Significantly these entities were introduced alongside and not instead of existing policies affecting rural areas. Despite the claims made for local participation in the way these projects were established they complied with a remarkable degree of consistency to a specific model of local development entity. This model reflected at local level many of the features of the Partnership arrangement favoured in national policy making at the time. The programmes they pursued were also remarkably similar. More than anything else the first LEADER programme represented a European subvention to the private commercial activities of middle aged, middle class businessmen. However more significantly, when the process through which LEADER was introduced in Ireland is considered even briefly, we see evidence that in working towards the LEADER programme policy makers complied with established policy practices which pre date and transcend the forms of policy argumentation that lie at the heart of many accounts of the way in which local development programmes emerged at this time. The introduction of the programme appears to be opportunistic. The nature of the entities created appears to have more to do with what it was anticipated would attract European funding than any commitment to local development, there was limited effort to bring about the genuine co-ordination or integration of existing services that an integrated approach suggests and even less so the new adventures in governance so often associated with local development (OECD 1993, 1996). Again this seems to reflect existing policy practices, a tendency not to reform or expand the role of existing bodies, the states preference for weak single purpose local organisations and the tendency for new programmes to become significant primarily as funders and for initiatives with a specific “spatial” dimension to be undermined through their expansion to cover larger areas. All of these factors suggest that the emergence of local development programmes in Ireland has infinitely more prosaic roots than those which are grandiosely associated with it in the literature. Prior to the conclusion of the first LEADER programme a second and expanded programme (LEADER II) was announced this resulted in an expansion of the scheme in terms of the finance and areas covered. By 1995 LEADER had become a de-facto national scheme with LEADER companies covering the entire rural area of the country a pattern which continues to date.

4.5 The Programme for economic and social progress and Area Based Partnerships

Alongside the first LEADER programme this period also saw the introduction of the 12 areas based partnership companies as part of the ABR. As previously discussed the A.B.R was introduced as part of the P.E.S.P. Chapter seven of this document provided for the introduction of an area based response in designated areas of high unemployment, the resulting programme included the formation of the twelve Area Based Partnerships to implement programmes to address social and economic problems in areas which were considered to be socially and economically disadvantaged. Although the programme had different objectives to those outlined for LEADER there were many similarities in the way it was expected to function. The programme was to be eligible for E.U funding to local bodies and this again required the state to identify suitable local structures for funding under this initiative. As with LEADER the state proposed new local structures. As in the case of the LEADER companies the ABR partnerships were established as companies limited by guarantee and were formally autonomous from the state while remaining highly dependent on it for resources. Again the boards of the new bodies were to incorporate a local partnership arrangement. As with the both the County Development Teams before them and the LEADER companies, a co-ordinating role was envisaged for the Partnerships as they were to encourage a re-allocation of existing resources yet had no powers to compel other organisations to make such re-allocations. As has already been discussed the formal justification for these partnerships was drawn on forms of policy argumentation which emphasised a gap in the ability of existing policies to respond to the spatial dimension of poverty. The idea of seeking to address these spatial problems through a series of targeted measures in these areas underpinned the initiative.

As with the LEADER the emergence of this programme and the shape it took sheds light on the factors that influenced its introduction. Again it appears that the availability of a specific form of E.C. funding to support certain measures was of pivotal importance in this process. The fact that the availability of this funding became known while the negotiations that led to the P.E.S.P agreement were underway was particularly opportune. In this context the Area Based Response offered an additional proposal for addressing the issue of long term unemployment during those negotiations. As with LEADER the state opted to implement a locally based programme by creating new single purpose local entities which were, as in the

case of the LEADER groups, expected to exercise a degree of local autonomy over the implementation of the local programme. However in the case of the area based partnerships, these organisations enjoyed even less flexibility than the LEADER companies in relation to their structure and operation. The ABR programme laid out very specific requirements as to how the local boards of the various partnerships should be constituted and as to what type of measures should be included in the action plans that these bodies were to prepare. While it could perhaps be argued that LEADER groups and the state “worked towards the LEADER programme”, the area based Partnerships were given very specific guidelines about how to be local. As in the case of LEADER groups while there was an expectation that the area based partnerships would co-ordinate the work of other agencies, in reality they were not provided with any means of doing so. In effect the groups simply functioned alongside existing service providers. Again therefore the formation of the Partnership appears to reflect well established policy practices, the opportunism of the Irish state in this respect is clearly demonstrated, it is of particular note that the A.B.R was able to draw down funds in areas which were not eligible for LEADER funding and in fact only one organisation initially qualified for both. Again the Irish states preference for single purpose entities and reluctance to adopt measures to coordinate the activities of different agencies is evident.

4.6 Consolation for the councillors County and City Enterprise Boards(C. E.B's)

In 1991 a third of type of local development entity was also piloted in Galway City and County this was the County and City Enterprise Board (C.E.B). The CEB's was conceived as an agency to support small and medium sized enterprises in the respective County Council or Corporation areas. As with the LEADER groups and Area based Partnerships this was conceived as a new entity with its own board and corporate identity and access to its own funding resources. However unlike either of the other two initiatives it was envisaged that the C.E.B's would have strong links to the existing local government structures, drawing a substantial part of its membership from the local authority. In addition the C.E.B's were, in the initial stages, set up with the practical and administrative support of, and staff seconded from the local authorities. Following the pilot initiative in Galway an undertaking to establish a national network of C.E.B's was given during 1992, and the formation of this network was announced in 1993. Simultaneously it was proposed to wind up the County Development Teams. A total of 35 enterprise boards were established to cover each of the County and

County Borough areas. It is worth noting that one of the reasons given for the formation of the County Enterprise Boards was the perceived success of local economic development as practised by organisations such as the LEADER groups which had themselves been in operation for a relatively short period of time prior to the announcement of the CEB's, a time when little in the way of hard evidence of this success had then been produced. The CEB's were to be a support service, specifically targeted at very small businesses and delivering support under a number of headings, these included;

- 1) Creating local enterprise awareness to ensure community based enterprise activity. (Originally described as "promoting an enterprise culture,")
- 2) Assisting community effort by the re-focusing of available resources and the provision of a range of new enterprise support services at local level, such as advisory and counselling assistance, business information and grants.
- 3) Influencing the allocation of resources for small enterprises from European Community, private and public funding sources.

Again the C.E.B's were organised in a way which bears many similarities with the other organisations discussed above. They were formally independent and incorporated as companies limited by guarantee. They included fourteen members; three councillors, the Mayor or local authority chairperson, five representatives of state agencies including the county manager. They also include three to four representatives of employers, unions and in rural areas farming organisations. Finally community or general members were invited onto the boards. As with the other initiatives outlined above the County Enterprise Boards were described as locally based entities with a degree of decision making power and some resources at their disposal. It is also the case that the combination of interests that made up the boards was intended to allow for more cooperation amongst those involved in the delivery of enterprise supports. As was also the case with the other entities the County Enterprise Boards' activities were to be based on a plan that was to act as a strategic guideline for the effective targeting of all enterprise support services in its area. Thus again the new bodies were given a "co-ordinating" role.

Given the similarities in terms of purpose, structure and strategy between the proposed CEB's and groups established under LEADER and the Partnerships, it is unsurprising that the decision to establish C.E.B's gave rise to concerns that services would be duplicated. Steps to avoid this included making assurances that C.E.B's would "co-ordinate," rather than replace existing services. The point was also made that the C.E.B's were also different from other initiatives such as area based Partnerships in being centrally concerned with enterprise development rather than rural or community development. However there is little evidence that efforts were made to create clear boundaries between the programmes. There remained striking similarities between the CEB's and the other programmes listed above. As with the LEADER plans the County Enterprise Plans were required to include a baseline analysis of the county or city borough they worked in as well as proposals for direct support to enterprise such as grants and additional measures including commercial advice and "other technical support". In effect this meant that in many counties organisations applying for LEADER II funding and the CEB's undertook almost identical planning exercises. Indeed in Waterford, the area covered in this study, this resulted in the same baseline work being undertaken by the same researcher twice in the space of a year. As was the case with the area-based partnerships part of the CEB's role was to "co-ordinate" existing services. However despite any aspirations that the creators of the CEB's may have expressed that the bodies perform a variety of support tasks, it was their role in allocating direct grants to small businesses that was to dominate the work of the CEB's. As with the LEADER programmes the CEB's were given funds which they were expected to allocate to small businesses in the form of feasibility grants of up to seventy five per-cent to a total of IR£5,000 or employment grants of up to IR£5,000 per job created or capital grants at a rate of up to fifty per-cent to a total of IR£40,000. Thus as was the case with LEADER funding matching funding was required by the CEB's and hence the need to identify credible private promoters became central to the success of the CEB's. So similar were the basic criteria under which both programmes operated that in many instances projects could be funded under either and the question of what project was funded by which programme was a question of which office the promoter contacted first. While each programme sought to establish a separate identity and claimed a different role for itself the pressure on both to identify and support promoters with credible projects and matching funds inevitably resulted in a degree of competition and overlap. Ironically given the regular claims of the LEADER groups and area based partnership that they were specifically established to give a voice to local views and development needs, one of the principal differences between the CEB's and the other programmes outlined above is

that unlike those organisations, the CEB's were formally required to include democratically elected local representatives. This was in marked contrast to the other bodies described above some of which specifically excluded local politicians from the membership of their boards initially.

The CEB's were thus introduced during a period in which the local development scene was becoming increasingly cluttered. Indeed their emphasis on enterprise support and the degree of local authority involvement has led to a tendency amongst many of those involved in the analysis of local development to exclude the CEB's from inclusion in discussions about local development. This despite the fact that in practical terms the programmes pursued by the C.E.B's and the LEADER companies were in many respects almost identical. It is perhaps particularly ironic that while extravagant claims are made for local development as a new form of local governance the one local development entity which initially set out to incorporate elected representatives from local government has been excluded in this way. The introduction of the C.E.B's also again raise questions about the extent to which an analysis of formal policy argumentation serves as a reliable means of explaining how certain policies emerged at a certain point in time. For example it was suggested that the introduction of the C.E.B's filled a niche in existing provision, even though their introduction effectively replaced a previous programme (the C.D.T's) and coincided with the introduction of other programmes with remarkably similar aims and objectives in the form of LEADER. This raises the question as to whether in fact the niche the policy makers claimed existed for the C.E.B's ever existed at all. Furthermore amongst the CEB's objectives was the expectation that they would co-ordinate the activities of other agencies. Yet this was also identified as an objective for the LEADER and ABR programmes, a task which in the event none were able to achieve on a substantial level. Both these observations suggest that the formal reasons given for the formation of the C.E.Bs do not adequately explain why these organisations were introduced at this point in time. What was not mentioned in this narrative was the fact that at this time the concern among people involved in local authorities about local development programmes were growing. There was some disquiet as to the implications that the introduction of new local bodies with the ability to allocate funds had the potential to undermine local authorities (See Moseley et al 2001). This was particularly the case given that the SCES scheme had ended and the local authorities had no such funding mechanism of their own. In this context the possibility that the C.E.B's introduction was an attempt to restore the role of the local authorities in this area is at the very least worth asking.

4.7 A severe case of overbooming?

In the preceding sections of this chapter, a brief outline of events which led to the creation of a number of new local development programmes in Ireland by the early nineteen nineties was presented. While it is clearly the case that by this point a dramatic increase in the number of programmes involved occurred, is less clear whether the explanation of how this came about offered in the policy discourse is accurate. In chapter one, a version of this narrative was outlined in which the emergence of these new programmes was presented as being the result of a paradigm shift. According to this view, inconsistencies and inadequacies in existing policies were identified. These were, in part linked to the fact that these programmes were administered through national agencies. As a consequence, they were unresponsive to local needs and unable to deal with spatial inequalities. Having diagnosed the “problem,” the “prescription,” was made out; local development bodies could succeed in responding to local needs and focussing help where it was needed most. However, even a brief consideration of the actual way that these programmes were introduced suggests that the accuracy of this narrative is open to question.

A first area of inconsistency relates to the idea of locality and in particular to the claims of these programmes concerning their ability to incorporate local concerns and interests. An important justification for the introduction of the new local development bodies was the existence of a tradition of local self-help and voluntarism including, for example Muintir Na Tire, the Gaeltacht development co-operatives and the first poverty programme as well as the plethora of voluntary and community organisations that permeate Irish rural life. However while great significance was attached to the ability of these programmes tap into this tradition, relationships between the new local development bodies and existing voluntary, rural and community development organisations, with each other and with the state agencies was to say the least, mixed. The new programmes universally involved the creation of new entities rather than attempts to fund existing community structures directly or strengthen existing forms of public administration. Indeed, even the I.R.D groups that had been established in 1988 were not universally successful in securing funding under LEADER and those that did receive LEADER funding, were required to adopt significantly revised structures to operate LEADER funds. The creation of the C.E.B.s also replaced existing bodies with a similar role, the County Development Teams. It is also clear that the bulk of

the funds allocated by these organisations did not go to community groups. In the case of LEADER and the CEB's the vast majority of funds were allocated to private ventures while in the main, the Partnerships initiated new projects rather than funding existing organisations.

A second area of inconsistency relates to the idea that these new bodies could influence the resource allocations made by existing service providers, hence, making these services more responsive to local needs. While, like the CDT's before them, each body was formally required to facilitate local input in the way that existing state agencies operate or have a "co-ordinating role", this was something which these organisations had little success in achieving. As early as 1992 it was recognised by the Partnerships that they were meeting limited success in influencing the work of other bodies. While both the LEADER companies and County Enterprise Boards formal responsibility to co-ordinate the activity of other agencies was all but forgotten as these organisations focussed on the all-consuming task of allocating grant aid.

A third area where the experience of the programmes appears to diverge significantly from the ideas underlying their creation was that of their role in countering spatial deprivation. Both LEADER and the area based Partnerships were initially described as special programmes providing targeted assistance to areas which experienced specific spatial disadvantage. However as with efforts to develop an Irish Regional Development strategy in the 1960's and the farm improvement scheme in the 1950's any specific spatial dimension was rapidly lost as both programmes were rapidly expanded to encompass more of the country. Indeed advocates and participants in these programmes at all levels were almost universal in arguing for expanding the geographical area covered by LEADER and A.B.R. From an early stage it was clear that for many of those involved the success of the projects was linked to their expansion into national programmes

A fourth factor worth considering is that while the programmes were described as being operated by local organisations with plans that incorporated a degree of local input the different programmes achieved a high level of uniformity. In the case of each initiative the process for allocating funds bore close similarities. Each local development body which was seeking inclusion in any programme was required to prepare a local plan that was to be submitted to a national co-ordinating body. In format the plans resembled and indeed were often described as "business plans," that outlined a mission statement for the body setting out

its broad aims, objectives, and proposals for actions with budgetary requirements and targets which the group hoped to achieve. In effect three parallel structures were created for three sets of bodies with similar aims and operating in a similar way. At national level the similarities to be found in the way these structures operated at local level were reflected in the administrative arrangements under which the programmes were managed nationally. All three programmes were initially placed under the supervision of national co-ordinating units responsible for monitoring and evaluating the programmes and also for controlling the allocation of funds to the individual local bodies. In the case of LEADER this role was fulfilled by a section of the Department of Agriculture, in the case of the Area Based Partnership this task was initially undertaken by a unit in the Department of the Taoiseach and in the Case of the CEB's this role was undertaken by a section in Department of Enterprise and Employment. Each in turn reported and worked with units within a separate Directorate Generale (D.G.) within the E.C./E.U. in relation to the European element of the funding provided⁹. Thus all three programmes were managed in a very similar way at national and indeed European level through co-ordinating entities through which could exercise a significant level of control over the local projects.

4.8 Conclusion

It is undoubtedly the case that the period between 1988 and 1992 saw something of a boom in local development. Alongside the launch of the actual programmes mentioned above. An assortment of ideas which had prior to this time featured on the periphery of a number of programmes in diverse areas of public policy were drawn together into what could be collectively described as components of a local development policy discourse. This was also reflected in the growth of academic activity in the area with the creation and/or expansion of programmes offering professional post-graduate training in local development. However, as the preceding section of this chapter suggests, the implementation of these programmes

⁹ As previously stated the in the case of the area based Partnerships the unit responsible for the programmes national co-ordination was subsequently superseded by a private company; Area Development Management Ltd. This company was formally autonomous from the Department. However, it retained many of the staff and responsibilities of the departmental unit it replaced, furthermore its board continued to reflect the national partnership arrangement under which it was initially established. Subsequently A.D.M ltd has been rebranded as Pobal

varied in many key respects from the very ideas about local development that were employed to justify them.

Subsequent evaluation of these programmes provides further evidence that the experience of events as played out in the programmes varied significantly from the role and operation of all three programmes as envisioned in the by then growing literature and public discourse concerning local development. Amongst the key findings of the evaluation of the first LEADER programme for example, was the fact that of all the supports the programme offered, by far the most significant in the eyes of those interviewed was the availability of grant assistance to small businesses, this echoed similar observations that had been made in relation to the CDTs. It was also found that in the case of LEADER and CEB operations, by far the most significant group availing of assistance were established business people, normally male, and in the case of the first LEADER programme aged forty five years and over. One key finding of the evaluation of the A.B.Rs was the confirmation of the fact that their efforts to influence the allocation of resources by other agencies had proved the most difficult aspect of their operation (Craig, 1993, Craig and McKeown 1994, Walsh et al 1998, Haaze and McKeown 2003). Even internal evaluations raised questions about the extent to which the programmes were able to live up to the claims made for the local development approach or, outside of cash grants, of any great evidence of a demand for the inputs the various local development programmes offered¹⁰.

Nevertheless although initially introduced as short term or pilot measures all three programmes were subsequently extended beyond their initial operating period. As early as 1992 it was clear that a second LEADER programme (LEADER II) was likely to be introduced. Likewise the A.B.R programme was also extended. In the case of both LEADER and the A.B.R Programme the geographical scope and level of resources allocated by the programmes was also substantially increased. It was anticipated that these expanded programmes would also involve competitive application procedures with groups from different areas being required to submit proposed plans for consideration for funding, when announced both LEADER II and an expanded A.B.R programme, the Local Development Programme (L.D.P) included funding for all of the existing areas with some being expanded

¹⁰ This is reflected in the European and national experience Koutsouris (2008) found that many recipients in Greece also attached most significance to LEADER's role as a funding mechanism.

to cover a wider geographical remit and a number of new areas making both, into what were in effect national programmes. One point of note is that the spatial expansion of the LEADER programme resulted in the inclusion of groups representing a wide range of rural areas. Whilst the spatial logic behind such forms of intervention was at least in part based on the notion that certain rural areas can be identified as disadvantaged or marginalized (E.U. 1988) under the second LEADER programme the range of areas included in the programme covered the vast bulk of rural Ireland including areas which were statistically amongst the most productive and least disadvantaged areas in the country¹¹. Thus it was the case that any residual notion that this programme was intended to target specific communities experiencing specific disadvantage were largely subsumed in the drive to expand these initiatives into national programmes.

Likewise the extended ABP programme meant that by 1995 every major urban centre in the country was included in the scheme as indeed were many rural areas. This extended programme was incorporated into the 1995 national development programme as the local development programme (LDP). The LDP procedure for funding allocation was somewhat different to that for LEADER. New groups which had not been funded under the ABR were initially asked to apply for pre-development status giving them access to funds to draw up an action plan. The groups were then assisted by ADM Ltd to draw up these plans¹² while intended as advisors the ADM staff members had considerable influence over the local groups through their ability to interpret the national guidelines to which applicant groups were required to adhere. As with the LEADER programme the increased number of projects led to a dilution of the programmes area based component. Whilst the programme documentation still spoke of work in areas of disadvantage many areas included in the programme were not particularly disadvantaged¹³. As with LEADER for the A.B.R

¹¹ LEADER II funded 36 individual organizations covering the entire rural areas of the country. Subsequent LEADER programmes have maintained support for what is a de facto national rural programme.

¹² Staff members acted as advised local groups as to how to conduct suitable consultations with the wider local audience and draw up action plans.

¹³ The Area based programme was initially based on a spatial concept of disadvantage. Certain areas could be identified as disadvantaged, and targeted assistance could thus be delivered to them. Under the expanded scheme a practise of designating certain smaller towns for inclusion in the programme was adopted. While Tralee in County Kerry was designated as an area based Partnership its main emphasis in community work was in 2 local authority housing estates. The Galway City Partnership was also designated to cover the whole city

expansion meant the extension of the programmes to areas which had, to say the least, dubious claims to being eligible for inclusion in the programme. The CEB programme was also retained beyond its original three year funding period and was also incorporated in the 1995 and later national development programmes.

It is undoubtedly the case that the emergence of these programmes represented the rapid adoption of a new approach to implementing public policy initiatives. The decision to extend the original programmes and increase the number of local organisations and the geographical area they covered appears to confirm this. However as the preceding section of this chapter also suggests, while this was undoubtedly true, in the case of the ABPs and LEADER groups in particular, the relationship between the policy rationale which was used in justifying them and the way the programmes were actually implemented is in many respects unclear. What is clear however is the very direct relationship between the introduction of these programmes and the availability of funding from the E.U. As already mentioned the period under discussion coincided with significant changes in the C.A.P and marked the period between the Passing of the Single European Act and the Maastricht Treaty. As part of the movement towards greater European integration, measures at targeting resources towards areas of the E.C. considered to be experiencing specific disadvantages were regarded as an important part of the process of facilitating greater European integration. It was this that resulted in the availability of significant European funds for all three of the local development programmes listed above. (Commins and O'Hara 1991, Commins 1991, O'Cinneide and Walsh 1990). LEADER received funds from the E.R.D.F, The Partnerships received funds from an E.U. GLOBAL grant for local development. While the CEB's receive a large proportion of their administrative support from the department of enterprise and employment they also received E.U. funding. In each case a separate government department acting as the national intermediary body for a separate E.U. funding stream presided over the creation of a separate set of local bodies with similar structures roles and funding arrangements. In doing so the government departments in question were responding to the fact that these E.U. funds intended to be used to support autonomous local bodies. It was this requirement which prompted the state to engage in measures resulted in the formation of separate autonomous

yet concentrated its work in the cities local authority housing estates (Galway City Action Plan). The programmes in such towns often targeted certain areas of the town. However some of the benefits were available to the population of the town in general.

organisations. The criteria under which these funds were issued thus prompted the Irish states interest in this approach, and the form that the new local structures took (O'Cearbhaill and Varley 1988, Varley and Ruddy 1996). Seen in this context these programmes appear less the result of a paradigm shift, growth in demand from grass roots community movements or indeed the consequence of policy debate than the product of established patterns of policy practice.

In doing so the Irish State adopted a strategy which involved the creation of a range of new bodies which despite operating entirely separately were in many respects similar in structure aims and objectives. While these new local structures operated programmes aimed at local development which it was claimed involved a degree of horizontal integration of initiatives at the local level. It was the case that rather than facilitating greater co-ordination between existing service providers there introduction effectively resulted in the addition of yet more service providers operating independently of the others.

The new rural development agenda associated with events since the beginning of the 1990's is described as being area based multi-dimensional and people centred. However while these programmes are presented as a new departure the issues that they address had surfaced from time to time in different policy debates and led in the past to the introduction of different programmes. While it is obviously the case that development policy in rural areas as it operates now differs in many respects from previous approaches. The introduction of these new programmes displays characteristics of established practices which have long featured in Irish policy making. Considered in a longer historical perspective they appear to be the result of established policy practices which pre date and transcend the concerns and utterances that feature in the formal policy argumentation which occupy the attentions of many of those engaged in commenting on such policies. This highlights the importance of understanding the socio cultural context in which these programmes have emerged. This approach owes something to Foucault's genealogical approach in tracing the emergence of new development programmes through an understanding of the wider range of factors which have made possible their "conditions of their existence" at certain points in time.

This chapter began by discussing some of the points made in connection with the new local development agenda in Ireland. In the early nineteen nineties programmes such as LEADER and the County Enterprise Board were presented as innovative approaches to development. It

was argued at the start of this chapter that such views need to be treated with caution, merely examining formal statements about these policies and how they operate does not constitute an adequate basis of analysis. If the intention is to look into the way in which policies emerge we must look beyond policy argumentation and consider what actually occurs when policies are implemented. The remainder of the chapter sought to consider the extent to which a historical overview of various development programmes can assist us to formulate an understanding of how such policies have come to prominence.

One fact that emerges from this discussion is that the notion that rural Ireland was facing a crisis was an important part of the justification for this new approach. In the previous chapter it was illustrated that this idea is not new. Even a cursory examination of the facts indicates that far from being a recent phenomenon Irish rural policy has long struggled with commercially necessities and concerns for the more marginal agricultural areas. While the desire to portray this as a conflict between a particular ideological vision of traditional Ireland and the forces of modernisation is strong it is the case that the former tendency has always been weakly represented in the actual policies introduced. Often those who supported this ideological vision were also those who supported other policies in other areas which negatively impacted on this vision, so there appear to be differences between an important tenet of this ideology and the reality of policy making. Far from it being the case, as some policy commentators suggest, that rural policies involve a choice between policies which support rural development and those that support commercial agriculture these tendencies have co-existed not as antagonistic points in a policy debate but as the expression of variable political imperatives. In the 1960's for example it was in fact the presence of this dominant modernising perspective in policy making that led to the adoption of a rural development policy as a means of countering some of the negative socio-economic effects of modernisation in the agricultural sector.

Equally in the late 1980's and early 1990's the Irish state was in the midst of a major phase of restructuring in the agricultural sector, restructuring which was increasing the minimum size of viable holdings and edging more people out of agriculture. It was in these circumstances that the state embarked on a substantial series of programmes which established a range of local, neo-corporatist bodies providing an interface between local communities and the state, buzz words such as participation, empowerment and local

consultation were to lead a number of observers to applaud what they saw as a renaissance in local development a new 'paradigm' of local, people based policy making.

Applied policy research tends to work in a specific way. It draws on the objective language of science. Problems are defined and measured projects are designed and implemented and then quantitatively evaluated and then redesigned, mainstreamed or discontinued. Over time understandings of the subject of policy practice and knowledge of how policy works is built up. Things gradually get better. The brief review of the historical events recapped above suggests a different story. Rather than a rational and linear policy making process. The events that are discussed in this chapter show that local development policies emerged contingently as policy makers responded to events, employing established patterns of policy practice to do so. The "discovery" of rural development by the Irish Government in the late 1980's followed E.U. policy moves geared towards reducing the extent to which farm income was dependent on price supports. As in the 1960's it was anticipated that such a process would reduce the numbers employed in agriculture. As had been the case a generation beforehand the introduction of measures aimed at creating alternatives to agricultural employment were introduced contingently; alongside and not in opposition to mainstream agricultural programmes. Thus again the emergence of rural development policies arose at the same time as agricultural policies were taking a direction that would reduce levels of on farm employment, and less as the emergence of an opposing approach to traditional agricultural policy. Considered in this context the new local development programmes appear to be less the product of a new paradigm and more the product of a certain policy practices. First and foremost amongst these practices was the opportunism which policy makers displayed in responding to the new funding opportunities made available from the E.U. In addition we can identify the tendency for policy makers to only turn to local programmes at times when it facilitates other policies with radically different aims. A reluctance to see power devolved and a desire to retain substantial control at the centre are also evident in the programmes introduced at this time. Thus features of administrative culture and the practises undertaken by administrators operating within that culture had an important role in shaping these programmes.

The review presented in this chapter thus calls into question the significance that specific features of the new programmes which have featured prominently in the local development literature had for those involved in policy implementation. While the programmes

implemented at this time and described in this chapter involved the introduction of a range of local forms of organisations which embodied concepts such as "integrated," and "participative." the use of these terms appears to be opposed to the reality of the programmes as implemented. While the new programmes offered new forms of organisation, and new implementation methods. Longstanding policy practices have diluted the significance of these tendencies. When considered as part of a historical tradition of policy formulation we can see that the efforts to respond to the needs of small farmers and other rural dwellers through rural policy measures have often coincided with major changes in agricultural policy which reduced the number of viable farm holdings and levels of on farm employment. In this sense the local development boom of the early 1990's bears remarkable similarities to the tradition of turning to rural development style approaches to ameliorate the adverse effects other programmes, rather than as a specific attempt to devise innovative new approaches to development. It should be born in mind that when compared with other elements of policy, such programmes continued to attract relatively low levels of public investment. They co-existed with other policies with radically different aims, and they continue to be administered in a way that suggests that such initiatives were unlikely to replace or even have a strong influence over other policies that affected rural areas.

Chapter 5. “What else but Waterford,”

“The Physical Geography of Waterford subdivides into several meaningful smaller districts but there are two primary regions. The Comeragh-Monavullagh massif almost dissects Waterford into two equal portions and subsequent settlement, cultural and economic history have adhered to this cardinal distinction between east and west.” (Burtchael p. 541 in Nolan and Power 1992)

5.1 Introduction

In chapter one it was suggested that local development programmes can be conceptualised as socially constructed networks of both human and non-human objects. Actors participate in exchanges during which they enrol other objects in a frame of meaning which accords with their interests. The actual shape that development policies takes is the result of this process as it unfolds in various different encounters at different points within this network. Employing this perspective involves an approach to researching local development which is open ended and recognises that actors possess their own knowledge, experience and ability to act. In responding to policy initiatives they do so strategically in ways that supports specific goals. In the previous two chapters these ideas were applied to an examination of the Irish states changing approach to local development policy via an analysis of the emergence of these programmes at national level. This analysis illustrated the fact that formal statements and official documents which outline any policy cannot be taken as verbatim, objective accounts of how policies are worked out and formulated. Rather they are evidence of specific policy practices. The documents and statements produced constitute a form of substantive discourse which suggests that the new policies were the product of a certain series of ordered policy making steps while “deleting” the contribution of other factors that may have been of equal or indeed greater actual significance in stimulating the development of these new policies. In reality new programmes emerge contingently as the result of established policy practices which are not necessarily part of the formal policy making process. These practices, it was suggested, transcend individual policies and appear to be entrenched aspects of administrative behaviour. When confronted with certain types of dilemmas senior administrators and policy makers tend to act in certain ways. Indeed the production of certain

styles of formal policy documentation is itself an example of such a practice. One feature of these practices is that they “cover their tracks” by supporting accounts of policy making that portray decisions in a way which obscures the significance of these practices, and of the interests that underlie them.

The new local development policies came to Waterford in 1991 when one area of the county, West Waterford, was designated for inclusion in the Area Based Response to Long Term (A.B.R). As we have seen the A.B.R was one of the principal practical manifestations of the local development boom and the initiative incorporated the key elements of the new approach to local development described in the previous chapter. In consultation with local interests the new local partnerships were to develop and implement local plans tailored to the particular requirements of their areas to address the problem of long term unemployment and related issues of socio-economic deprivation. Funds to implement these action plans were drawn from an E.U. Global Grant fund and matching national exchequer funds. This programme was a product of the new local development discourse which was itself, formulated by policy makers responding strategically to changing circumstances within the immediate policy making environment. In many cases the issues that these new local development programmes addressed weren’t in fact particularly new, nor were the proposed responses to those issues particularly novel. Significantly however certain new factors dramatically changed the context in which these issues were situated (most notably the pull factor of E.U. funding and the push factors of partnership). These considerations influenced the strategies adopted by senior policy makers and researchers which made new local development programmes such as the West Waterford Development Partnership possible.

A key feature of the formal local development discourse concerned the specific nature and role of locality as the unit and the vector for effecting planned socio-economic change. The new local rural and community development programmes all embodied certain ideas about local areas, the problems facing them and the role of locality in solving these problems. Through its designation for inclusion within one of these programmes a new official account of West Waterford came into being which presented it as a discrete contiguous area suffering from specific problems related to long term unemployment. A further implication of this approach was that within this “disadvantaged” area of West Waterford, lived a community which included various specific interests, representatives of which could be identified. Furthermore it was suggested that these representatives would be willing or could be

persuaded to form a local board to agree a set of local development priorities. Thus a specific view of the nature and role of locality permeated almost every aspect of the national and local administration of this new programme. Not least it formed the rationale for the “area based” approach. In each case it was asserted by those administering the programmes that it was possible to identify geographical areas that displayed a set of characteristics which made them eligible for inclusion in one of the new local development programmes and that within these areas it was possible and desirable to “empower” the local community. The implications of the specific importance that these programmes gave to concepts of locality went further, influencing the relationships such organisations enjoyed with other state agencies and indeed with other local development bodies. These programmes each in different ways claimed to “*constitute a means of returning power to local communities*” (Curtin and Varley 2006 p. 424). The shape of local development was thus intimately bound up with certain administrative perspectives on locality, its nature and the most effective ways and means of generating “local development” within them. The implementation of these programmes involved the extension of the local development policy network and with it a specific form of discourse about the nature of localities. Within this discourse it was suggested areas that could be “designated” and in which a degree of community support could be enlisted for a local development programme through the enrolment of certain community actors who were deemed as suitable “partners” to “represent” the wider community.

However the previous chapter highlighted the limitations of formal accounts of policy as descriptions of the actual policy process. Ironically for example, given the central role played by the concept in both formal policy documents and political rhetoric, there is little evidence of any in depth discussion of the significance of the term locality in the development of these policies. In particular there is an absence of any specific discussion of the particular mechanisms at local level that made this a more appropriate approach to delivering socio-economic development inputs. Rather it appears to be the case that in many instances policy makers assume that certain types of areas exist and exhibit traits which make them suitable for local development. Subsequently it appears to be the case that an assumption is made that local development can be “gifted” to these areas through the formation of local development organisations. This is reminiscent of the employment of “magic phrases,” mentioned in chapter two, certain terms that are sometimes invoked in policy making in an entirely unproblematic way when in fact they refer to aspects of social reality which are highly

complex and often contested. The previous chapter referred to the importance of distinguishing between what formal policy says about certain ideas and objects and the role of those formal statements in the policy process. According to the formal development policy discourse certain areas suffer from specific problems. They are spatially disadvantaged. It is on this basis that such areas were, according to this narrative, selected. It was further asserted that such programmes would achieve their desired outcome by addressing some of those issues that contributed to this disadvantage through a series of targeted measures. Additional assumptions incorporated into this programme relate to the role and willingness of the community, local social partners and the local state to co-operate in this process. Thus from the basic idea that spatially disadvantaged areas exist and can be identified much of the logic of local development is rolled out.

The idea that localities form both the subject of these programmes and the vehicle through which local development policies can be delivered is thus crucial to the approach. However, while there has been some academic discussion on the subject, little if any attempt has been made to define locality or to critically discuss its operational significance in formal local development policy documents. Discussions among policy makers of the potential impact of the new local development programmes on relationships between the state and localities are even less evident. In the absence of much in the way of specific references to how these relationships are worked out we, are left with what amount to assumptions that through these policies the state can somehow bestow or empower local communities (Curtin and Varley 2006).

In summary, the way in which local development policy discourse conceptualises the local areas in which it operates and indeed local disadvantage are critical to the approach. However there are in fact substantial and justifiable grounds on which to question the way in which locality is understood and employed in local development programmes and important reasons for investigating the topic in greater depth. There is for example little evidence of any spatial concentration of poverty in the Republic of Ireland particularly in rural areas (NESC 1995, Nolan et al 1998, Frawley et al 2000, Commins 2002). More importantly however there is reason to believe that the relationship between the locality in which actors live and their responses to local programmes introduced into these localities is more complex than the local development model suggests. In reality the way that particular actors act in relation to a specific local development programme is informed by their lifeworlds and, to

borrow a phrase from Jonathon Murdoch, they approach them heterogeneously (2006). The locality in which actors are situated is an essential dimension to this process constituting the context in which these events take place. For this reason a clear understanding of the relationship between locality and development programmes is vital. Moreover locality is particularly critical in the case of local development programmes, since a specific concept of locality lies at their very heart. In considering the response of individuals to development programmes we are dealing with people located in specific places, possessing different understandings and interests in relation to the programme. The ideas of locality that different actors bring to bear on the process through which local development programmes are developed exist at what Jonathon Murdoch described as “*the point of ‘crossover’ between the social and the material*” (Murdoch 2006, p19). Thus the question of how localities, which are the subject of development, are constituted and understood is significant.

This chapter sets out to achieve two complimentary objectives. The first of these is to provide a comprehensive description of the area in which the local development programme studied in depth was situated. The reason for doing so is not simply to provide a physical description of the area. In order to understand how the programme is worked out it is necessary to consider how actors reach the decisions they reach. This chapter provides some of the necessary contextual information as regards the wider web of objects and ideas in which local actors and representatives of the new programme encounter each other. In later chapters some of these objects will again feature in the story as the local development policy network developed in the area over time, having done so the information presented in this chapter serves to shed light on a second and wider issue. This concerns the way in which certain areas came to be designated for inclusion in these schemes and what this tells us about the relationship between formal local development policy discourse and the actual way in which the programmes were implemented in practice.

The next section of this chapter examines the areas physical characteristics its geographical location, topography, drainage and transportation networks. Following this, the areas economic life is examined through a brief examination of the principal economic sectors in the county. In addition to providing basic contextual information this examination also has an important role to play in addressing the issue of the relationship between the model of economic life in rural areas outlined in local development policy and the reality in Waterford. To this end, the situation in relation to the area’s labour force is also examined.

Following from this public administration in the county is also considered through a brief examination of the state agencies that were active in the area when the ABR programme was introduced. Such agencies were important members of the list of “Dramatis Personae” in events around the formation of the local development organisations.

Having presented this overview the data generated is employed to address the questions raised above concerning the way in which locality is conceptualised in local development. At the heart of the entire local development approach is the view that certain local areas could be identified and designated for inclusion in such schemes. A question thus arises as to the extent to which these ideas reflect the actual situation in the areas which are subject to local development. The data presented in this Chapter is thus used to shed light on this question by addressing two issues.

Firstly to what extent do these facts match the ideas about Waterford as a disadvantaged area? Does County Waterford display any great degree of deprivation or any specifically local problems warranting its inclusion in any of the locally based development programmes mentioned previously?

Secondly what does the answer to this question tell us about the relationship between local development policy discourse and the reality of implementing local development programmes in real localities?

5.2 Waterford’s multiple personalities

The name Waterford is internationally recognised through Waterford Crystal the luxury glassware brand named after the County. The prestige associated with this brand perhaps making Waterford one of the best known place names in the Republic of Ireland. The company was for generations one of the principal pillars of the economy both in Waterford City and County and for years a rare example of an Irish commercial success overseas. The association between the company and the area has been exploited by those involved in promoting tourism in Waterford, one marketing initiative launched during the course of the study branding the area as “The Crystal County”. Over the period studied and since, the

relationship between the Waterford Crystal and the geographical area from which it derived its name has changed dramatically. Waterford Crystal's operation in Waterford underwent repeated re-structuring which involved the laying off of workers locally as the company transferred production to Eastern Europe. The total closure of its plants in Dungarvan in 2005 and Waterford City in 2010 finally brought production in Waterford to an end. The company's presence in the city is reduced to a gift shop and visitor centre where, presumably, tourists travelling through Ireland can call in to buy internationally renowned Waterford Crystal made in the Czech Republic.

Even a brief consideration of Waterford's physical geography as well as its administrative and social and economic infrastructure reveals that many factors have a bearing on how the area is understood and constructed by those who live there. Far from being "The Crystal County," when considered in depth Waterford appears to be more like a mathematical fractal which continues to exhibit complexity over a large range of scales. Even in starting to consider the area it is necessary to make choices about how it is defined. For the purposes of this thesis the administrative area controlled by Waterford County Council is that which is under examination. Waterford, situated in the South East corner of the Republic of Ireland (Map 5.1), is a relatively small county in close proximity to the major urban centres of Waterford City, Kilkenny and Cork. The area has good access to sea routes via ports at Waterford, Cork and Rosslare. The administrative area of County Waterford excludes Waterford City. However the borders between the city and county have become increasingly out of touch with modern settlement patterns, with the city's suburbs extending well past the city boundaries into the "rural" county. Despite the blurring of the borders of city and county this division is not simply a feature of local government. It is an important element of local identity. The rivalry between the city and county are manifest in such issues as the selection of players on the county hurling team and more significantly in the traditional rivalry between east and west Waterford and between the city and the county. Such distinctions are an important feature in local economic and political life. While Waterford people are deeply conscious of these differences for most of them Waterford embraces both city and rural county; it is a single entity albeit one with its own internal divisions and antagonisms

As the remarks of at the start of this chapter suggest the County's topography plays a major role in contributing to the way the area is understood by those who live there. The "cardinal distinction," between east and west is in the first instance a physical one. A product of its

most significant physical feature, the Knockmealdown and Comeragh Mountain ranges (Map 5.2, Figure 5.1). The Knockmealdown range marks the North West border of the county. The Comeragh Hills cover the central part of the county and their spine effectively bisect it in a line from north to south.



Map 5.1: County Waterford



Map 5.2: County Waterford Relief Map

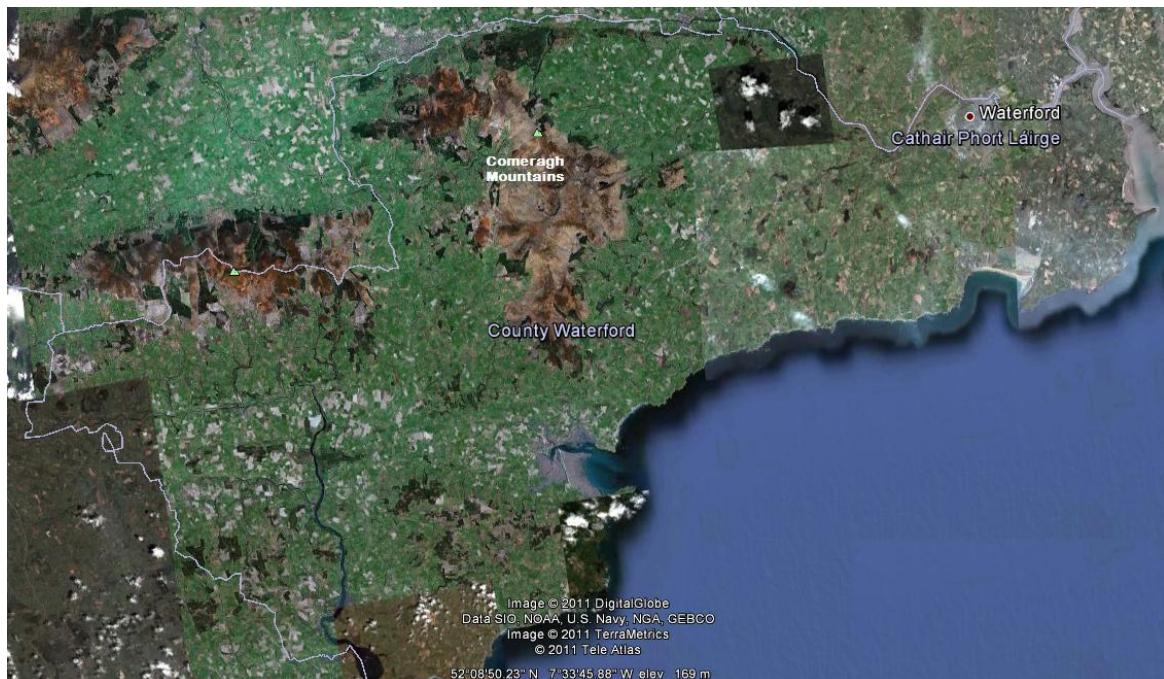
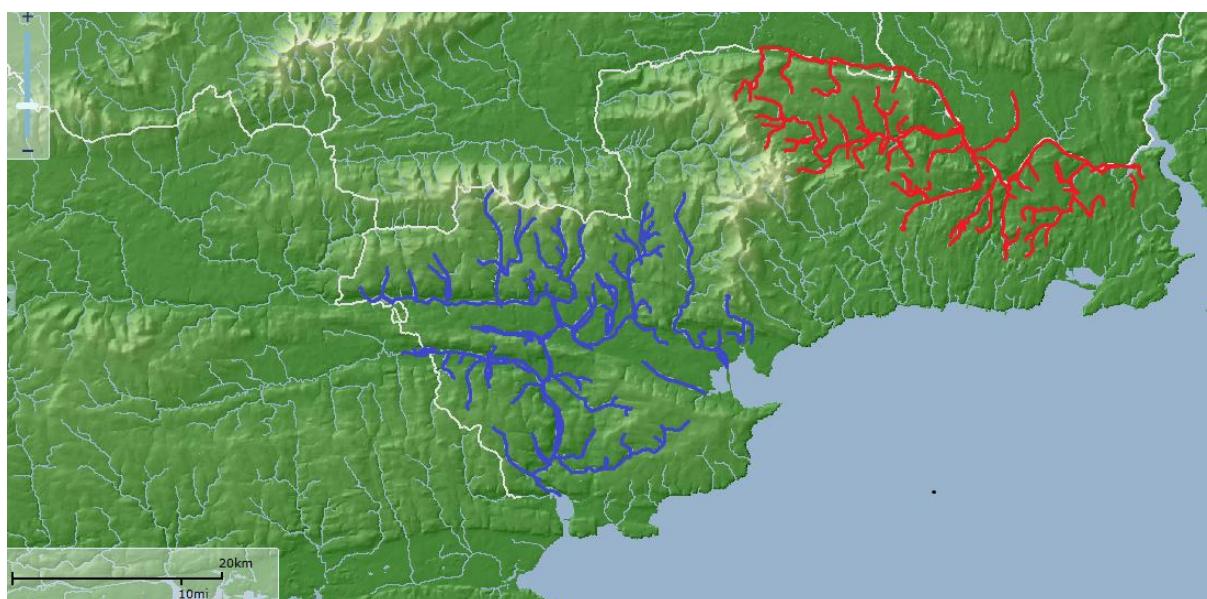


Image 5.1 Satellite image showing the Comeragh Mountains (Google Maps)

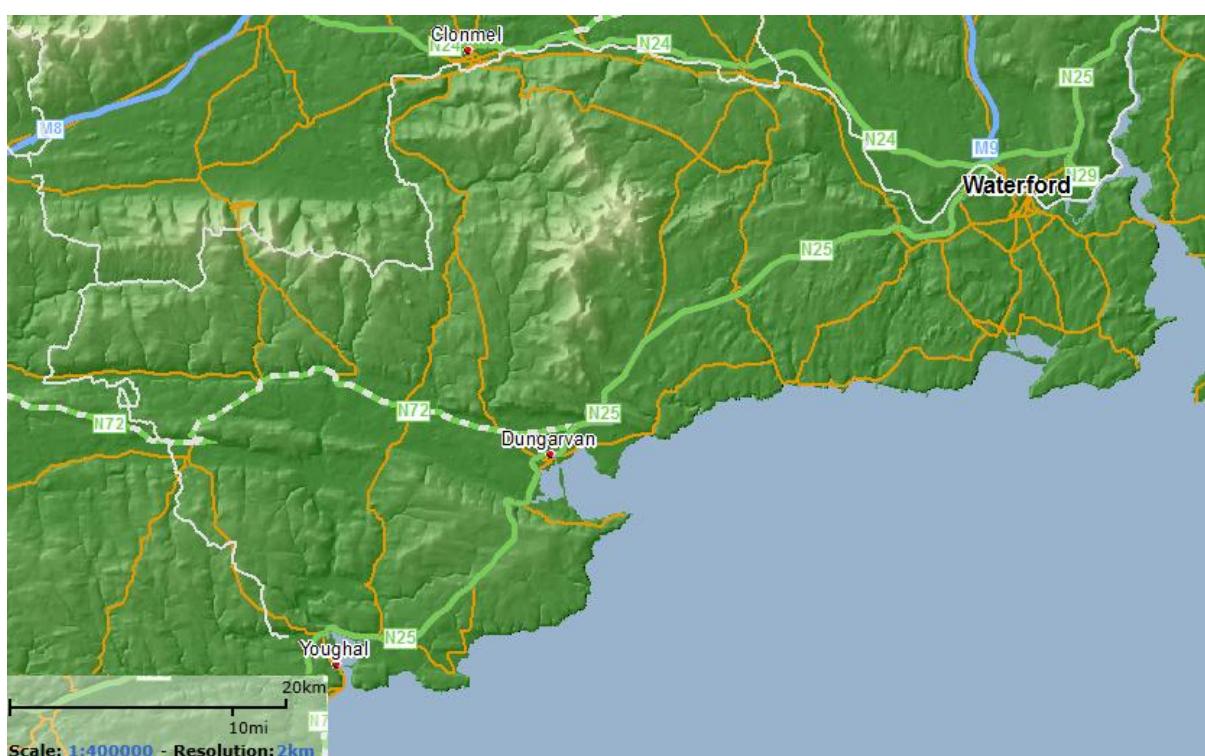


Map 5.3 Main Drainage systems (Blackwater marked blue, Suir in red)

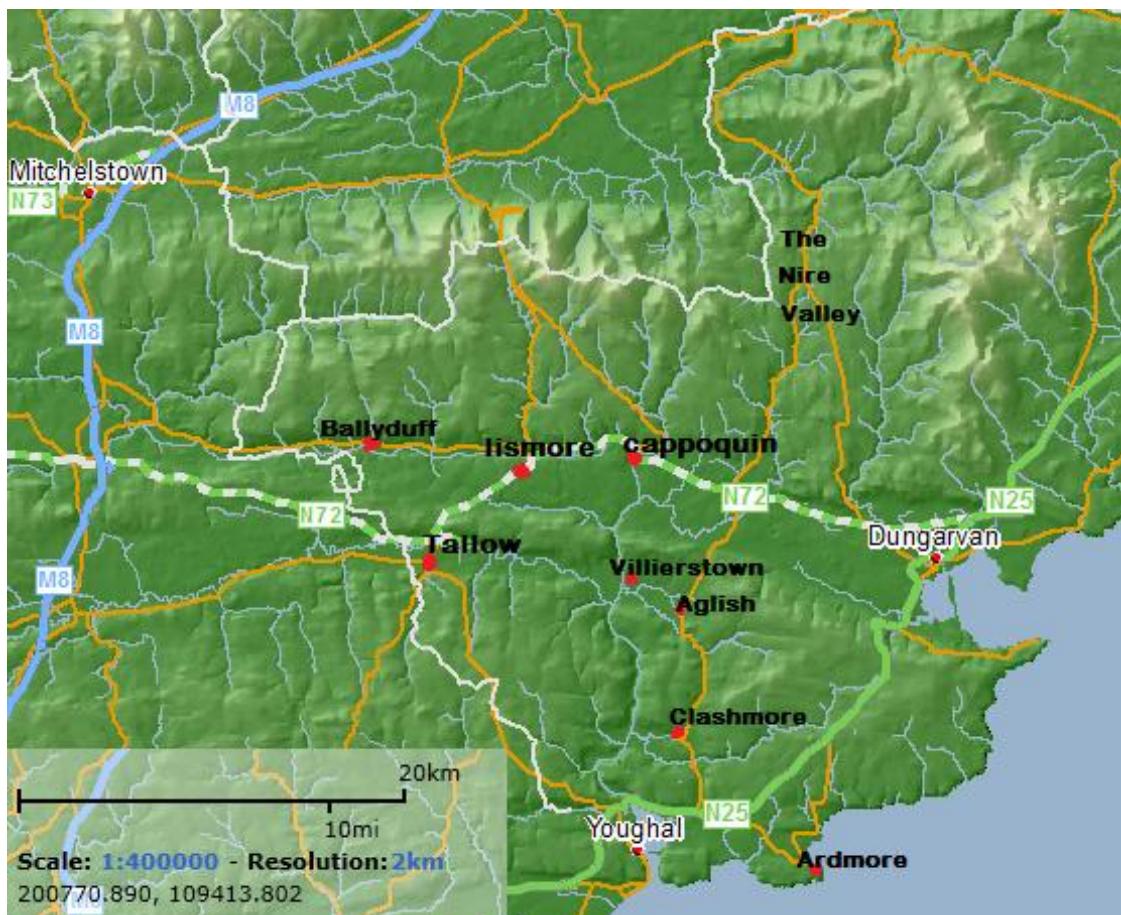
The third map illustrates the county's river system. As is clearly illustrated the drainage pattern also reflects the division between an eastern and western side of the county. The bulk of the West is drained by the Blackwater River system (marked blue on Map 5.3). In the east the Suir system (Marked red on Map 5.3) plays the same role. The South Coast has a number of bays and inlets the most significant of which are the Blackwater and Suir estuaries, which form the western and eastern ends of the county's coast line respectively, and Dungarvan and

Tramore Bays. In the past both river estuaries and Dungarvan Bay were all important centres for commercial fisheries and shipping. However while the Suir Estuary remains a particularly important centre for both fishing and shipping, the Blackwater Estuary and Dungarvan Bay have diminished in economic significance, though they retain an important role as centres for angling and related tourism and leisure boating.

The areas transport infrastructure is also a product of its topography. The two principal roads in the county both follow low lying paths along the base of the Comeragh range. These are the 69.5 kilometre section of the N.25 (also Eurorate E30) from Waterford City along the southern base of the Comeragh mountains to Dungarvan and towards Cork and the N72 running from Dungarvan along the base of the Knockmealdown mountains (Map 5.4). These two routes connect the two major population centres in the area. The city forms a natural centre for the eastern part of the county. In the west the hills form a saucer like depression centred on Dungarvan. This low lying area extends westwards in a narrowing strip at the southern base of the Comeragh and Knockmealdown ranges and it is in this strip that the small towns of Lismore and Cappoquin, are located. As with the city in the east, Dungarvan presents itself as a natural centre for West Waterford.



The mountains form part of the County's diverse landscape, which also includes large fertile valleys and a coastline that intermixes strands and sandstone cliffs, a diversity that was reflected in W.W.D.P's tourism literature "*Waterford offers the complete holiday experience. The county offers a dazzling coastline, beautiful river valleys and a glorious range of very accessible mountains.*" Besides the "cardinal," distinction between east and west, the topography and river systems contribute to the creation of a multitude of fine distinctions within Waterford. The towns located in the Blackwater basin, for example, form a defined area within west Waterford which to some, represents the true rural core of the county. These are areas of good land, historically favoured as the location for a series of demesne that surrounded a number of "big houses" in the area (Map 5.5). The Easternmost part of the county, south of the city and divided from the rest of the county by the road connecting Tramore and Waterford forms a distinct area of coastal settlements and smaller farms (Map 5.6), while the southern coastline forms a strip of cliff tops, beaches and small villages (Map 5.7).



Map 5.5 West Waterford



Map 5.6 East Waterford



Map 5.7 The Waterford Coastline

The area's varied topography is reflected in its land and soil quality. The County possesses large areas of land well suited to agriculture. However the Comeragh and Knockmealdown

mountains render some areas agriculturally poor. Communities in these areas tend to view themselves as significantly more isolated than others in the lower lying areas of the county. The North Eastern part of the county constitutes one such distinct area made up of communities living between the northern flank of the Comeragh mountains and the course of the Suir River. This area which includes the villages of Rathgormack, Clonea and Portlaw is a location in which the challenges posed by poor and more mountainous land are combined with relatively poor road access making it more isolated than other parts of the county, despite its closer proximity to the city (Map 5.8)



Map 5.8 North East Waterford.

Thus while most of the hills and the bulk of the land in the county itself are utilised for agriculture the varied land quality and landscape mean that there is considerable variation in the styles of agriculture in different areas. The best agricultural land is located in the lowest lying areas on the eastern side of the County around the city and most significantly, in the lower lying land in the Blackwater Basin in West Waterford. These areas are highly productive and are given over to the extensive production of cattle and dairying. There is also significant grain tillage and market gardening. In the area on the coast close to Dungarvan around the village of Ballinacourty, rich, sandy alluvial soil and well drained land has made it a noted centre for the production of a variety of vegetables. The more mountainous areas of the county are sparsely populated and have the poorest soil and land quality consisting of, in part, poorly drained bog land as well as areas of peaty and reclaimed land. Soil cover is thin in places, with rocky outcrops. At the time when the field work was conducted some 22,000 hectares of land in these areas were planted with coniferous tree species and common grazing

of sheep was practised. The influence of topography and land quality on the shape of communication, administrative, economic and social links within the county is clear. The west of the county has a clearly defined centre in Dungarvan while in the east the City of Waterford fulfils the same role. Both form centres for business, administrative and social activities. The distinctions created by the area's physical features are reinforced by patterns of settlement and local administrative arrangements.

5.3 Will the real rural Waterford please stand up.¹

An important issue in the local development programmes discussed in this study was the notion of spatial disadvantage. In relation to Waterford a question worth considering is the nature and the extent of the disadvantage it faced. Amongst the indicators of the problems facing various localities employed in applications for support under various local development programmes. Basic statistics derived from census data were of particular significance in this respect. Indeed A.D.M, the company established in 1992 to manage the A.B.R, commissioned GAMMA Ltd, a newly established consultancy company to produce a series of reports providing basic statistical information upon which the level of deprivation in each district electoral divisions (D.E.D) in every local authority area in the country could be assessed. The data produced by this company was intended to make it possible to rank areas in an ascending order of deprivation, thus making the classification of certain areas in line with the requirements of local development programmes possible. In this section the facts that such data reveal about County Waterford over the period of the study are considered.

In the period between 1985 and 1991 there was a small decline in Waterford's population in line with national trends during a period when the national economy was performing poorly. With the exception of Waterford City every county in Munster recorded a population decline during this period substantially greater in proportional and actual terms than that experienced in County Waterford. Towards the end of the period covered in this study Waterford's population was entering into a period of dramatic transformation. After almost two decades of relative stagnation the population began to grow at its fastest rate since the foundation of

¹ The statistics for this section are drawn from GAMMA baseline reports made available through WWDP and CSO small area statistics for the census years 91,96,2002

the state (Chart 5.1). The population increase reflected the national trend and corresponded exactly to the period during which the country began to experience strong economic growth. National, rather than local factors appear to have driven population change over this entire period.

The pattern of settlement in the county in 1991 when the study began largely reflects the geographical facts presented in the previous section. Settlement in the County can be broadly divided into three. Firstly a substantial portion of the area's population (27%) lived in the County's two large towns of Tramore (6000+) and Dungarvan (7000+). Secondly there are numerous D.E.D's which while still regarded as part of County Waterford are in fact suburbs of Waterford City. Indeed much of the county's population work in urban areas outside the County. This includes a large proportion of the population of Tramore and smaller villages such as Dunhill, Fenor and Kilmeadon. Thirdly a significant proportion of the county's population still live in the smaller rural towns and villages as well as single dwellings dispersed widely around the county.

The combination of what could be described as suburban, urban and rural dwellers within what is a relatively small area is not clear cut nor does it make it easy to draw any clear conclusions about the nature of spatial disadvantage in the area. Indeed the adherence to local authority and D.E.D boundaries in drawing up the GAMMA reports create some bizarre statistics. For example the rural area of Ballygunner boasts a population larger than that of all the Counties towns except Dungarvan and Tramore. Dunhill a supposedly small rural community has the highest standard of education in proportional terms of any DED in the County and the highest proportion of people employed in the technical and professional occupational categories.

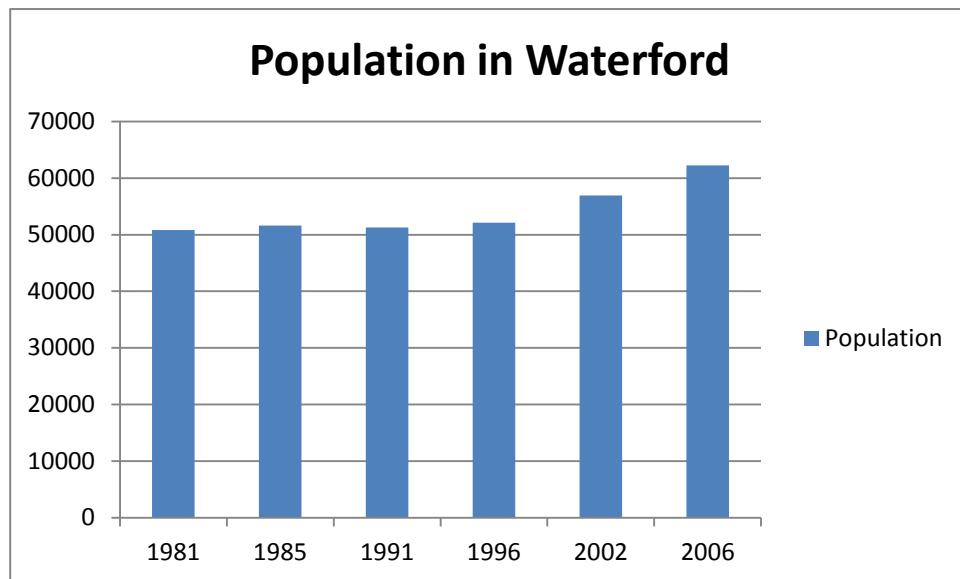


Chart 5.1 Waterford Population growth 1981-2006

There are some indications of patterns of population decline and change in demographic structure in certain rural parts of the county typical of areas experiencing rural decline in the early 1990's. This included such demographic trends as a disproportionate numbers of dependent people under 18 years of age and over 65 years, reductions in numbers in the population in the early adult years as a consequence of people leaving these areas on entering the active labour force in the late teens and early twenties and lower than average income. In 1991 this was true of some D.E.D's in the north, west and centre of the county as well as the Ring Gaeltacht². Such areas also exhibited other characteristics associated with "rural decline" including poor land quality and a proportion of smaller land holdings that was higher than elsewhere in the County. However the most "statistically," disadvantaged rural D.E.D's were in the extreme east of the county in areas in close proximity to Waterford City and outside of the area initially designated as part of W.W.D.P the West Waterford ABR. Furthermore some of the most "disadvantaged" rural D.E.D's contained demographic data which applied to very small numbers. A very bleak picture of disadvantaged rural areas applied, but only for a very small population. There is in fact little evidence to suggest that such features of rural decline applied to the entire county. Indeed overall, the general rate of

² The term Gaeltacht refers to areas where the Irish Government that Irish is the first language spoken and used in daily life. Such areas are the subject of certain state policies intended to support the Irish language. As already mentioned these areas collectively fall under the remit of Udaras Na Gaeltacht an agency responsible for their socio economic development and the promotion of the Irish language. The village of Ring and its hinterland in county Waterford are one of the smaller Gaeltacht areas.

population decline was negligible over the period and in most DED's the population has increased since the mid 1990's in line with or in many cases at a greater rate than is the case in rural areas nationally. By the 2011 census some of the highest rates of population growth in the county were recorded in "rural" DED's while population decline and other indicators of deprivation were greatest in some parts of the areas urban centres. In fact it could be argued that the greatest cause of local economic decline and deprivation in the years since 1991 relate to closures and re-organisation in traditional industry. So for example in Dungarvan one side of the town faced issues generated out of the decline of longer established industries while the other faced the challenges of accommodating an expanding workforce brought in by the arrival of new industries. In yet other areas the growth of the City of Waterford and other urban centres poses an entirely different set of problems to those associated with "rural" areas.

Throughout the period under review it was also the case that some of the most rural areas of the county displayed the features which suggested that far from being disadvantaged they were relatively affluent. Taken as a whole these facts suggest that the idea that County Waterford could be defined as a disadvantaged rural area lacks a degree of credibility. Besides the population another aspect of local development concerned the changes facing agriculture at this point. What then, can a consideration of agriculture in Waterford in the 1990's tell us about the scale of disadvantage in Waterford in the early nineteen nineties?

5.4 Agriculture in Waterford - An unsuitable case for development?

A prevalent theme in the local development narrative was the idea that agriculture was in transition or even in decline. Local development was proposed as a set of countermeasures aimed at addressing the fallout from the effects of this agricultural restructuring³. By stressing the importance of alternatives to mainstream agriculture the new locally based rural development programmes created a niche which was largely separated from agricultural policy. Indeed, it could be argued that an important feature of the perspective concerned the

³ Van Der Ploeg's work on farming styles and comparative studies on rural areas in Italy and Holland makes the point that producing similar crops in different styles can have radically different implications in terms of employment levels. One feature of the debate on agricultural development in Ireland is the almost uncontested view that modernisation resulting in reduced levels of employment on larger farm units is inevitable.

redefinition of rural spaces in a way which reduced the continued significance of agriculture in their future; rural areas are to become “multifunctional,” spaces in which a complex array of socio-economic processes unfolds. Such ideas are embodied in local development programmes which attempt to introduce initiatives which are integrated and multi sectoral.

In Waterford it was and remains the case that, regardless of what local development policy may suggest and despite significant changes in agricultural production patterns, agriculture remained an important local employer and an important element of the local economy, albeit that as a proportion of overall employment in Waterford it has steadily declined in significance as in the country nationally. Indeed Waterford represents something of an anomaly, differing in many respects from areas that have featured more often in studies of rural communities in Ireland⁴. Any consideration of the state of agriculture in Waterford prior to and during the period covered in this study makes its designation as a “disadvantaged area” all the more intriguing.

This is particularly so if the area occupied by the villages and towns in the lower lying parts of West Waterford, the area drained by the Blackwater River are considered. Even on the most cursory examinations of this area the observer would note its neatly fenced and hedged farmland interspersed with wooded areas, abundance of substantial houses, walls and gateways which combine to give the area an almost park like appearance. A more alert traveller might note the areas old buildings and demesne walls, concentration of food processing plants and dense network of old creamery buildings. They would also note the preponderance of pasture and fodder, as well as the numerous Friesian herds as evidence of the areas continued deep commitment in the beef and dairy sector. While not of course representative of the entire County, the above observations do give something of the flavour of the area visually reinforcing the impression given by the statistics. This is generally an affluent area largely given over to cattle and dairy production lacking many of the visible signs of rural decline that are to be found elsewhere in Ireland.

A more considered reflection of the area’s numerous old, closed or converted industrial, commercial and agricultural properties are also evidence of the areas vibrant economic

⁴ It is fair to say that the bulk of studies in relation to rural development have focussed on the western seaboard. Waterford, located in the south East has not been subject to the same degree of study.

history. Again Waterford differs considerably from those areas on the western sea board which have so often been the focus of study⁵ in Ireland. Farmers in Waterford have for a very long time engaged in large scale commercial farming⁶. Closely linked by the port at Waterford City to the U.K and Europe the area has traded agricultural goods overseas for centuries and throughout the 19th century provisioned shipping engaged in the transatlantic trade. In addition the County has in the past and continues to play host to a large number of downstream activities that arise from its agricultural production

When compared to other locations in Ireland agriculture in Waterford was, and indeed remains in relatively good shape having benefited more than most areas from the movement to a more market oriented and investment driven agricultural policy. The area enjoys significant physical advantages. With the exception of some areas of the mountains, soil and land quality is very good. Climatically the area has less frost and a longer growing season than is the case for the rest of the country. At the beginning of the period included in this study data produced by the Central Statistics Office (C.S.O) in relation to farm structure for the year 1990 suggest that Waterford is a region that has successfully embraced modern commercially geared extensive agriculture. In that year some 74430 hectares of land in County Waterford were in use for agricultural production, in over 3000 registered land holdings, this included what were described as 2,100 commercially viable farms⁷. The average farm size was the highest in the country at 39 hectares with relatively few small holdings concentrated in some areas around the coast in the extreme east and the extreme west with the extreme east of the county having a particularly large number of smaller holdings. Here however, industrial employment in the city and the fishery traditionally supplemented or substituted for farm income. The bulk of commercial agriculture was undertaken on structurally better holdings than was the case nationally. It is perhaps because of these factors that farm incomes in Waterford significantly exceeded the national average with production concentrated in high volume dairy and beef farming. Moreover, in Waterford

⁵Tovey makes the point that in relation to Ireland it has often seemed to be the case that specific studies carried out by ethnographers on the West Coast have been used as the basis for an analysis of Irish rural life as a whole.

⁶Local historians stress the fact that Waterford was a noted production center for both agricultural and fisheries. The area was a noted centre of agricultural production during the nineteenth century. In the eighteenth Century the area was also a noted location for the production of smoked Hake for export to Spain.

⁷ According to Teagasc the organisation had 2000 clients in 1996 representing what they then considered to be the farms that are most likely to be viable in the long term.

this production was concentrated in larger and more efficient units, a trend which continues to date.

As noted the areas soil type and climate allows for a wide range of farming activity. However in 1990 the production of beef cattle was the principal activity on seventy five per cent of farms in County Waterford. Despite the difficulties encountered in this sector it remained and a core activity amongst local farmers. While dairying was considered to be the by far the most profitable farming enterprise the rising costs of maintaining production to adequate standards, together with quota restrictions brought considerable change to the industry. Those farms involved in dairying becoming specialists having invested heavily in the business, upping production and hygiene standards and moving even further away from the mixed farm model.

Traditionally confined to the hills sheep production is a relatively small part of the areas agricultural mix when compared with the beef sector. Nevertheless expansion of the sheep flock occurred in the area during the 1990's particularly in the upland parts of the county. The comparative ease of entry into sheep production meant that numbers could be increased relatively cheaply and quickly in response to perceptions of improvements in price as occurred during the mid-1990's. This together with improvements in the quality of lamb produced led to significant increases in the total number of ewes in Waterford at this time. Subsequent declines in the value of lamb since then has resulted in ewe numbers declining again.

Tillage production in the county in line with the rest of the country is overshadowed by livestock production and in particular beef. However the area has advantages in this respect including its climate, proximity to market, soil quality and the low occurrence of plant diseases and pests and the area is noted for its tillage of cereals and market gardening. The relatively small numbers of farmers in the area involved demonstrating considerable technical and commercial competence in commercial crop production. Of the crops that were produced in the area, sugar beet and cereals were amongst the most significant with smaller numbers of farmers specialising in market gardening. Sugar beet production was dramatically declining during the period in the study with remaining production restricted to a small number of holdings. Grain production was static within Co Waterford for much of the 1980's but winter cereal yields picked up in the 1990's. Production was largely confined to a small

number of producers located in a relatively small area in the west of the county, with one large concern, Tourin Farm, accounting for over fifty per cent of the total produced in the County.

Waterford also has groups of producers located in specific areas that specialise in a range of vegetable and fruit crops. These include producers of carrots cauliflower and potatoes as well as limited production of apples, celery and cucumber in different parts of the county and yet other farmers have become involved in the production of mushrooms. A feature of all of these activities is that they tend to be undertaken by individuals or small groups of farmers operating in small pockets of the county. The only real discernible pattern in relation to these producers is that there is little in the way of a discernible pattern. There is for example no real, "grain growing area," but a small pocket of producers could be said to be located in the area around Lismore and Capoquinn on better land which is more conducive to the extensive cultivation of crops. A group operating around the village of Ardmore specialise in the production of carrots while the area has no overwhelming natural advantages in this regard. The close association to Ballinacourty with market gardening and in particular potatoes is however related to its soil quality and lack of frost being situated close to the coast.

While the extensive production of dairy and beef was the dominant style of farming in Waterford throughout the period covered in this study, the area offered its farmers the possibility of becoming involved in a wide range of farming activities. In some cases, such as that of lamb production in the hills or the production of new potatoes in Ballinacourty, there are obvious reasons why these activities should be favoured in certain locations. In relation to other areas and other activities, the question of why farmers appear to adopt certain courses of action over others is less clear. Farmers in similar locations and in some instances with similar farms encountering the same questions of change in agriculture, operating under the same European and national support framework have pursued strategies that differ radically to those of their neighbours. A key issue appears to be the willingness of certain farmers to invest in and make use of technical inputs to become involved in different ventures. The choice of farm venture appears to owe much too specific actors choosing different responses to similar situations.

In summary, it is fair to say that those seeking graphic examples of farming in crisis in the late 1980's and early 1990's would have found Waterford disappointing. There is little in its

agriculture to suggest that Waterford constituted a particularly disadvantaged rural area in this period. Indeed throughout the entire course of the study there was little evidence that the farming community in Waterford was experiencing significantly higher levels of hardship than was the case in the national population. While some households with small land holdings were in receipt of welfare payments this number was in fact lower than the national average⁸. However this is not to say that restructuring had no effects on agriculture in the area. There was a significant decline in the numbers of smaller producers engaged in milk production and overall the period was marked by a steady movement towards consolidation in the farming sector reflected in a steady rise in the size of holdings and a corresponding reduction of the overall numbers of active farms in the area. Indeed the local branch of Teagasc privately predicted that the number of active farm holdings would continue to fall⁹. Repeated survey results from the C.S.O. confirm that this process is continuing ¹⁰ (C.S.O 1996, 2000, 2007). This figure is also confirmed in an even more dramatic way in decline in the numbers employed in agriculture (Chart 5.2). Over the period from 1991 to 2006 over fifteen hundred people left fulltime agricultural employment. Though this reflects the decline in holding numbers and increase in holding size described above.

⁸ The number was less than 100 during the period studied.

⁹ Based on an internal memo sent by the Chief of the Teagasc in Waterford.

¹⁰ By 2000 the number of farms in the county was counted as 2,780 by the central statistics office and the average size of holdings had risen to over 41 hectares per unit.

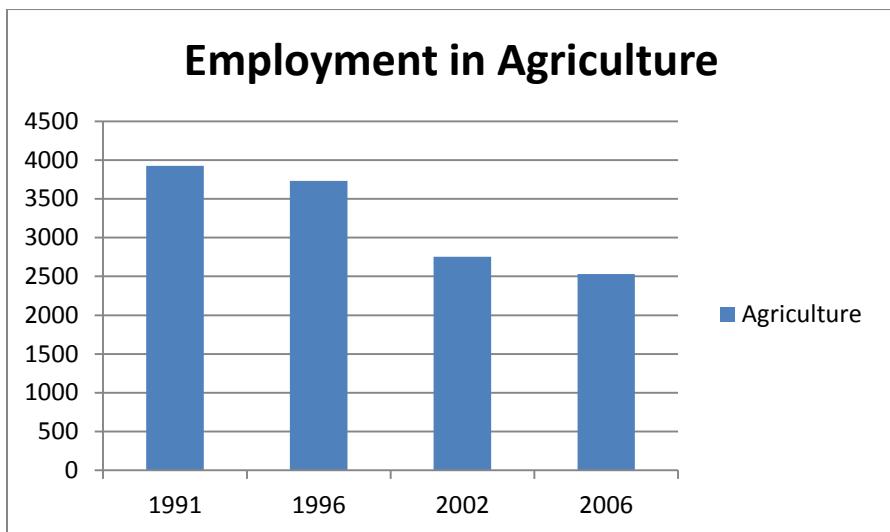


Chart 5.2 Decline in agricultural employment

The scale of the decline in agriculture as a source of employment in the area can be more fully grasped when its decline as a percentage of the workforce is taken into consideration (Chart 5.3). In 1991 agriculture accounted for almost twenty five per-cent of all employment in the County by 2006 this had fallen to less than ten per-cent, 1996 was a particularly historic year, for the first time since figures became available, agriculture ceased to be the largest occupational category in County Waterford.

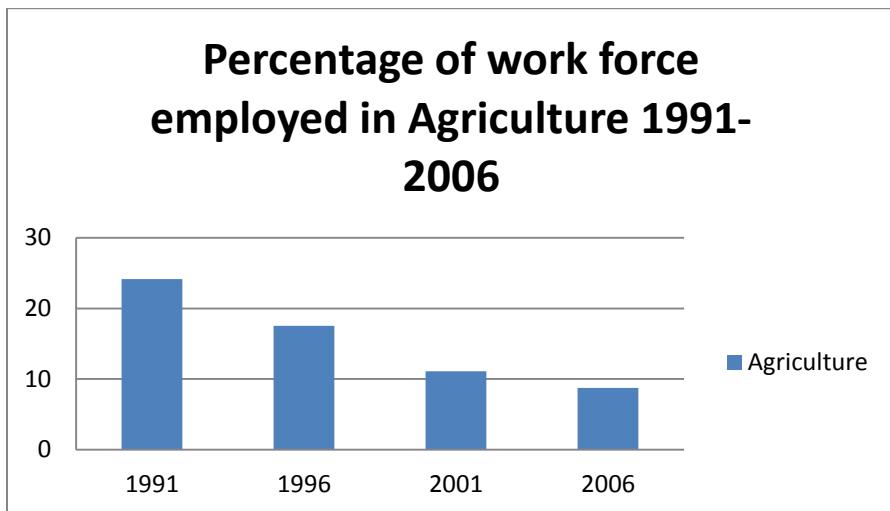


Chart 5.3 Agricultural employment as a percentage of the overall workforce.

However the situation in Waterford brings into focus an important issue in relation to the way that transition in rural areas is understood. This concerns whether in Waterford the decline in farm numbers can be taken as indicating rural decline. Declining numbers of

holdings did not in this case result in diminished productivity, social welfare payment figures do not indicate that large numbers of existing or former farmers experience unemployment or hardship in this area as a result of these transformations. The fact is that many of Waterford's farms prospered and while restructuring produced losers there is no collective evidence of the existence of a mass of small holders clinging on for survival. While one of the arguments deployed in supporting the emergence of rural development in the 1990's was that agriculture was in a transition that had to be "managed," in this instance the question needs to be asked is what exactly needed to be managed in Waterford.

5.5 Waterford Foods and Glanbia – Waterfords Agri-giant

One reason which was often cited locally to account for the robustness of Waterford's farming sector was the areas intimate link with one of Europe's largest agribusinesses. Waterford Foods dominated the counties dairy industry until 1997 when it finally merged with another large company Avonmore to become Glanbia¹¹. The scale and significance of this organisation in relation to the County's agriculture and wider economic life can hardly be stressed enough. Both as Waterford Foods and following the merger as Glanbia this multinational dominated the dairy sector in Waterford, which until 1999 also remained one of the mainstays of industrial employment in Dungarvan, its twenty five acre processing facility dominating the town (Figure 5.2). An account of the organisation of the dairy industry carried out by Breathnach (1992) charted the development of dairy co-operatives in the Waterford area, the process which ultimately concluded in the creation of Waterford Foods. The development of the co-operative movement in Waterford actually lagged behind that in other parts of the country in the late 19th and early 20th century, Breathnach attributed this to the fact that Waterford had an established commercial dairy industry privately owned and operated, which impeded the emergence of the dairy co-operatives. However after it was established Waterford Co-operative grew through a series of mergers to become one of the country's leading co-operatives. It was prominent amongst those which pioneered the development of PLC's in the dairy sector. The company it established, Waterford Foods went on to develop some of the most successful brands in the national dairy sector including

¹¹ Waterford Foods Plc was formed on behalf of the shareholders of Waterford Co-operative. During the study it finalised an agreement to merge with Avonmore Plc based in County Wexford to form Glanbia. As with Waterford Foods Avonmore also emerged out of the Dairy co-operative movement.

Kilmeaden (cheese), Yoplait (yogurts) and Gain (animal feeds) as well as the cream additive in Baileys, cream liqueur. During the latter half of the 1980's and early 1990's the company aptly fit into the a new business model then emerging out of the co-operative sector, that of the acquisitive agri-business plc (See Tovey 1991). It pursued an aggressive overseas expansion programme acquiring companies in the USA and U.K. in particular. The scale of this expansion led to difficulties in the company in the mid 1990's with high levels of borrowings leading to problems with cash flow and profit levels. This led to moves towards a restructuring of the group, which involved the sale of some of its overseas acquisitions as well as staff cuts and other cost reductions. It also prompted moves towards consolidation at corporate level. Following a previously abortive attempt to agree terms, Waterford Food shareholders finally voted to merge with the Avonmore Plc. based in neighbouring Counties Wexford and Kilkenny to form the Glanbia group in 1997.

The new group, Glanbia is amongst the largest agri-businesses in Europe and was on its creation ranked as the fifth largest dairy company in Europe. Under the restructuring that accompanied the merger one of the first decisions announced was the closure of the company's milk processing facility and administrative headquarters in Dungarvan lessening Waterford's significance to the larger corporate body. This together with the subsequent closure of the Waterford Crystal plant in 2005 meant that the two most significant industrial employers in Dungarvan when W.W.D.P was initially established no longer had a significant presence there. However while the company's significance as an industrial employer has declined its importance for the areas dairy farmers remains undiminished. Indeed as the only market for the majority of farmers supplying milk in the area, the company controls the operation of the milk market, providing the collection and processing network for the areas dairy farms. As the only real outlet for local milk it also largely controls the prices paid. Because of this the company encounters something of a conflict of interest, its origins lie in the co-operative movement and the areas dairy farmers through the co-operative still has a stake in the merged company¹². The farming community is both part owner and supplier and while the company is increasingly driven by commercial considerations it retains an important relationship with the local farming community. The company operates a system of

¹² Under recent re-structuring proposals necessitated by yet further changes in E.U's agricultural policy the farmers would be forced to sell further equity in the company effectively leaving them without a majority shareholding.

farmer advisory committees through which a dialogue is maintained with the farming community. In addition Waterford Foods and subsequently Glanbia have continued to actively involve themselves in local issues. The company maintains a high profile locally through sponsorship and the active involvement of its managers in various boards and voluntary initiatives. Farmers tend to see themselves as being at the mercy of Glanbia as regard milk prices and disputes over the rates paid regularly feature in the local news¹³. However the interlocking of the interests of local farmers and the company are such that it is scarcely imaginable that any significant rural initiative could occur in the county without the company's involvement.



Image 5.2 Waterford Foods Dungarvan Plant

5.6 Manufacturing in Waterford

The previous section highlighted the very close relationship that exists between the County's farmers and Waterford Foods (Later Glanbia). In the particular case of Waterford Foods and Glanbia it is clear that the interests of that industry and a significant group of the areas agricultural producers are deeply enmeshed. In order to understand one the other must be taken into account. Early during the research it also became very clear that another essential feature of economic life in County Waterford was its long and very significant history of

¹³ The company now functions as a private concern. In conversations the majority of farmers view it as such and as an entity over which they have no influence.

industrial activity involving a wide variety of products and processes. Indeed Waterford's industrial and commercial history suggests that it does not fit neatly into the depiction of Irish rural areas as locations of petty commodity production. As far back as the 19th century one commentator suggested that Waterford resembled areas of Devon on the South coast of England rather than other parts of Ireland (Nolan and Power 1992). The county is littered with numerous old industrial sites reminiscent of an area caught up in the early industrial revolution (Figures 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5). Within the county are a number of small "rural," communities that came into being or were for many years dependent on one particular industrial activity. While some of these industries drew on raw materials produced locally others did not. While some local industry served local interests others produced primarily for export. Through these industries Waterford has a long history of involvement in wider international networks of trade and commerce. In order to develop an understanding of "rural" Waterford it is necessary to pay attention to its industries, past and present.

The County's administrative centre, Dungarvan was historically and continues to be a significant industrial town. At the beginning of this research industrial employment was dominated by Waterford Foods and Waterford Crystal. In addition a number of other smaller manufacturing businesses including a tannery operated in the town. By the time that the research had concluded Waterford Foods had completed a merger agreement and had confirmed that it intended to close its plant in Dungarvan. The Tannery had already shut down (for the second time having first closed its doors in 1985) while Waterford Crystal would ultimately close its Dungarvan operation in 2005. With this, three of Dungarvan's most significant employers throughout the period under research would no longer have an industrial presence in the area. The closures constituted a string of serious blows to the county yet they echo previous events in the areas economic history. About three miles to the west of the town a hotel now occupies the former site of Quigley Magnesite, a heavy industry plant that processed the mineral compound magnesite for use in steel making and a range of other applications. The plant was a substantial employer in the area from the end of the 1950's until 1982 when it was finally closed. Some twenty kilometres further along the coast in the small village of Bonmahon the remnants of miner's cottages can still be seen along the street while on a hill top to the east of the village stands the former site of the copper mine worked between 1827 and 1877. Driving further east along the coast the fishing villages of Dunmore East and Passage are located on the western bank of the Suir estuary. The modern fish processing plants in Dunmore contrasting with the community centre in Passage East

which at one time formed part of one of Europe's largest smoke houses. The drive along this stretch of coastline encompasses nearly three hundred years of industrial activity. Other industrial sites include a rare Irish example of a planned industrial town, Portlaw located on the Suir in the North East of the County (figure 5.5). The town, which is laid out as a series of streets radiating from a small central green was originally built to house local cotton mill workers. In 1901 that mill was converted into a tannery which remained in production until 1985. The Odlums Mill buildings in Kilmacthomas together with the Kilmacthomas Viaduct (defunct since 1997) are further evidence of the areas industrial heritage.

In 1992 manufacturing employment accounted for thirty one per-cent of the total number at work in County Waterford. They were engaged in a diverse range of activities including food processing, crystal manufacture, pharmaceuticals and engineering. Of those companies active in the county during the period 1992 to 1998 the role of those engaged in processing food and agricultural products remained significant. According to Forbairt¹⁴ in 1992 the food processing sector included two of the areas small number of large¹⁵ employers and two of the areas medium sized firms employing 50-200 people. In 1992 the food processing sector and Waterford Crystal ensured that within the county there was a large indigenous element in the areas industrial base. Inward investment by foreign multi-nationals was concentrated in Dungarvan with two pharmaceutical companies being the most significant employers. As discussed above during this period some of the most significant local companies, including Waterford Foods/Glanbia, Waterford Crystal and Dungarvan Leathers, either closed or reduced their labour force. These industries required workers with largely manual skills. Many of the possible replacement industries, particularly those involving multinational companies required skills which those affected by restructuring in the older industries did not possess. As older industries closed it was not the case that those affected could move en masse into alternative jobs. For this reason while in overall terms unemployment was at or below the national average in county Waterford there were specific problems with small groups of people previously employed in these industries. Far from rural black spots it could be argued that the chief issues in terms of employment in the county related to changes in the areas industries which affected its urban areas

¹⁴ Forbairt, was established on January 1 1994 as the new Irish government agency to promote the development of indigenous industry in Ireland.

¹⁵ Forbairt regards companies that employed more than 200 as large and those employing 50-200 as medium.

Rural Waterfords Industrial History



Image 5.3 Bonmahon Mines Closed 1877

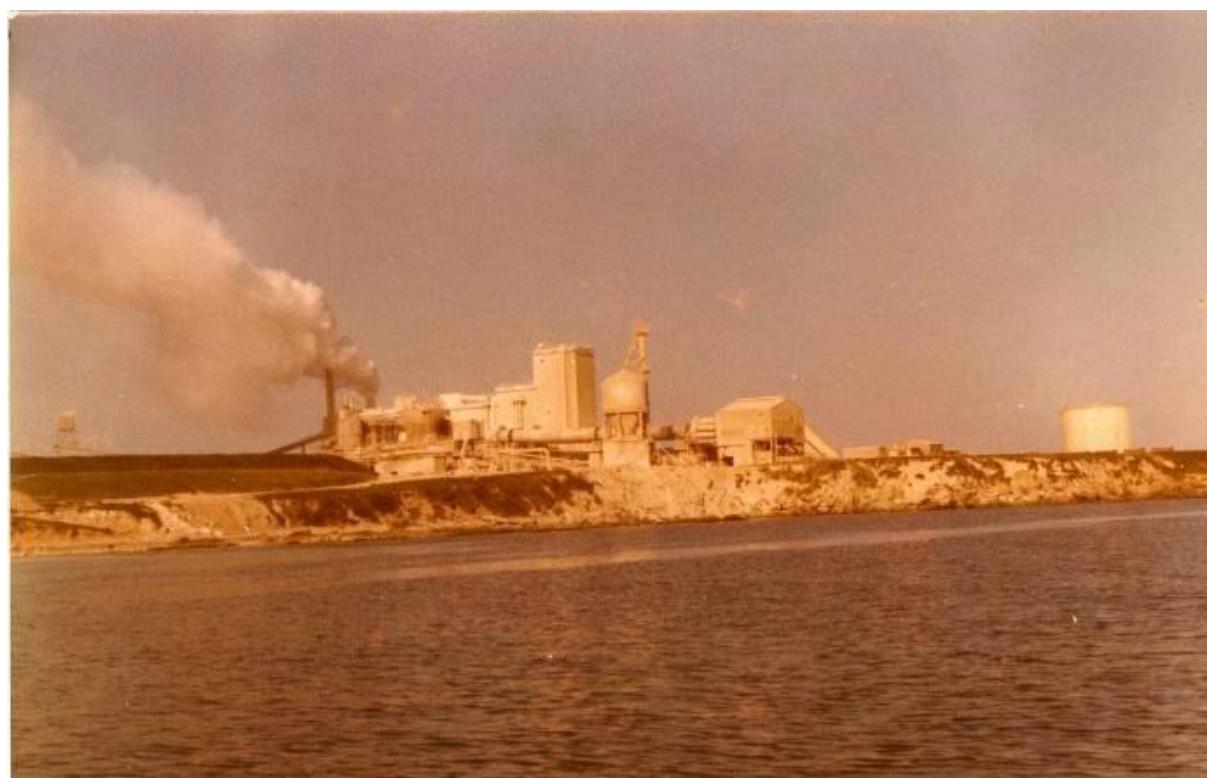


Image 5.4 Quigley Magnasite Closed 1982



Image 5.5 Portlaw A Planned Industrial Town The old tannery here closed in 1985



Image 5.6 Kilmacthomas Viaduct, Train service ended 1987



Image 5.7 The Former Site of Waterford Foods, Dungarvan, Redeveloped as a retail and leisure complex.

Outside of the larger companies mentioned above the remainder of the areas industrial companies were small enterprises. Of a total of 87 firms listed by the IDA as involved in manufacturing in 1992 the vast majority were classified as very small, employing between 1 and 15 workers (71 firms). Subsequent work undertaken by Waterford Development Partnership identified some 120 firms and businesses in the area involved in industry. However this number included enterprises which would have been too small to figure in the I.D.A. estimate (McNamara 1992b). The overall picture of the counties industrial base at this time was that it was divided between a small number of large employers and a large number of very small employers. The large employers were primarily involved in three areas, food, crystal and pharmaceuticals. The smaller businesses tended to be owner operated with limited capital or business know-how and they operated in sectors as varied as plastics and packaging, light engineering and furniture making. In the majority of cases the approach was low tech and the markets they operated in were highly competitive. Entry barriers were low and margins tight making these businesses vulnerable to competition and fluctuations in the local economy. A typical start up scenario for these businesses involving an employee of a similar local concerns leaving to “go out on his/her own”. For example a number of former

employees of one company which fabricates windows, Munster Joinery, now have their own joinery businesses.

5.7 Tourism in the Crystal County

Going by the tourism brochures it would be hard to imagine that the area has any significant industrial estates or factory farms. Rather to the tourist Waterford is presented as a rural idyll where all the farming is organic, golf courses abound and the only evidence of industry is to be found in visitor centres, craft shops and quaint 19th century architecture. Tourism is a third significant component in Waterford's economy. Tramore was for many years the counties main tourism centre. Situated south of the City on the coast, the town first became established as a tourist destination in the eighteenth century when it was known as a health spa. In the nineteenth century it developed as a seaside resort with its own railway line and Victorian era promenade. The town primarily attracted domestic tourists and was one of a number of "traditional" resort towns which lost out to the cheap package holiday. With the decline of the seaside holiday Waterford has been repackaged for the more discerning foreign and later the more upmarket local holiday maker. Throughout the 1990's Waterford was promoted as a tourism area of rich variety. With amenities that included; a number of sign-posted drives and walking routes, eight designated scenic woodlands, four blue flag beaches and the Blackwater and Suir salmon fisheries. In addition to these natural amenities must be added leisure and other facilities that have expanded in recent years to include angling centres, sailing schools, equestrian centres, hotel leisure facilities complete with swimming pools and no less than ten golf courses. Accommodation in the area includes four star hotels, country houses, bed and breakfasts, hostels and caravan parks.

The distribution of tourism activity in Waterford was reflected in the development strategy devised for the area by the South East Regional Tourism Organisation (SERTO) under which the county was divided into 3 development areas. Firstly The Greater Waterford area as defined by SERTO included the extreme east of the County, including Tramore, and Waterford City. This area was defined as an established tourism centre by which was meant that it offered between one and two thousand beds. Secondly a developing tourism area in and around Dungarvan of between four hundred and one thousand beds was identified. Finally a rural tourism area centred on the north of the county including the Nire valley (See Map 5.5) and parts of the Suir valley was also established. The SERTO strategy was

focussed on extending the range of available tourism resources, in particular increasing the supply of activities that could be carried out in the off peak period thus extending the areas tourist season. As the emphasis on bed spaces in the way that different areas were described suggests there was a significant emphasis on infrastructure and SERTO's plan largely reflected patterns of existing and new private investment. Indeed many of the developments that did receive state funding during this period were actually initiated prior to the launch of the SERTO strategy. In essence its strategy fit what was actually occurring in retrospect. In Waterford City and Tramore the 1990's saw the development of a substantial number of new and existing hotels and visitor attractions, including the Waterford Crystal visitor centre and a waterpark. Dungarvan also became a major focus for the development of tourism infrastructure chiefly in the form of new accommodation with four, four star hotels in the town's immediate vicinity. The town also boasted three golf courses by 1996. These developments benefited from significant state grant aid through Bord Failte and SERTO. Those locations designated by SERTO as being part of the "rural tourism area," were mainly parts of the County where tourism had never figured to any great extent previously. While the 1990's saw more Bed and Breakfast accommodation being offered in this area, tourism activity remained limited. SERTO made no major investments in rural tourism although as will be discussed below, some projects subsequently received support under the LEADER and CEB initiatives.

A feature of tourism activity in the area which will be discussed in more depth later was the formation of groups representing various parts of the county in a number of locations including Dungarvan and the eastern coastal area. The formation in 1993 of County Tourism Committee's across Ireland aimed to bring together parties interested in tourism to develop county level strategies and involved many such groups. Amongst the problems mentioned by the Waterford County Tourism Committee were declines in the North American market, inadequate Camping & Caravan Parks, high levels of unapproved accommodation¹⁶, particularly in and around Tramore. There was also a view that Waterford was only used as a corridor by most tourists on their way to better known tourism locations on the West Coast.

¹⁶ Unapproved accommodation refers to accommodation that is made available to tourists but is not registered with Bord Failte. Unapproved accommodation is a regular bone of contention with registered tourism operators and with the tourism authorities themselves. The standard of accommodation offered is unregulated and there is a perception that that its owners are un-taxed and don't they pay fees to the regulatory authorities.

This has contributed to a sense that the area is by-passed¹⁷. Despite continuing developments in how area is marketed, and the development of a range of activities, intended to encourage people to stay in the area longer, the question of the “corridor effect,” the idea that the area is by-passed by people on their way to the West coast continues to be cited as a problem. The committee’s proposed remedies reflected those proposed by SERTO. The body consistently argued the case for funding to develop tourism infrastructure and activities in the county. However in addition to the development of amenities it did call for the establishment of a marketing initiative aimed at promoting both the county and city of Waterford, resulting in the “crystal county,” campaign. The activities of the Waterford County Tourism Committee again brought out the traditional antagonisms between the rural west of the county and the City. As the term Crystal County as well as the decision to base this campaign in Waterford City were interpreted by some operators in West Waterford as evidence that this was a city campaign.

The 1990’s did see considerable expansion of the areas tourism infrastructure in the form of private investment in some of the facilities listed above. During this period tourism was also recast in rural areas as an alternative to agriculture with the emergence of agri-tourism as an idea. As a result the area witnessed a geographical expansion in its tourism base with the opening of new tourism businesses mainly in the form of bed and breakfasts outside of its traditional centres. Though in comparison with the western seaboard the significance of tourism in monetary and employment terms remained relatively limited, the development of an agri-tourism base in the county would it was claimed by SERTO and also later by W.W.D.P be of some considerable benefit as an alternative or supplementary income to those involved in the agricultural sector. Tourism thus assumed a new role as a supplement to rural income and the agri-tourism option was actively promoted in Waterford as part of the new and expanded local tourist product.

¹⁷ An illustration of this perception was the regular complaints at meetings of Dungarvan tourism and Dungarvan chamber of commerce about the Dungarvan by Pass. It allowed traffic to avoid the town thus representing in physical terms the belief of some operators that the area had been sacrificed to the western counties. Others made mention of the fact that a sign for Killarney, one of the country’s best known tourism destinations was positioned on the east of the town “diverting,” tourists towards the west before they reached Dungarvan.

5.8 Fisheries the Cinderella sector.

The discussion of manufacturing above suggests that an examination of the rural areas in Waterford that focuses on agriculture to the exclusion of other economic sectors is unsatisfactory. In the case of County Waterford it is clear that changes in the status of other economic sectors have featured significantly as both the cause and as potential solutions to the problems it faces. To truly understand the nature of the economic problems of an area such as Waterford and of how a local development programme that claims to be pursuing and “integrated development strategy” is likely to play out there, the wider local economy needs to be considered. The extent and importance of manufacturing has already been illustrated. In this section the significant role of the sea fishery is briefly mentioned.

As with manufacturing and agriculture, large scale commercial and export oriented fishing has linked County Waterford to wider international trade networks over a long period of time. In the past the sea fishery was of critical importance along the entire Waterford coastline from Ardmore and Helvick in the west to the Suir Estuary and Waterford City itself. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a great deal of the area’s wealth was based on its fishing industry. Fish landed in the county were exported to Spain in the 18th century. In the same period and continuing into the nineteenth century Waterford was a major centre in the Grand Banks cod fishery. Dungarvan and the villages on the Suir Estuary were important fishing centres in the early twentieth century landing hake and herring, while inshore salmon fishing was a further major source of income for many local fishermen in the Blackwater and Suir estuaries. Changing markets and fishing practices together with declining fish stocks have reduced the area’s involvement in the industry progressively since the second half of the last century. In the last thirty years in particular, catches of all traditional species have deteriorated dramatically and consistently. Indeed if the decline in the importance of any economic activity can be said to have precipitated dramatic decline in the wellbeing of Waterford communities and a “crisis,” requiring additional state intervention fishing rather than agriculture is the prime candidate. The decline in the fishery is attributable to a number of causes with decline in stocks being cited as the major factor. Other problems for the local industry include fishing regulations in relation to the use of monofilament nets, competition from larger offshore vessels, reduced seasons and quota regulations.

By 1991 commercial fishing in Waterford was reduced to a very small scale involving inshore fishing carried out on a seasonal basis concentrated around the east of the county as well as a small number of larger trawlers venturing further off shore. Dunmore East is the largest and most important of the areas fishing harbours and the only one capable of accommodating the larger offshore vessels. The harbour is also used by boats from elsewhere as a landing point at certain times of the year. It has some fish processing facilities although these facilities process fish that is often brought in by truck from other ports. With the exception of Dunmore the other coastal villages land very small quantities of fish. The industry also suffers from under investment. The majority of fishing boats in the area are small half deck vessels, while landing facilities are antiquated. Many of the smaller docks and quays are silted up. Most of the remaining commercial stocks are subject to severe restrictions and in recent years such controls have been extended as a larger variety of fish stocks have come under pressure.

As in agriculture one attempt at addressing the decline of this industry has been to encourage the development of alternative activities. In this respect throughout the 1990's the efforts of B.I.M and Udaras Na Gaeltacht have met with considerable success nationally in supporting the development of a previously almost non-existent aquaculture industry. This has had results in Waterford. In the west of the county this has involved the cultivation of Pacific Oysters and Clams in Dungarvan Bay and to a lesser extent in the Suir Estuary. Mussels are also now cultivated in the east of the county in the Suir estuary in the area around Passage East. Those involved in the industry range from individual fishermen to larger scale commercial investments undertaken by companies. In fact the first major oyster development in Dungarvan bay was by a company whose owners included senior figures in the management of what was then Waterford Foods.

Despite the emergence of the aquaculture industry it remains the case that in Waterford as nationally the relatively diminutive fishing industry remained and remains the poor and somewhat neglected relation of the infinitely more important agricultural sector. One consequence of its "Cinderella" status is that at national level fishery policy remains a relatively minor issue, it continues to be formulated and administered distinctly and the development of the fisheries sector is undertaken by a separate state agency Bord Iascaigh Mhara (B.I.M). This arrangement has resulted in a degree of separation between the fishery and other sectors that has carried over into implementation of local development projects. An

example of this being the launch in 1994 by the European Union of the PESCA programme alongside the local development programmes such as LEADER being discussed here. PESCA was intended to be the “*Community's response to the structural changes in the fishing industry brought about as a consequence of a number of factors, including global fleet reductions, the ongoing instability on the markets and the possible enlargement of the union*”¹⁸ (Dail Eireann 1994). The PESCA programme was intended to “*help the fishing industry overcome these difficulties and so to contribute to the socioeconomic survival of regions dependent on fisheries through the development of job-creating measures*”(*ibid*). The similarity between the rationale and aims of the PESCA and LEADER programmes are unmistakeable. Both programmes were responses to problems in specific industries, both suggested that these problems would pose specific difficulties for areas which were dependent on those industries and both proposed a series of measures aimed at creating employment in order to ensure the socio-economic survival of these areas. Yet while both programmes claimed to be involved in forms of integrated responses to the problems of specific areas, in Ireland they continued to be operated at national level as distinct programmes under the supervision of units within departments with sectoral responsibilities.

This and the previous three sections have examined some of the key economic sectors in County Waterford. It is important to stress that this does not represent a comprehensive overview of all of the economic activities in Waterford. These sectors were discussed because of their overall significance in relation to the economy of the area over time and also because of the significance that these sectors were to have within local development programmes. What the outline above suggests is that while undoubtedly significant, agriculture is only one of a number of activities that make up the areas traditional economic base. When considered over a longer time the combined experience of a range of different economic sectors suggest that economic life in County Waterford is more complex than is suggested by the local development narrative of a “declining” rural (that is to say agricultural) area. Rather the Waterford economy has in the past, and continues, to exhibit diversity and dynamism across a range of sectors and scales. Change has been the rule rather than the exception. The degree of linkage between different economic activities varies. While some are closely interlinked within the local economy some are more closely integrated into much wider international networks and some are closely articulated with both. This seems to

¹⁸ Dáil Éireann Debate Vol. 439 No. 4

reinforce the point made by Marsden and Murdoch (2006), a complex rural economy is articulated with a range of local and larger production and trade networks. In addition we see that this situation has existed over long periods of time, although in the case of Waterford these networks encompass both agricultural and non-agricultural activities. Amongst other things this illustrates the fact that concepts such as locality, pluriactivity and multi-functionality which have been “discovered” or “rediscovered,” over the past twenty five years have a long and uninterrupted history in this area. Waterford has an economy that has been complex and multi-functional for a long time. While some of the area’s economic activities are intimately bound to its natural resources others are not. While various elements of this economy have expanded over time others have contracted. The brief survey presented above thus raises questions about the conceptualisation of a rural area as an economic space which have an immediate and significant bearing on the key research issue addressed in this thesis. Local development as an approach was, as we have seen, based on a specific set of ideas about local areas. To a very substantial extent this involved the idea that specific socio-economic development issues were attributable to spatial factors. These understandings formed the basis upon which the areas and the actions to be included in local development programmes were decided. If as an examination of County Waterford seems to suggest these ideas do not apply to this county then it raises important questions which have a significant bearing on how the local development programme plays out which are central to our understanding of this process. Any approach to “rural,” Waterford that associates the area or its economic problems or potential with a specific activity or group of activities runs the chance of failing to recognise significant actual or potential diversity of economic activity there.

5.9 Labour Force Trends The new rural economy in Waterford.

The diversity identified in the previous section has additional implications for local development in County Waterford. This concerns understanding and addressing the needs of a diverse labour force. As we have seen the A.B.R programme was specifically designed to address employment issues through a range of measures aimed at identifying and supporting the long term unemployed. This model incorporated certain ideas about the unemployed which shaped the types of supports they were offered. Thus a consideration of employment patterns in Waterford may help to determine the extent to which this was a suitable method to

addressing the needs of the unemployed in the County. The accompanying chart (Chart 5.3) displays the actual numbers employed across seven occupational groups between 1991 and 2006¹⁹. The most outstanding feature of this chart is indeed the dramatic decline in the numbers involved in Agriculture since 1991 with the most dramatic fall occurring between 1996 and 2001. Since 1996 the numbers in every other occupational category have increased. With the exception of manufacturing this increase has been at a remarkably similar rate across all categories. In this respect Waterford clearly reflects the national trend.

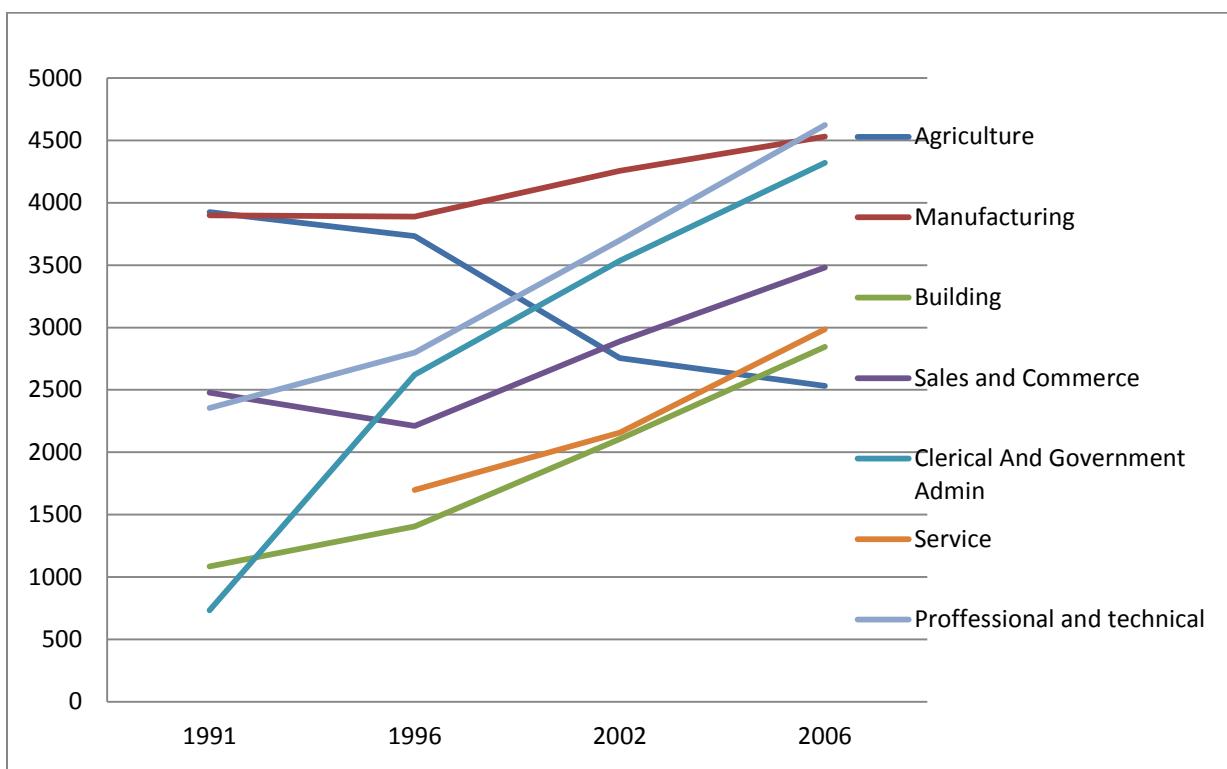


Chart 5.4 Numbers Employed By Occupational Sector

Overall there has been a degree of convergence with just over two thousand persons separating the highest from the lowest employing category in 2006 as opposed to over three thousand separating the highest and lowest figures in 1991. In 2006 the highest numbers of people were employed in the Professional and Technical category closely followed by Manufacturing and Clerical and Government Administration. Despite significant factory closures the numbers employed in manufacturing have continued to increase, albeit at a slower rate than has been the case for other occupational categories. New manufacturing employment, together with the expansion in the service sector has contributed to the growth

¹⁹ This is based on the CSO broad classifications

of population in proximity to the County's urban centres while population has declined in some of these urban areas themselves, which suggests a movement from "urban" settlement associated with declining industries towards a more sub-urban settlement pattern associated with employment in new industries which are not necessarily in close proximity to these residential areas. The highest rates of unemployment in the county have consistently been found in its urban areas. Levels of unemployment in rural areas in Ireland are normally lower than those reported in urban areas. However in the case of County Waterford the latter are particularly low.

The picture of the Waterford economy presented above suggests that the unfolding of economic life in a rural area is more subtle than is suggested by ideas such as rural decline, farm restructuring or of a transition from rural to urban lifestyles suggest. It is clearly the case that Waterford has experienced a period during which significant changes in its economy have occurred and that these have had implications for the areas labour force. Taken in isolation these can be presented as evidence of a number of processes with a variety of implications. Farm numbers have indeed fallen dramatically. However this has occurred during a period when average farm size and farm income in the area rose. It is also clear that there have been significant losses in employment in some of the area's oldest manufacturing industries. The fishery, an industry that was at one point synonymous with the County, has been decimated. Indeed in many ways the problems of industry and the fishery in Waterford appear to be much more pressing than those of agriculture. During the period examined the County could be portrayed more as the victim of collapsing fish stocks and industrial inertia than of rural collapse. However all of this it must be remembered is being discussed in the context of a period during which in overall terms employment and population began to grow substantially. This growth was in line with national trends suggesting that national rather than local factors were at play in determining the County's economic fortunes. The level of unemployment was never such as to suggest either an employment crisis in Waterford County or that it represented an area of spatial deprivation. In short there is little to suggest that County Waterford displays any great degree of deprivation or disadvantage or any specifically local problems warranting its inclusion in any of the locally based development programmes introduced at this time.

5.10 The Local State in Waterford.

The implementation of new local development programmes involves the introduction of new actors and objects into a location already occupied by other actors operating within an existing and dynamic socio-cultural context. For this reason it is important to build up a picture of the context into which the new programme was introduced. This is particularly so in this case because as was said in the first chapter and repeated at the beginning of this one, local development programmes were predicated on specific ideas about the spatial dimension of development policy. An element of the response to such programmes concerned the role of the existing agencies responsible for public administration in the area. The new local development organisations were variously charged with co-ordinating or re-directing resources and acting as catalysts for local initiative and co-operation. In many cases therefore it was inevitable that their work would involve them closely with the State; indeed it was intended that this be the case. The local development approach embodies certain ideas about the nature of this engagement as a process which involves bringing local representatives of state bodies into the local development process through involvement in local boards. In this way co-ordination happens. However, there is considerable evidence to suggest that in practice the process of establishing new local development bodies was not as straightforward as this model suggested and that there were in fact significant tensions between the new bodies and other state agencies. Citing Walsh, Mosley et al (2001) suggestions have been made “*that the various local partnerships undermine the status and role of local government structures and of elected representatives, indeed of local democracy. Political tensions have resulted in many areas,*”(p . 179) A question thus arises as to the extent to which the role envisioned for local development groups embodies a realistic appraisal of how the local state operates, and of the capacity of the new programmes to effect changes in these practices. For this reason a consideration of the extent to which the local development narrative reflects the actual situation in a specific designated area must consider how local development programmes interact with other forms of state intervention in this area. This theme will recur throughout the study as specific incidents are examined in greater depth. The material in this section of the current chapter serves as an introduction to some of the organisations which formed part of the administrative context in County Waterford.

Public services in County Waterford are delivered through a number of bodies with different management structures incorporating distinct sub-national areas and decision making arrangements. Historically the county is part of the province of Munster along with Counties Clare, Cork, Kerry, Limerick and Tipperary (north and south riding) and retains a cultural association with the province. A number of voluntary groups and associations continue to organise on a provincial basis. The county is also part of the Munster constituency for the European Parliament. However as a consequence of an E.U. requirement that some form of regional structure be established to facilitate the administration of E.U. funds. The County is also part of the South East region along with Counties Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary (South Riding) and Waterford City, This region has an un-elected regional authority drawing membership from the local authorities in the counties concerned. This entity has a monitoring role and does not administer development projects. This regional tier of administration became significant during the Irish Governments successful attempts to have the country divided into two separate regions in 1998. One encompassing a number of counties in the west, midlands and border area (the BMW region) retains disadvantaged status. The remainder of the country including Waterford is no longer considered as such.



Map 5.9 Waterford in Munster



Map 5.10 Waterford in the South East Region

The principal local authority in Waterford is the County Council with a headquarters in Dungarvan. Despite its close links with the county, Waterford City has its own local authority based in the city accentuating the rivalry between the City and County. While they are separate entities for the purposes of local government the County and City form one

national constituency with four Dail Deputies²⁰ elected from the area. In terms of national politics voting patterns in the county are relatively predictable. Traditionally the county has returned representatives based in separate areas in the county with one seat going to West Waterford, one to Waterford city, one to the east of the county, including the Tramore and the southern city suburbs and one seat going to a representative from the central part of the county. In the period 1989 to 2011 two Fianna Fail, one Labour and one Fine Gael T.D. have been elected with the exception of one brief period between 1989 and 1992 when one of the Fianna Fail seats was taken by the now defunct Progressive Democrats. The seat returned to Fianna Fail when the Progressive Democrat TD left that organisation to join Fianna Fail.

Waterford County Council has twenty three directly elected members. Besides being responsible for elements of the county's infrastructure including some waste disposal services, sewerage and roads, it has a key role in the area of physical planning as regards land use zoning. The council controls the planning application process through which construction projects are permitted. As already mentioned the local authorities were involved in the operation of the C.D.T's and the C.E.B's were established with local authority support, and retain a close relationship with them. In addition the county councils have been required to establish sections with responsibility for supporting community and enterprise development known as Community Enterprise and Economic Development units. These sections are integral elements of the county council and have assumed responsibility for a range of different projects and measures. These new local authority units exist alongside other local development initiatives and operate a range of activities without reference to them. To date the relationships between the councils and most of the entities mentioned in the preceding chapter remain ambiguous and is now under ministerial review. Three other statutory local authorities operate in the county these include Dungarvan Urban District Council, a nine member local body with some limited responsibility for infrastructure. In addition nine member Town Commissions exist in the Lismore and Tramore. They are concerned with minor infrastructure and are of limited significance.

A diverse array of other state programmes in the County are administered through a range of bodies operating under different management structures. These included structures that are organised on the basis of a county, structures that have a regional dimension and national

²⁰ Members of the Irish Parliament

bodies. The south east region as described above applies for some of the state agencies that organise on a regional basis such as the Department of Social Family and Community Affairs²¹ and Forbairt.

As the principal government department responsible for implementing social policy and Department of Social, Family and Community (formerly the Department of Social Welfare) one of the most significant in relation to local development. The bulk of its work relates to administering the national social welfare payments system. Thus for the most part the programmes that the Department operates are national programmes with limited scope for local discretion. The Department is run along strict lines with tight vertical integration. The head offices for its South East Region (the regional tier of its management structure with no policy making role) is located in Waterford City.

Forbairt was one of three agencies established in 1994 and was formally a division of the Industrial Development Authority (I.D.A). The organisation supports the development of Irish industry in the manufacturing and internationally traded sectors and offers supports that include grants and technical advice to new and existing businesses, while this involves the application of national eligibility criteria and rules the organisation has some scope to negotiate specific arrangements with individual clients. Forbairt operates in parallel to the LEADER and CEB programmes. The funding criteria applied by the three agencies meant that certain projects were eligible for funding by all three, with little hard and fast rule as to which organisation should support which project. An informal arrangement meant that in practice LEADER and the CEB tended to support extremely small enterprises employing very small numbers while Forbairt tended to target projects employing more people, though these boundaries remained ill-defined, with suggestions that all the various organisations “cherry picked,” the better projects.

Throughout the period covered in this research FAS was perhaps the single most important state agency in relation to significant elements of the work the local development organisations were attempting. Its various training and community development programmes constituted one of the most significant resources for local development both before and after the introduction of local development programmes in the early 1990's; it was undoubtedly

²¹ This is the current name of this department in this chapter I will be employing it to refer to what was at the beginning of this study the Department of Social Welfare.

the case that this agency would be affected by any attempt by local development organisations to reallocate resources. The range of services provided by FAS included some that related directly to local development policy, including skills training for the unemployed, employment schemes and the Community Enterprise Programme. As one of the principal agencies involved in the field of training and employment FAS was represented at board level on many local development programmes including the one that is the subject of this study. F.A.S. itself was structured as a vertically integrated national organisation, at the subnational level it was organised on a regional basis. County Waterford being part of FAS's South East Region with a Director based in Waterford City answerable to the national management of FAS based in Dublin²².

During the study the development of tourism in the area was the responsibility of S.E.R.T.O until it was replaced by the South East Regional Tourism Authority. This body worked alongside Bord Failte²³ the national body responsible for marketing the national tourism product. S.E.R.T.O/A was managed by a regional management board and covered the South East Regional Authority area. Other organisations that were to have a significant bearing on the events that unfolded as W.W.D.P was established included;

Teagasc – This organisation advises farmers on technical and commercial matters, as well as on the requirements for a range of grants offered through the E.U. The service has increasingly encouraged the development of competitive commercial farming, with the emphasis on improving the efficiency of current farming operations. Teagasc services in the area are managed by county officers who work in local offices under a County Agricultural Officer based in Dungarvan. Besides the main offices in Dungarvan the organisation also had offices in Lismore²⁴.

The County Waterford Vocational Education Committee (V.E.C) – This body was and remains responsible for the provision of second level vocational education in the County. The Waterford VEC is responsible for the management of just three schools. It also has a limited commitment to further education and second chance education. The VEC is responsible for

²² Following the discovery of a series of financial irregularities a decision was made to disband FAS in 2011

²³ Bord Failte was itself a victim of restructuring being replaced by Failte Ireland in 2003

²⁴ Teagasc used its Lismore offices on a limited basis and leased it to W.W.D.P during the course of the study and has since closed.

the same geographical area as the County Council and the committee includes representatives of the County Council and teachers.

B.I.M – This was the body responsible for the national development of the Irish marine fisheries. The organisation allocates a range of grant aid made available through the State and the E.U. supported marketing, aquaculture and fleet development and also undertakes some fishery related research. The organization had no permanent local office in County Waterford or regional structure and implements its programmes through staff based in Dublin.

Udaras na Gaeltacht (U.NaG) -As mentioned a small area in County Waterford is designated as a Gaeltacht and as a result comes under the administrative responsibility of U.NaG. Located in the extreme south west of the county the Waterford Gaeltacht encompasses the area around Helvick head on the eastern side of Dungarvan Bay and is known as the Ring Gaeltacht (An Rinn). As previously noted U.NaG has a wide developmental brief which includes economic development in a number of areas. The Ring Gaeltacht is exceptionally small and isolated geographically from the other Gaeltacht areas. U.NaG has no permanent office there.

The bodies discussed above are all responsible for the administration of significant aspects of state policy which impinge to varying degrees on social and economic development in Waterford. They thus form part of the administrative context into which a new local development organisation, W.W.D.P was introduced. These organisations possess a variety of management structures with decision making being vested in units that cover differing geographical areas. They also possess varying levels of discretion as to how such monies should be allocated within the region or county. There are some areas of significant overlap. Of principal concern in this study are areas of overlap concern local economic development and training and employment measures. When BIM is included no less than five organisations were directly involved in grant aiding small and medium sized local enterprises at times during this study. While training and employment measures aimed at the unemployed were undertaken by at least six bodies.

At local level the administrative environment is one in which there is a distinct lack of clarity, particularly in relation to the issues that lie at the centre of discussions of local development. In the absence of a clear sub national framework for local government,

separate bodies operate in separate geographical areas, boast varying competencies underpinned by conflicting concepts of governance, institutional histories and administrative practices. They are responsible for administering programmes that concern policy sectors such as education, welfare and training with no specific reference to the work of other agencies. Where the programmes of different agencies or organisations do overlap there is little evidence of formal mechanisms to resolve interagency conflicts. All of these features of administration in the area make local co-ordination between service providers difficult. The one set of bodies with a clear local mandate, the elected local authorities, have limited responsibilities and powers in areas of policy outside of infrastructure. What is revealed is a local administrative context which reflects the contingent patterns of policy implementation pointed to in the previous chapter as bodies have been established over time to implement new policies and programmes as they have emerged. The absence of a clear mechanism for co-ordination between these bodies (a problem that is exasperated by a lack of any clearly defined sub-national mechanism for influencing policy) means that in some cases they operate closely related functions in isolation from each other.

5.11 Conclusion: County Waterford and the threat of “rural decline,”?

This chapter began by discussing the importance of the concept of locality in local development policy. The concept is particularly important given the use of the term in local development programmes to identify both the unit and vector of action. Locality is employed within the local development network in a number of specific ways and the actual shape of the development project is heavily influenced by the encounters between actors with different interests in and understanding of the locality in which the project is operating. For this reason this chapter presents some information about the area in which the local development programmes examined in this study operated in order to consider two questions. Firstly what do these facts tell us about the idea that Waterford is a disadvantaged area? Secondly what does this tell us about the relationship between local development policy and the localities in which it operates.

One of the overriding features of this data is that it illustrates a considerable degree of heterogeneity. In County Waterford we find an area where internal differences form an intrinsic part of its identity. The mountains which split the county in two act as a boundary

which in turn has an important impact on transportation routes as well as on social and economic networks. This is manifest in the divide between an eastern area around the city and the west of the county with Dungarvan as its administrative and economic centre. Besides laying the blueprint for much of the physical infrastructure of the county this physical boundary also has a profound impact on the areas identity and also its administrative structure creating rival bases in Waterford City in the East, and Dungarvan in the West. The division extends to the traditional distinction between the “rural,” County Waterford and urban Waterford City local authority areas. The principal focus of attention for this study is County Waterford. A brief consideration of the County’s social and economic past and present suggest that the County cannot be regarded as a contiguous area in which a homogenously “rural,” population experience a specific set of socio-economic challenges related to rural decline. Demographic data demonstrates that within the area distinct localities exhibit different demographic trends. In 1991 some rural parts of the county had features that could be identified with rural decline. However other rural DED’s ranked amongst the most prosperous agricultural areas in the country. The County also contains large towns and suburbs. Many of the inhabitants of these areas are involved in economic activities which have no connection to agriculture or the rural environment at all. Some urban areas are suffering from economic and social problems associated with industrial change while still others are confronting problems associated with rapid population growth resulting from industrial expansion.

With County Waterford we are dealing with an area of contrasts. On the whole Waterford was and remains a relatively prosperous area of physical, social and economic diversity. The County has excellent areas of good land, a strong farming base, substantial industries and a substantial tourism infrastructure. It is also an area in which the level of employment in the professions, services and the sales and commercial sectors have risen substantially over the period since 1991. In fact it is now the case that the numbers employed in these sectors exceeds the numbers employed in agriculture and manufacturing combined. While there are areas in which it is possible to identify potential problems of decline and marginalisation related to changes in agriculture, in the early 1990’s the areas agriculture was in as good a shape as that of any comparable area in the country and was better positioned than many. With the end of the old price support regime it was expected that while some farmers in smaller holdings would face difficulties the county’s larger and more efficient farms would perform well. The industrial base of the county was large, expanding and, unusually,

involved significant indigenous industries in engineering, food processing, tanning and the then ubiquitous duo of Waterford Foods and Crystal. In recent years, these were joined by a number of substantial new manufacturing industries. When Waterford Foods and Crystal pulled out (a consequence of the ability of such companies to rapidly redeploy capital within the global economy rather than any specific “local” issue) manufacturing employment was certainly affected. But in overall terms it continued to rise. What then does a brief examination of some of these facts tell us about the area based approach?

The Area Based Response Programme that was implemented in West Waterford in 1991 was specifically related to the problems of long term unemployment (Craig 1993, Craig and Walsh 1994, Walsh et al 1998, Haaze et al 1996, 2003) and the poverty this long term unemployment generated had a spatial element which manifested itself in different ways. In urban areas *“A particular feature of poverty is its socio-spatial manifestation notably the clustering of poor households in urban localities... ...the concentrated incidence of poverty is further compounded by inferior housing and other social problems giving rise to a pattern of cumulative disadvantage...”* (Walsh et al 1998 p14) However *“In rural areas the spatial expression of poverty is one of peripherally and social isolation, problems compounded by ageing population networks and underdeveloped transportation networks,”* (ibid p 15 1998, See also Curtin et al 1996) The Area Based Companies had a brief to address local economic and social development involving a progression of social, educational and employment measures in specific areas of disadvantage. Equally the logic underlying the LEADER programme was based on the existence of marginalised or peripheral rural areas which could also be understood as suffering from specific problems of disadvantage. They were to be pilot measures for rural development targeted at these specific areas because they were suffering from the effects of rural decline (Kearney et al 1993). Thus an important element of the logic underlying the area based approach was that these areas suffered from specific spatial problems. This idea led to a second key feature of the approach, that these spatial problems could be better addressed through measures which facilitated the participation of people from that area experiencing those disadvantages. The idea that certain areas were experiencing specific disadvantages was central to the area based approach and the idea that certain communities were affected by these disadvantages was fundamental to their involvement in such programmes.

The A.B.R and later the LEADER and Local Development Programmes were implemented in Waterford in the period from 1991 continuing up to the present. However despite the clear evidence that over this entire period the role of agriculture and manufacturing employment declined, there is little if any evidence that Waterford exhibited the characteristics of either an urban or rural disadvantaged area. This raises a number of questions about the way in which these local development programmes operated in practice. The first of these concerns the process by which the selection of areas occurred. Clearly going by the role and operational philosophy under which the A.B.R was expected to operate Waterford was a poor candidate for inclusion in the first programme. The most obvious possibility was that the selection of Waterford was simply a mistake. There is a degree of plausibility in such a suggestion, if only because there is little hard data on the procedure used to select the areas included in the initial programme. Neither the interim, nor later final evaluation reports on the first partnerships go into detail as to how areas were selected. Waterford's selection could perhaps be a simple result of poor selection criteria being applied. This however does beg the question as to why it was persistently stated that these areas were selected on the basis of a set of criteria that included the level of unemployment and long term unemployment in each area and which incidentally made no mention of indicators of what the evaluators described as the "*rural expression*," of the "*socio spatial manifestation of poverty*" (Walsh et al 1998 p 14-15 see also Craig 1993, Craig and McKeown 1994). Later the national co-ordinators ADM Ltd did commission GAMMA Ltd to produce reports on a large number of local authority areas. This included Waterford data which clearly indicated that the area as a whole was not particularly disadvantaged. These reports only became available in 1993 long after the first areas had been designated. Even then and despite having access to additional data which suggested that Waterford was not disadvantaged, no mention of this fact was made in any project evaluations and the decision was subsequently made to extend the Waterford Partnership's life. If Waterford had been chosen by mistake it was a mistake that was never corrected.

Another explanation for the inclusion of County Waterford in the A.B.R, and one which has featured in later accounts of the evolution of local development programmes has been to stress that the A.B.R was a pilot scheme which was intended to test the area based approach to development. As such a range of areas with varying levels of unemployment were selected to assess how well the area based approach worked in different settings. While it is undoubtedly the case that both LEADER and the first A.B.R scheme were intended to be

pilot programmes for the local development approach, this approach embarked from the position that areas could be identified which exhibited specific spatial features of disadvantage. It was the presence of spatial disadvantage that formed the justification for allocating additional resources to these areas. To the residents of such areas, the various social and economic problems they confronted were compounded by specifically spatial factors. These included poor access to services, a lack of local leadership and social and political marginalisation. It was the failure of national programmes to recognise and address the specific combination of socio-economic problems confronting members of the community in these areas that justified their involvement in the planning and implementation of the new programmes. Both LEADER and the A.B.R explicitly linked local participation and targeted resource allocation with spatial disadvantage. These programmes were specifically based on the idea that certain areas needed to be treated differently. Thus, while both the first LEADER and A.B.R programmes were intended to act as pilot measures, this concerned the testing of the area based approach in order to establish if it was in fact an effective strategy for implementing socio-economic development measures *designed for disadvantaged areas*. It was not the case that they were initially presented as a test bed for a future programmes to be implemented nationally across a range of areas regardless of their socio-economic status. In fact in the case of the A.B.R where measures were identified that potentially had applicability outside disadvantaged areas it was expected that these would be adopted by national agencies through “mainstreaming,” (Craig 1993, 1998). There is little logic in the suggestion that Waterford was selected to see how well measures to counteract spatial disadvantage worked in an area that was not spatially disadvantaged. An alternative suggestion would perhaps be that County Waterford was selected as some sort of experimental control. Even if there was a shred of evidence to support this suggestion and this was a case of a government employing an incredibly thorough experimental approach, no data has ever been presented to this effect.

This chapter thus suggests that in this case there is a considerable divergence between the official version of local development policy as outlined by senior administrators and the actual way in which the policy was implemented in the practice. In addition it raises a more fundamental questions relating to the validity of the concepts of both locality and spatial disadvantage as employed in local development policy. Taking Waterford as an example it is quite clear that treating it as homogenous locality conceals a significant level of diversity which suggests that formal ideas about locality are poorly theorised. By contrast Massey

(1998) outlines a relational approach to understanding space which is worth considering here. illustrating the complexity of social space she makes the point that space “*is never closed, never fixed, in other words space is always in the process of becoming,*” (Massey 1998 p. 28 See also Massey 1999). Massey’s perspective understands space and thus locality as a dynamic function through which actors located in a heterogeneous range of relationships with a range of other actors and objects define these in spatial terms. The implementation of local development policies necessarily occurs in a local context in which there is a relationship between physical landscape, cultural concepts of place and socio-economic practises. These must all be examined as it is in the interaction between these factors, that the social institutions and relationships in any given locality are forged. This suggests that any meaningful conceptualisations of locality cannot be arbitrarily imposed from above. Locality is manifest in the dynamic interaction of a variety of factors which must be observed if the characteristics of a given area are to be identified.

Approached from this perspective the aggregate area of the County can be seen to contain a number of locations where different problems and development priorities exist. These include D.E.D’s that exhibit the characteristics associated with rural and urban decline as well as areas that are quite affluent. At least six subcategories can be identified;

- Marginalised farming areas which are dependent on farming and suffer the effects of rural decline and economically and socially peripheral position. Typified by falling farm income, poor services, poor access to markets and depopulation
- Commercially integrated farming areas where farm size and demographic structure is improving and where commercial farming by less, but larger farmers is the tendency. Typified by stable income, stable population better access to services and markets.
- Marginalised urban areas suffering from the effects of decline in traditional industries, typified by low income, high unemployment and high levels of local authority housing.
- Prosperous urban areas where there has been growth in non-farm economic activity new business start-ups and the expansion of existing businesses.

- Dormitory areas typified by large and increasing residential populations and limited local economic activity dominated by service providers and commercial outlets.
- Coastal Areas: Areas suffering from the impact of declines in both agriculture, fisheries and related industries and typified by high unemployment and low income.

This list illustrates the point that while it is possible to identify specific features of areas within County Waterford which identify them as disadvantaged, it is clearly the case that the claims of County Waterford as a whole to be regarded as such are highly dubious. When considered in detail the aggregate area of County Waterford incorporates a number of smaller areas some of which certainly do comprise “disadvantaged areas”, while others clearly do not. While in the county as a whole unemployment was unremarkable by national standards there are specific unemployment “black spots”, such as Portlaw and the west side of Dungarvan. Equally, we can identify rural black spots where the problems of rural depopulation and declining farm income were clearly evident. Thus while it is certainly possible to speak of certain pockets of disadvantage within the county, it is only possible to do so in smaller areas such as individual villages or sections within larger towns like Dungarvan. When considered in this context the question of what constitutes a disadvantaged area becomes a question of scale. Clearly the inclusion of Waterford meant that in this case at least the A.B.R was not targeting a specific “disadvantaged,” area, but rather a large and relatively affluent area which included some specific areas of disadvantage.

The ability of the area based approach to form an effective basis for targeting measures to counteract disadvantage hinges on the idea that it is possible to identify disadvantaged areas and furthermore, that such areas could and should benefit from the additional resources and opportunities for involvement in such programmes. However a close examination of Waterford indicates a degree of diversity, with areas which are disadvantaged alongside areas which are clearly not. This raises questions about the choice of the most viable unit of action for such programmes. Since the inception of these programmes the tendency in rural areas has been to move towards units of action which corresponded very closely to local authority boundaries. In the 1998 consolidation of the local development sector this position was copper fastened. Yet it is clearly the case that even in relation to the administration of local government there is a growing inconsistency between these boundaries and the nature of the

areas they include. The data presented in this chapter suggests that measurement at this scale lacks the sensitivity to adequately identify disadvantaged areas. In assessing spatial deprivation the county boundary is a very blunt instrument.

If the criticism made in the previous paragraph is valid then it has a number of practical implications for the area based approach. The first concerns the choice of the unit of action. In the case of Waterford it is clear that the overall aggregate figures which indicate that the area is not disadvantaged conceal the existence of a number of areas experiencing disadvantage. It is also possible that such areas could and should benefit from the type of inputs included in a local development programme. Thus the potential of implementers to identify what are and are not disadvantaged areas depends on essentially arbitrary decisions. These concern the size of spatial unit and the type of indicators drawn on to define the scale of disadvantage in these areas. The lack of sensitivity of the county as a unit for assessing disadvantage has already been demonstrated. Using the county as the unit of action means that people living in small disadvantaged areas can lose out because they live in an affluent county, while in other cases affluent individuals or neighbourhoods can potentially benefit from measures introduced into “disadvantaged” counties. This raises a further series of questions. If the county or local authority does not represent a suitably precise unit of measurement what does. It is difficult to establish any fixed spatial unit that would not involve some level of arbitrary decision making which would almost certainly make for hard cases. There is always the likelihood that regardless of what unit is selected certain areas would qualify for the status of disadvantage if only its borders were adjusted to exclude a few of its wealthier neighbourhoods or include a few poorer ones. This problem is in turn related to another issue, this concerns the way in which the spatial disadvantage for any given spatial unit is assessed. Most of the available indicators related to the specific features of individuals or households in an area. This included figures such as farm size, unemployment and the level of educational attainment. Such data was and continues to be employed by GAMMA Ltd in the analyses it has and continues to produce for A.D.M and its successor organisation (An Pobal 2008). This approach uses figures generated at the level of D.E.D's to produce a set of statistical scores which are then used to rank the level of disadvantage in different areas. While the rigour underlying these measurements is beyond doubt the way in which they were employed illustrates the difficulty in coming up with a meaningful concept of spatial disadvantage. Facts relating to individuals and households were employed as evidence of a phenomenon that related to the “spatial manifestation of poverty”. This in turn formed

the basic justification for the inclusion of certain areas in the new area based programmes. However while the statistics employed may be taken as indicators of the relative level of spatial disadvantage found in different areas. The causal links between the specific problems facing individuals and families and the specific spatial element of disadvantage are not clearly demonstrated. In its absence a number of significant issues concerning the spatial manifestation of poverty that such programmes were intended to address remain open to question. This includes the question of the most suitable size of spatial unit to be targeted. At what scale does the spatial manifestation of poverty “kick in”? They also concern the density at which indicators such as unemployment and farm income indicate that an area is spatially disadvantaged. Is there a magic number or tipping point beyond which point the rate of unemployment or rural depopulation signal the emergence of the “spatial manifestation of poverty”. If so how is it calculated; if not then how can such facts be used to support the idea that certain areas require a specific form of response. A further concern relates to the use of differing sets of indicators in rural and urban areas, how can different indicators be taken as indicating similar phenomena.

It appears that despite the emphasis on the local in local development policy there is a weakness at the heart of this approach relating to the way in which locality is conceptualised. The original rationale for targeting resources to specific areas and involving local communities in planning and implementing development projects was based on the idea that spatially disadvantaged areas existed and that within these areas individuals were marginalised. In this chapter we have seen that in the case of Waterford the approach was applied to a non-disadvantaged area. In this case the basic justification for targeting resources to that area did not exist. Furthermore this situation continued even after it became clear that the County was not particularly disadvantaged. At the very least this chapter suggests that the actual basis upon which West Waterford was selected for inclusion in the A.B.R programme diverged significantly from those outlined in local development policy. Secondly it is clear that even though Waterford itself cannot be regarded as a disadvantaged area, it contains smaller areas of disadvantage.

This raises critical questions about the way that local development programmes operate in practice, particularly given subsequent events. At the conclusion of the initial pilot programmes both LEADER and the A.B.R were expanded. The number of local groups was increased making the A.B.R into the Local Development Programme (LDP) a nationwide

strategy. The same was to occur with LEADER. It did indeed appear as if the paradigm had shifted and local development had arrived. The stated aim of both LEADER and the A.B.R was to identify and support development in areas experiencing specific socio-economic disadvantages. A series of partially autonomous organisations were set up to which a variety of individuals said to represent “the local community,” were appointed (OECD 1995, 1996). Amidst the enthusiastic (and unsurprising) assertion that areas of all types benefit from more resources and that more local involvement is a generally good thing a basic fact was lost. What was missing was a specific understanding of the nature of spatial disadvantage or of how these policies were intended to address it. In its absence the expansion of these programmes into nationwide initiatives inevitably involved the inclusion of other counties which were, like Waterford, relatively affluent. The involvement of such areas raises a range of issues. Among these is the question of what constitutes the local community and how it is represented. One aspect of local development programmes was that they aimed to address the fact that certain communities were marginalised. The goal of establishing local boards was to facilitate the involvement of such communities in the design and implementation of those measures. What however happens when this model is applied in an area such as Waterford which contains a range of smaller areas including besides disadvantaged locations affluent ones, and when the community in question expands to include the population of an entire county? In doing so in a county like Waterford this necessarily involved including a range of actors with widely divergent interest. Some of whom were relatively affluent and well educated members of the local elite. In this particular context some of the perennial questions which face those involved in development of any kind begin to surface. Not least these include the difficulty of identifying and working with the marginalised element in any diverse population, and the challenges posed by dealing with an existing local leadership with its own specific projects and interest to protect. The question arises as to whether programmes can avoid favouring the most willing, vociferous or able locals or those who are best able to manipulate the system or match the model of the deserving client (De Vries 1990, 1992). The question of local leadership in such a diverse population also has a bearing on how local participation in such projects is worked out, forming a crucial element in understanding the jigsaw that makes up a local development project. Which actors become members of that board? which local interests are represented? Are such boards better placed to represent the interests of local groups including those that are marginalised? How do such boards agree on a set of development priorities? Are the local priorities decided at county level by such boards any more likely to favour the interests of weaker groups or the long

term interest of the area than national programmes, particularly when the boards in question are representative of a broad range of local opinion? The question of participation and involvement are not simply resolved when local boards are introduced. These boards represent a critical arena during which the actions of board members play a crucial role determining the shape of development policies and it is to the make-up and operation of the Board of W.W.D.P that the next chapter turns.

6 Round Up The Usual Suspects –Forming a local development coalition.

6.1 Introduction

The assertions made by the advocates of local development policy focussed on the capacity of such programmes to overcome the deficiencies of other policy approaches. It has been shown that their claims were intrinsically linked with the notion of locality and spatial disadvantage. Another significant element of these approaches concerned their claims to be able to re-define or at the very least re-structure the relationship between elements of the state and the community. This involved the creation of mechanisms which allowed for a greater degree of participation in the implementation of the new local development process by the various representatives of the local state, social partners and the “community”. In large part, this was the role that the new local organisations were expected to fulfil. Through their members such organisations were the principal means by which the relationship between the local state, economic interest groups and representatives of the local community was to be mediated in local development. As we have already seen, the perceived capacity of such organisations to bring about changes in these relationships was fundamental to their adoption in development policy. The 1995 report published by the N.E.S.C referred to this process as involving the formation of “local development coalitions” (NESC 1995). Ultimately the success or failure of the project was dependent upon the successful formation and operation of these coalitions and their ability to agree local development priorities and set out measures to attain them.

In the first two chapters these claims were investigated at length. It was argued that in the literature a number of radical and pragmatic arguments are made for the local development approach. Radical arguments stress the capacity for local development to redress long standing social and political imbalances in specific localities, while pragmatic ones stress the capacity of local development organisations to offer more effective policy delivery and a means for testing innovative responses to economic and social problems. Both the ideological and pragmatic approaches emphasised the role of the local organisation in this process. If locality serves as both the unit and the vector of action in local development then

the local organisation controlled by a local board consisting of a range of people representing local interests is the primary mechanism through which the local development approach is to be implemented. However as with the question of locality, the way in which these boards operate is arguably under theorised in the local development literature. As was argued in the previous chapters, there is a tendency to assume that the physical presence of a board which has certain characteristics relating to membership, rights and responsibilities can be taken to indicate that certain processes are played out in a certain way. In the case of the programme examined in this study the term “partnership” is employed both as a noun and a verb to describe both the local development organisation and the way in which it operates. Great lengths are taken to depict the process as a collaborative one. Yet as with the case of the question of locality in local development, there has been a lack of thorough analysis of the anthropology of the local development group and in particular of its board. In its absence, the ability of researchers to understand how local development entities actually operate in practice and to correctly identify the nature of failures or weaknesses in their operation is a matter of concern.

Another issue of concern was identified at the end of the preceding chapter. This was the extent to which research and debate in relation to local development is capable of recognising, and adequately dealing with the highly diverse mix of actors who may come to be involved in events occurring inside local development organisations. In some instances the models employed in local development envisage a unitary local state juxtaposed with a homogenous disadvantaged community. Indeed, as has been demonstrated, the existence of identifiable marginalised communities was fundamental to most justifications for the local development approach. Yet the examination of Waterford undertaken in the previous chapter pointed to the existence of a considerable degree of local diversity suggesting, that at least in the case of Waterford, the demarcation of a specific area or locality did not correspond to a homogenous local community with specific development priorities. The same could be said of the local state itself, which incorporated a range of different bodies functioning within different geographical catchments, pursuing differing and sometimes even contradictory development priorities. In the absence of any understanding of how local development boards operate, we have little if any basis on which to embark on discussions of what happens when such initiatives are introduced into localities which are by their nature diverse and in which the “community” includes a diverse range of actors with varied interests. Given the sheer level of diversity that the previous chapter highlights and the failure of the local

development discourse to account for the diversity encountered, an additional and equally legitimate question arises, this is whether the actual events that occur in local development groups correspond to the process of negotiated development as suggested in development policy discourse. While the local development perspective emphasises the significance of the role local actors play in shaping the outcomes of the local project, it does not extend this point to its logical conclusion by developing the analytical tools to deal with local variations in the outcomes of development projects.

This observation points to another significant issue raised in the previous chapter, concerning the need to develop an understanding of the relationship between local development programmes and the space into which they are introduced. Local development programmes are not introduced onto a blank canvas but are insinuated into an area in which a variety of human and non-human objects are interlinked in networks pursuing specific projects. Gaining a meaningful insight into how this process occurs must take account of how such programmes become incorporated into this wider constellation of local interests and projects. As van der Ploeg puts it “*the pursuit of particular development projects should not be understood as a mere individualistic enterprise. Just as the actions (of any individual actor) can only be understood as the concomitance (interlocking) of/or distantiation from different practices, individual projects can only be realised if they are founded in the required degree of co-ordination that is, if they become part of a larger system of interlocking projects. Actor networks are crucial in this.*” (Van der Ploeg 2003, p. 7). Such an analysis needs to focus on how these schemes are incorporated into the wider lifeworld of local actors and of how these actors come to form part of the expanding network around local development as such programmes are established in specific areas. It is also, and equally, the case that such local events do not happen in isolation from the projects of those actors who are already part of the local development network. Referring to Van der Ploeg, individual projects become “interlocked” in a larger system of projects within actor networks. By examining how local actors behave and how such behaviour relates to the wider local development network a comprehensive understanding of how the boards of local organisations are formed, what interests are represented on them and how they come to make the decisions they do, can be developed. At the same time such events can be placed within a wider policy context. This chapter seeks to examine the events that actually occurred during the formation and early operation of one such local development organisation. How it came to be formed? Who came

to be appointed to that board? What impact did this have on the actions pursued by that organisation and through this on the shape of the local development programme itself?

As previously mentioned the researcher occupied different positions in relation to certain sites and types of events described in this study. The events examined in this chapter occurred just before and also during the early part of the researcher's time in the area. Thus the data that is presented in this chapter was primarily generated directly through observation of the events as they occurred and also indirectly through informal interview and an examination of documents produced during this process. For this reason after describing the programme being examined in the next section, some of the theoretical issues discussed in the first two chapters will be briefly reconsidered in order to outline how the data examined in the latter part of the chapter is to be handled. Following this the events themselves are outlined at length in the form of a thick description. Finally the chapter concludes with a discussion of the significance of the data presented.

6.2 The Area Based Response to Long Term Unemployment

The events considered in detail in this chapter concern the formation and early activities of West Waterford Development Partnership (W.W.D.P) following its designation in 1990 as one of the twelve local partnerships supported by the A.B.R. As has been stated the A.B.R was established as an "*integrated approach designed to implement a community response, in particular local areas, to long term unemployment and the danger of long term unemployment,*" (Craig 1993, p.3). Of the original twelve partnerships, four were in rural areas. These were South West Kerry, North Mayo, South West Wexford and West Waterford. Subsequent events testified to the perceived merit of the programmes. In 1994 all twelve partnerships received indications that they would receive additional support under a new local development and social inclusion programme, a situation which continues under current funding arrangements¹. In addition the perceived success of the approach was

¹While the area based Partnerships were funded under the two subsequent national development plans as part of what was to become known as the local development and social inclusion programme the actual catchments, composition and role of individual bodies has changed in different areas. In more recent years there has been a tendency to consolidate the various organisations established under the range of local development programmes with a degree of cohesion imposed in 2006 meaning that in most areas a single local development body was

reflected in the creation of a further 24 area based partnerships as part of an expanded local development programme in 1995.

One of the arguments made in support of the area based partnerships was that they offered a means by which a more co-ordinated response to unemployment and problems of deprivation in targeted areas could be delivered. Partnership was presented as the mechanism that would enhance co-ordination between service providers and incorporate local participation in decision making by a wide range of local actors. The transformation of the new ideas contained in local development policy discourse into action necessitated the creation of operational programmes which in turn involved the setting up of local bodies such as W.W.D.P. While these new organisations were involved in, what was described as, local development they were initiated and funded by the state and had to conform to certain criteria. They had to be organised under the supervision of local boards that represented a number of local interests, they had to be staffed and resourced and they had to produce plans and other documentation in support of their actions. The introduction of this new style of intervention in policy thus formed a new context in which the programmes developed by senior policy makers were to form the basis of new forms of intervention in which the state, through actors in the policy making network, came into contact with local people. This necessitated the involvement of a wide range of actors including not only staff and local beneficiaries but also such actors as local employers, farmers and unions and the existing state agencies. These actors with different interests situated in a variety of different locations had to be persuaded to assume certain roles within new state sponsored programmes and agree common development goals for the organisation. The partnerships' ability to achieve this was clearly related to the existence within the programme of the local board structure.

6.3 The development project as an expanding social network

The process outlined above can be interpreted in line with the theoretical framework outlined in chapter one as constituting a series of events during which the social network organised around local development policy expanded. In order to successfully achieve this expansion,

created from, in rural areas, the merger of local development and LEADER groups in those areas where separate entities ran both programmes.

actors in the policy network needed to enrol others in a frame of meaning as regards the new social object (the new programme) in a way which was consistent with their interests. The local development project was defined in a specific way in a specific administrative setting. This formal discourse defined the nature of local development policy and also proscribed roles for local actors and the relationship that such actors are expected to have with other actors within this policy network. It involves the introduction of the new object into a new setting in which a range of actors occupying disparate relationships with actors in the policy network, different understandings of the project and different world views must assess the project and formulate responses to it. The point at which the local boards were established thus represented an important juncture in the expansion of the development policy network at which attempts to implement the new approach to development discussed in chapter four were initiated in actual localities such as, in this case, Waterford. At this critical point, actors with a range of conflicting interests, different worldviews, and radically different stocks of knowledge were involved in encounters that were to have a critical bearing on the way in which these projects would operate.

The outcomes of these encounters would determine the make-up of the Board of W.W.D.P which would act as its main decision making body as well as determining the organisations development goals. Thus these encounters occurred at a significant point within the expanding network which can be described as a social interface, Normal Long defines such interfaces as "*a critical point of intersection between different lifeworlds, social fields or levels of social organization, where social discontinuities based upon discrepancies in values, interests, knowledge and power, are most likely to be located*" (Long 2001, p.243). During encounters at such interfaces the actors engage in activities through which the meaning of the objects in question are shaped by their efforts to accommodate or overcome the challenges posed by each other's understandings of those objects "*the interactions between actors become oriented around the problem of devising ways of 'bridging', accommodating to, or struggling against each other's different social and cognitive worlds*" (Long 1989, p.232). In the course of these encounters actors attempt to define these objects in ways which are consistent with their world views and interests. These encounters thus involve strategic action the outcome of which is inherently variable and unpredictable. As it is actors' strategies which play a defining role in determining the final shape of the object, these actors actions and the strategies they adopt at these interfaces provide an important

focus for an examination of how the reality of the local development programme is constructed.

Amongst these actors a number of distinct and identifiable groups can be discerned. These include the project staff whose knowledge and understandings of the programme are closely aligned with the meanings and understandings of the project contained in the formal discourse. In introducing the new programme into an area they are involved in efforts to enrol a range of other local actors who may or may not be part of other local networks into a new network relating to the new local development project. While it may be in the interests of the project staff to enrol others in the network in a way which conforms to the meanings and understandings of the programme contained in the formal policy discourse, the responses of local actors are informed by a wider range of local concerns and their personal assessments of the project. The process through which local development programmes are implemented involves exchanges during which different actors compete in attempts to establish the dominance of certain projects over others.

The process by which certain projects come to be selected over others is discussed in some detail by Van Der Ploeg in the context of considering different forms of social cohesion and the accompanying graphics, which are presented in order to help to illustrate this process are loosely based on ideas outlined by him (2003 pp7 -13). Figure 6.1 and 6.2 represent in very simple form the situation in a locality prior to the introduction of a new development programme. An ideal typical situation in which a series of local actors including the local state function in complete isolation from each is depicted in figure 6.1, we see each pursuing separate individual development goals. The second and third images Figure 6.2 and 6.3 represents a more realistic scenario in which the specific projects of certain local actors (in this case the local state and partner 1) are brought into alignment. The first of these scenarios (figure 6.2) illustrates the situation in which the project of partner 1 is subordinated to that of the local state. While in the case of the second of these scenario's (Figure 6.3) both the local state and Partner 1 have amended their projects in order to bring them into closer alignment. In the case of both these scenarios we see that actors are enrolled in a specific network, albeit the terms on which this occurs reflects on the differing abilities of the actors concerned to enrol others in line with their interests.

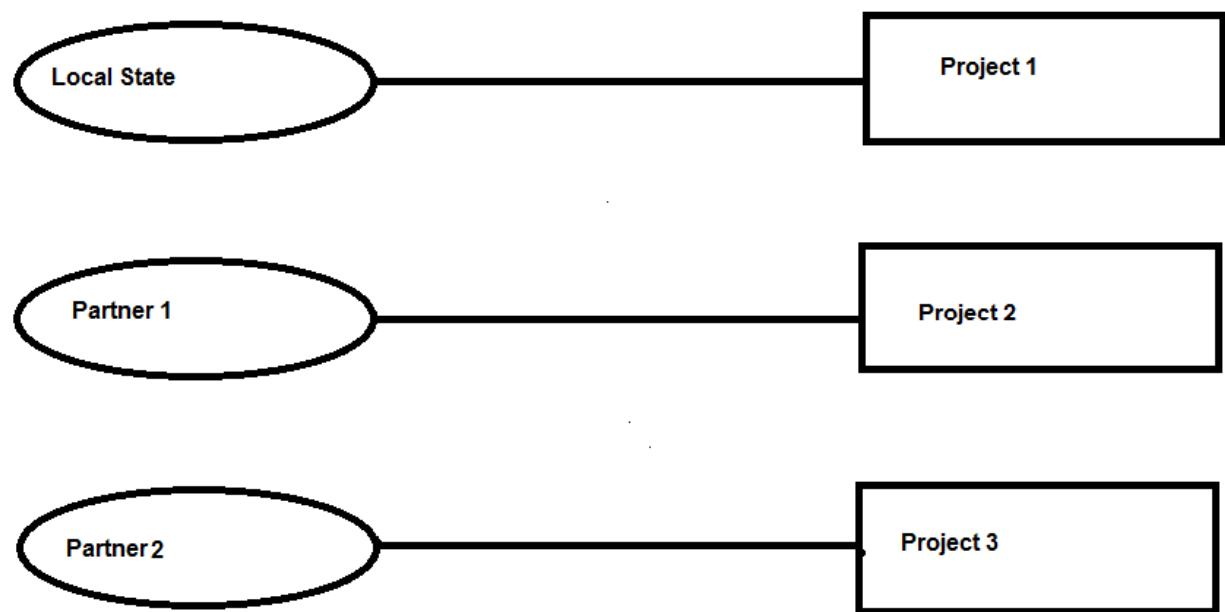


Figure 6.1 Local actors pursuing separate projects

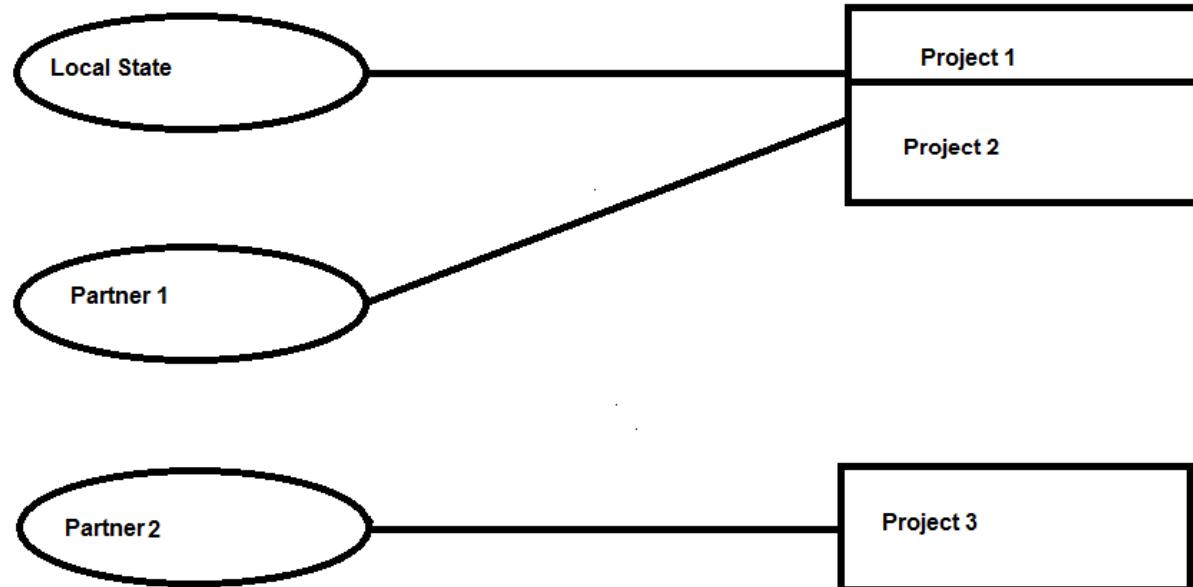


Figure 6.2 partner enrolled into project of local state

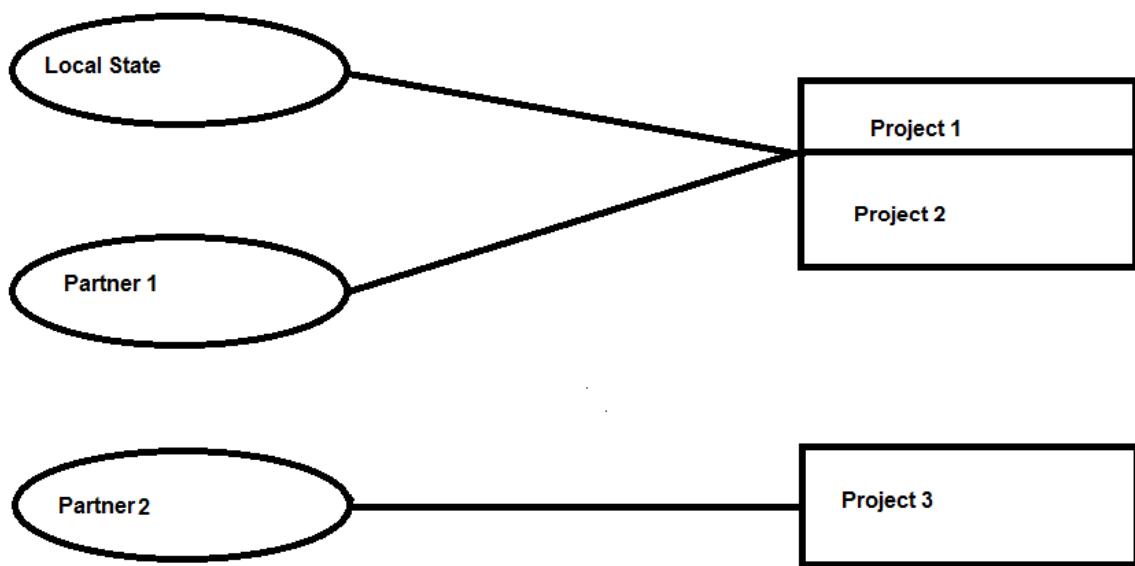


Figure 6.3 Partner 1 and local state negotiate aligned project

One feature of both figure 6.2 and 6.3 is that the development goal or project of Partner 2 remains isolated from those of the other two actors. This in itself may represent a number of outcomes. If for example partner 2's project is related to the same field of activity as those of the local state and Partner 1 then this may represent a form of exclusion. Without access to the additional resources that are collectively available to the local state and Partner 1, Partner 2 may find it much more difficult to pursue its own project. If on the other hand the project of Partner 2 relates to an entirely different field then the possibility of Partner 2 aligning its project with that of the other local actors may never arise. Indeed the degree of autonomy afforded to Partner 2 by not becoming part of this network may be beneficial allowing Partner 2 to concentrate all of its resources and energies on its own project. The introduction of a new local development programme occurs in areas in which a range of distinct local actors with their own specific projects, including it must be remembered elements of the local state, are already present. Despite the clear tendency within the Irish development policy literature to suggest an absence of coherence at the local level, it is highly likely that the areas in which such projects are introduced contain pre-existing formal and/or informal networks between actors. Indeed one of the criteria underlying the introduction of the A.B.R was the presence of a level of existing community organisation. As is suggested in figure 6.4 those actors who are attempting to introduce the local development project are initially at least entering a locality in which (regardless of what consensus has been achieved at national

level) they must enrol a range of actors in the network in a way that supports the project of local development policy (Project L).

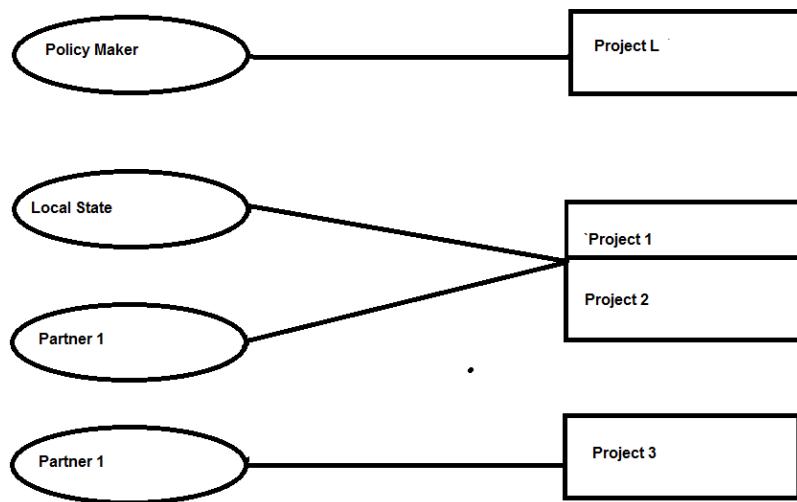


Figure 6.4 Local development programme introduced into a locality

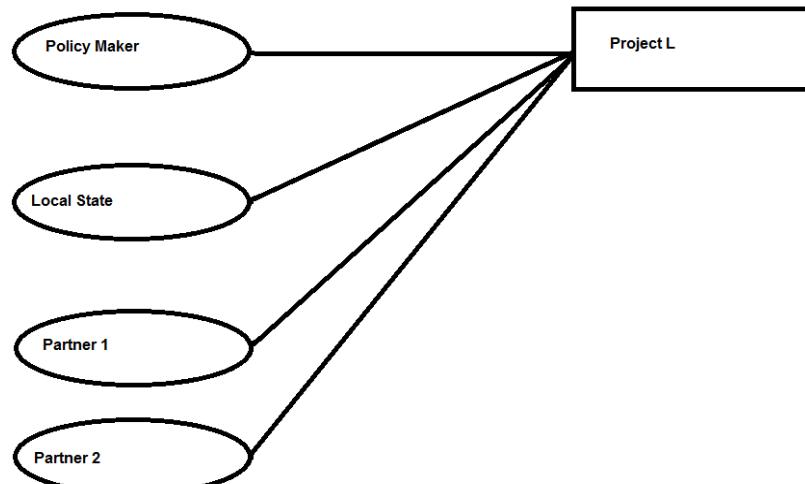


Figure 6.5 Local development programme complete enrolment

An important feature of local development approaches are their claim to inclusiveness. Unlike other state programmes which tend to limit their involvement to one sector and deal with other local actors in that context the emphasis in local development was on the approach's ability to incorporate a wide range of locals and to devise a programme around the "agreed goals of development". This placed a particular demand on such programmes to enlist the involvement of a much wider range of actors. Figure 6.5 represents an ideal outcome which could be described as total enrolment. In this case the projects of the full range of local actors including the local state have come into perfect alignment with the local

development project, in essence they have accepted and been enrolled in the network in support of Project L. In the process the alternatives to project L have faded away and any networks between specific actors have been subordinated to the network around project L. If project L is the new local development programme and the local state, Partner 1 and Partner 2 are the only actors with an interest in the areas development then the policy makers have been entirely successful as they have mobilised the entire local community around the agreed goals of development. Such an ideal typical enrolment would mean that those local actors would have come to accept the ideas about the material world and the social environment embodied in development policy discourse and the expert system that produced it. In so doing the significance of alternative forms of knowledge, including those on which they based their prior understanding of their own life world and previous projects has been displaced.

Swap the terms Local State, Partner 1 and Partner 2 in figure 6.5 with the terms State Agencies, Social Partners and Community representatives and this diagram could act as an organisational chart for the original partnership boards. This is unsurprising. Such charts are a feature of formal policy discourse and detail the proscribed roles for the various local actors involved. It is important to remember that the situation depicted in Figure 6.5 is only an illustration of an ideal typical situation in which the local actors accept the interpretations of formal policy discourse, and are enrolled into the network in a way which is in line with the roles proscribed for them by policy makers. In reality it remains the case that the new development programme represented a problematic social object. In assessing this object local actors do not necessarily fall into line with the roles proscribed for them by those responsible for introducing the new project. They retain the capacity to assess the potential impact of such new projects on their own interests as they perceive them and respond accordingly. While local development discourse presents one set of ideas as to the meaning of the new development programmes, local actors inevitably respond to these initiatives in a range of ways. Such considerations inform their behaviour at encounters at the interface with the programme and other local actors such as at public or board meetings.

The data presented in this chapter thus focusses on events that during the introduction and early activities of one local development project with a view to examining how the processes described above worked out in practice. These events are considered in order to examine what, if anything they tell us about the internal dynamics of the partnership and how these

influenced it's the shape of the organisation and the outcome of its programmes. The next part of the chapter involves a brief discussion of some of the components of the A.B.R programme as described in formal terms in particular it looks at the way that the local board, the formal mechanism through which local involvement and ownership in the Partnership was to be established. Following this the actual events that occurred during the formation of the board are considered. Finally the consequences of this process in terms of the later behaviour of the partnership are considered, by examining some events that occurred during the early operation of the partnership. The chapter concludes by briefly considering what these events tell us about the influence that actors at this interface had on the final shape of the local project.

6.4 The usual suspects

The Partnerships were but one of a range of local development programmes initiated in Ireland at about this time. As has already been suggested whilst these programmes differed in terms of the issues that they were established to address², each of these programmes bear considerable similarities in terms of the arrangements under which they were introduced by the state. All were to include representatives of a range of non-statutory and statutory agencies in decision making, all were subject to the guidance and supervision of central government bodies and all involved the formation of autonomous legal entities. Within the Partnerships the existence of a tripartite board with a degree of local autonomy was perceived as the key to enabling the development of locally relevant measures. This structure would permit the implementation of the programme in a way which reflected local needs whilst also enabling the sharing of knowledge and experience. In each case these entities were incorporated as companies limited by guarantee. Chapter four shows that the new partnership programme in Waterford was not simply dropped onto a blank "local," canvas. The area was one that was already richly patterned with existing local networks and power relationships. In the process of being introduced into the local area the programme had to be incorporated into the life world of local actors who were knowledgeable, capable and who were also part of existing local power relationships. The new programmes were not a-political. By their very

² Though the board structures under which all of these programmes operated was different the use of the Companies act as the formal mechanism under which these entities were established was common to PESP area based Partnerships LEADER groups and later the C.E.B.'s

nature the programme was to assemble a group that represented local interests and the arrival of the programme had a bearing on existing relations and social networks. This section of the chapter deals with the early process of partnership formation in Waterford. It considers how the local board came to be formed and what if any impact the responses of local actors had on the shape of the programme.

As we have already seen in each of the twelve areas originally designated for inclusion in the A.B.R, responsibility for getting a board established was given over to an existing body. This group or body was to form the initial nucleus both for what was to become the 18 member Partnership Board and also in many cases the core of its future staff. In the case of some, this involved well established local entities which had a track record in community development and in operating programmes in areas of high deprivation. As opposed to this, the origin of the group that was given the responsibility for establishing the Partnership in Waterford was somewhat different. The group there, evolved from a local organisation which, prior to the formation of the Partnership was called Waterford I.R.D. Though the national I.R.D programme was confined to the western counties, this organisation was one of a number of I.R.D groups established alongside the official programme³. The Waterford I.R.D initially established in 1989-90 was primarily limited to an advisory role having no access to state resources. It could thus best be described primarily as a body that could “identify possible projects that would contribute to the areas development”. The nature of the organisation was voluntary involving the participation of representatives who were not professional development workers. Though it had an office and hired one individual to act as secretary to the group, it had no full time executive staff. Much of the I.R.D’s early work was carried out by members of the group acting in a voluntary capacity and involved a series of meetings held in rural areas in the county.

³ A certain degree of confusion surrounds the term I.R.D in the republic of Ireland, As already stated the term integrated rural development was given to a 1988 programme initiated by the state in the Western Counties. In addition to this, the term was also adopted by a number of other bodies established independently over a significant period of time. These organisations vary in composition and in status but all represent some form of a local development coalition with input from the state sector of a varying nature. The adoption of the term by this range of organisations is related to the role of the Enterprise Trust and in particularly Phillip Mullally who, when working for that organisation, continually made use of the idea when talking to groups involved in local economic development in rural areas. As a consequence a number of groups incorporated the term in their titles.

As its name would suggest the group was specifically interested in rural development. This was reflected in its operation and membership. The group was initially based in an office in the Teagasc building in Lismore, a relatively small town in the heart of West Waterford's farming community. Both the location and the organisation that hosted the office reflect the I.R.D's primary pre-occupation with rural development. The organisation's membership is perhaps the strongest indication as to how the body defined rural development, it was headed up by the senior executive of Waterford Foods PLC in charge of new enterprises. His job within that organisation resembled that of a new business manager within any large corporation. It involved identifying new agricultural products and investigating their commercial feasibility with a view to their possible development as an enterprise by Waterford Foods. Naturally such ventures concern the farming community, as it would have been local landowners who would become involved in the production of possible new projects. Under his leadership for example an afforestation project had been introduced in Waterford. Amongst his responsibilities he was required to keep abreast with new E.U. and State financing measures. He acted as chairman of the I.R.D group. As a full time executive with managerial experience he was highly influential within the organisation providing its main source of managerial expertise. The I.R.D also included amongst its membership the chairman of the Board of Waterford Foods and a member of the West Waterford Farmers advisory committee, a body that was part of Waterford Foods and facilitated communication between the PLC and the farmers who were both suppliers and, in many cases, shareholders in the PLC. The involvement of the farming community was further highlighted with the inclusion within this body of a representative of Macra Na Feirme (a national organisation for young people in farming). Finally reflecting this focus, the manager of Teagasc in the area was also involved.

The other members of the I.R.D were comprised of people drawn primarily from rural West Waterford. Amongst them were members of community groups representing Lismore, Cappoquin, Ardmore and Tallow. In the case of all of these groups their primary interest was in economic development. Tallow was represented by the Tallow Enterprise Group, which was then involved in the conversion of a derelict building in the town into an enterprise centre. In the case of Lismore, Cappoquin and Ardmore the groups were involved in lobbying for a range of projects which would contribute to each areas economic development. These projects included a proposal for a tourist office in Ardmore and a project to carry out improvements to the river bank in Cappoquin. All of the groups represented a

relatively affluent sector of each community⁴. with a predominance of members drawn from people who operated their own businesses in each area. A possible exception to this could be made in the case of Tallow. This group was formed with the support and participation of Tallow Credit Union which provided co-operative credit facilities. While open to all the credit union movement has traditionally been regarded as a particularly significant source of credit for less affluent people. Among the Tallow groups members were a number of unemployed people. The full time manager of the Credit Union acted as the groups spokesperson with the I.R.D. In most instances the representatives of all of these groups on the I.R.D had a direct interest in activities or projects that could possibly benefit from a rural development initiative. While over twenty five per cent of the area's population live in Dungarvan and its immediate surroundings, the town was represented by only one person, a local solicitor who also acted as the group's legal advisor. Officially he was described as a representative of the Dungarvan Chamber of Commerce; again representation for this area was drawn from the business community.

During the time it operated the I.R.D's activities were limited. After it was formed a collection was organised in the rural areas of the county. Contributions were solicited for the group in order to assist them in helping to "improve the area". However the nature of these improvements was never detailed. These contributions were the main source of funding for the I.R.D's operations. The single major task that the I.R.D undertook was the submission of a proposal for the first E.U LEADER programme. The application for the LEADER proposal was drafted by a management consultant on behalf of the group. His approach to the drafting of the plan was straightforward. A series of meetings were called at which local people were advised of the fact that the LEADER programme would be introduced. In addition advertisements in the local paper also sought submissions. The emphasis in these meetings was on the fact that this programme would make money available for a range of local projects. People were then invited to submit proposals for the plan outlining projects that they wished to undertake together with costs. These included individual projects and a number of projects submitted on behalf of communities. On the whole the proposals were of a relatively large scale involving substantial spending on construction and infrastructure. The

⁴ The Tallow representative was the head of the Tallow Credit Union, which had lent money to the enterprise group of which she was also the head. The Ardmore member was the head of the local tourism group and his wife owned a pottery in the village which depended on tourists and the Cappoquin representative was the local Pharmacist owner of one of the limited number of small businesses in the town.

consultant then sifted through these proposals and produced a final draft for a programme entitled Waterford Area Rural Development (W.A.R.D). The final proposal put forward a list of projects selected from the applications received that the group proposed to fund with LEADER finance. A management structure was also outlined which would have involved the existing I.R.D group augmented by additional members and the appointment of one full time senior executive to oversee the programmes operation and act as a source of technical assistance. In the event this submission was to prove unsuccessful.

The failure of this application together with the lack of any additional visible results from the I.R.D initiative resulted in a significant amount of unhappiness amongst people locally. One of the principal issues raised in conversation was the whereabouts of the funds collected. While it was the case that the funds collected were relatively small, and they had been largely absorbed in administration the fact that money had been collected and nothing tangible had been delivered generated questions as to what had happened to the “missing” funds. Other criticisms related to the conduct of the planning process itself. Some of those who had submitted proposals complained that they had received no information as to whether or not their plan had been “accepted” for funding and that their contributions had not been acknowledged by the I.R.D. Amongst those making such complaints was the member of the I.R.D from Ardmore who complained that his group had done “most of the work,” on the proposal for the I.R.D and yet had not been acknowledged. The comments strongly supported a view expressed by one of those with whom I spoke that “*no one knew what they (the I.R.D group) were up to*”. These remarks suggest that there was a considerable lack of clarity as to what the I.R.D was attempting to achieve, its status in terms of funding and its relationship with any future LEADER programme. The organisations failure to secure LEADER funding together with a general dissatisfaction with the way the I.R.D had operated generated a degree of discontent in rural areas of West Waterford in particular. Some people were under the impression, given that the I.R.D had sought proposals for projects that the I.R.D was in a position to process applications for funding and were disappointed when no funds were forthcoming (though the I.R.D itself never had any funds to award). Others were left in the dark as to what had happened to proposals that were submitted whilst none appeared to be aware of how monies that were collected by the I.R.D were spent. This lack of clarity indicated that as an organisation the I.R.D’s had not been successful in acting in a way that was regarded as transparent by local people.

It was only following the failure of the I.R.D to secure LEADER funding and the emergence of local complaints about the performance of the I.R.D that the organisation focussed its attention on the A.B.R then being launched. According to the chairman of Waterford Foods⁵ at this time, both he and the then chairman of the I.R.D became aware of the A.B.R or as he termed it the P.E.S.P programme following the failure of the LEADER application. On their own initiative they began a lobbying effort at the Department of the Taoiseach in order to “get something for the area”. According to him, the decision to include the area in the Partnership programme followed a meeting in Dublin with the Department of the Taoiseach at which the case for West Waterford’s inclusion in the Partnership programme was made by him, together with the Waterford Foods executive who acted as chairman of the I.R.D. It appears therefore that the decision to apply for inclusion in the A.B.R was at least in part driven by a desire to secure something for the area following the failure of the group to secure LEADER funding.

The process described above by which Waterford was included in the Area Based Partnership Programme was one in which the lobbying activities of two prominent individuals in the area was thus of great significance. No detailed plan of the area was submitted, neither was any statistical data presented outlining the areas level of unemployment. Indeed no detailed outline of the reasons behind the areas selection for inclusion in the programme remains intact. This is at variance with the type of rational planning approach described in the literature where areas were designated on the basis that they experienced high levels of deprivation. In fact, and as has been shown, statistically speaking the area does not experience high unemployment or particularly low farm income. Indeed the area has the highest average farm size in the country. A second issue that needs to be noted is that the group that applied for the programme was primarily interested in economic development and drew its membership almost entirely from the local business community. The organisation had little experience in implementing local development projects and had no experience whatsoever of measures aimed at addressing the issue of unemployment. Indeed, given the apparent lack of clarity in its dealings with locals while

⁵ This was detailed at a meeting held with the IFA in September 1993 relating to the submission of a LEADER II application. At this meeting the work done to date by the Partnership was outlined. On this occasion he made the point that the work being done under the Partnership was not really relevant to farmers.

preparing the LEADER application, even its credentials as an organisation that reflected views of the local community could be questioned.

Thus the inclusion of Waterford in the A.B.R programme lies largely in contradiction to many of the central tenets of the formal discourse relating to the A.B.R. Here an organisation comprised of representatives of local business, primarily interested in local economic development and based in a relatively affluent area with low levels of unemployment and deprivation was to form the nucleus of a partnership that was to implement a programme aimed at addressing the social and economic needs of the least affluent in areas of high unemployment and social deprivation. While the review of the partnerships published by the C.P.A clearly casts the selection criteria used in the case of some of the Partnerships into doubt (Craig and McKeown 1994), the report never makes this explicit. Of the twelve areas originally designated Waterford's level of deprivation was significantly below the average⁶. What this situation suggests is that in the case of Waterford certain powerful local actors were able to by-pass the formal selection criteria described in the development policy discourse. Utilising their contacts in wider national networks with senior government figures, these local elite members were able to lobby for and ultimately secure inclusion in the programme for West Waterford. In this instance these local actors' contacts were more compelling to senior decision makers than the ideas included in the formal policy discourse.

The nucleus of the group that went on to become the Partnership in Waterford was the I.R.D group. The initial area that it was to cover was that of West Waterford. It was thus this group that was to undertake the process of Partnership building as discussed above. This involved broadening the group to eighteen members including six from the social partners, the state sector, and the community sector respectively. Many of those who had been involved in the original I.R.D were appointed to the board as social partners. Most significant amongst this group were the three members of the I.R.D most closely linked to Waterford Foods. In addition other key members of the I.R.D group were also appointed to the board of the Partnership as community members. These included many of the community groups mentioned above. In this way the members representing farming communities in west Waterford and the Dungarvan Chamber of Commerce retained their place on the board. In order to complete the board some additional members were included. The general manager of

⁶ Of all the areas include Waterford scored lowest across most indicators of deprivation.

Waterford Crystal's plant in Dungarvan, a senior executive with extensive experience at a senior level in management and the local full time officer of the A.T.G.W.U who acted as the I.C.T.U representative were both appointed as social partners. In addition to this individual an additional person was appointed as a representative for the unemployed⁷. This person was identified by the I.C.T.U representative was later to be employed as the manager of the unemployment resource centre established by I.C.T.U in the Partnership area⁸.

The board also had to include six representatives of state agencies. A number of state agencies were directly involved in services that related to the Partnership target group, i.e. those who were long term unemployed or at risk of becoming long term unemployed. These were FAS, the Department of Social Welfare and the V.E.C. Though it was not stated explicitly in the guidelines, given that each of these agencies was active in areas on which the Partnerships work would have a bearing and the fact that each had a significant role in the delivery of services to the unemployed, their inclusion on the board was considered automatic. The additional three members from the state sector were drawn from the I.D.A which was responsible for industrial development at this time, Bord Failte which was responsible for Tourism Development and Teagasc the advisory body charged with providing technical assistance to farmers.

While the original I.R.D had an overt bias towards economic development, the Partnership Board was supposed to focus on the disadvantaged. However, in the main, the Board of the Partnership retained to a large degree many of the characteristics of the I.R.D group. Under the new arrangements the positions originally held by members of the I.R.D were maintained. The Waterford Foods Executive continued as chairman, and the solicitor based in Dungarvan continued as secretary to the company and as its legal advisor. The board incorporated the original membership of the I.R.D. Thus the community sector continued to be represented primarily by people who were members of rural community groups with an interest in local economic development and in many cases specific projects. Of the six

⁷ No active representative body for the unemployed existed in the areas this representative was identified by the A.T.G.W.U board member; he had been an active trade unionist until being made redundant following the closure of Irish Leathers in 1985

⁸ One element of the A.B.R was that the the I.C.T.U would establish a resource centre for the unemployed in each of the partnership areas. It was envisioned that the partnerships would provide some financial assistance to these centres this process while their staff costs were covered under a FAS social employment scheme (S.E.S)

representatives of the Social Partners four represented local business. The addition of the General Manager of Waterford Crystal was a major development. He brought with him extensive experience in operating a large business including participation in management meetings. The business sector thus retained the chair of the organisation and the boards' secretary and legal advisor though officially listed as a community representative, was acting on behalf of the Dungarvan Chamber of Commerce. While the inclusion of representatives of the state agencies that dealt directly with the unemployed did take place, the presence at Board level of three agencies which worked with private industry, tourism and agriculture did little to diminish the extent to which the boards' membership was dominated by people with an interest in economic development and agriculture.

The mechanism by which new board members were appointed varied. In the case of members who had been part of the I.R.D it appears that they simply transferred membership to the new board. The appointment of a representative from I.C.T.U and of a representative of the unemployed were required components of the board as outlined by the Department of the Taoiseach/A.D.M and the inclusion of state agency representatives was also required, with three organisations, FAS, the Department Of Social Welfare and the VEC essentially having an automatic board place. The manager later appointed to head up the executive of the company suggested that the wherever possible the Chairman was influential in the appointment of the remaining members of the board putting forward for inclusion people who he felt would best serve the organisation. According to the manager "he (The chairman) was careful to get people who he would be able to work with". The outcome of this process was that by the time that the board came to be formally incorporated into a company limited by guarantee, its membership retained in large part the character and interests of the original I.R.D Company. In the eyes of the manager at least, this group retained a primary focus on stimulating economic development and had "no interest in the combat poverty agenda". By which he referred to the more socially inclusive dimension of the Partnership model.

While the formal policy discourse envisaged the board as a representative body which brings together a diverse range of interests it is quite clear that in the case of W.W.D.P, and despite what appeared to be the quite restrictive requirements of the formal policy discourse, certain local actors who were themselves relatively powerful were able to essentially capture the initiative and by so doing control the terms under which other members were enrolled into the local development network. Their ability to do so was related to the resources that these

actors brought to bear at this interface. These actors had a good working knowledge of the types of procedures that were involved in companies. They were also part of pre-existing networks which gave them access to resources and contacts which enabled them to do so. Their status within these networks gave them a considerable amount of influence during encounters with other actors. The means by which the partnership was secured for the area suggest that rather than simply becoming enrolled in the new local development network, these actors were able to utilise pre-existing and primarily informal networks to subordinate the new programme to their existing development projects. Firstly by appealing directly to senior decision makers to have the area designated for inclusion in the programme, and secondly through controlling the way in which additional members were brought into the board. Rather than building a broad development partnership the core people on the board again fell back on their contacts in established networks to identify and appoint additional members with interests which were close to those of the key board members themselves. This process was facilitated through the continued emphasis that was placed on the role of enterprise as the principal developmental goal of the board. By defining the role of the Partnership in this way the core members made the inclusion of certain people and organisations on the board almost self-explanatory while the adoption of such an approach made the exclusion of others almost automatic. In short certain local actors proved to be quite adept at ensuring that, while they complied with the letter of the formal requirements of the partnership building process, they were able to retain a considerable degree of control over the way the partnership operated. Thus rather than representing a broad local consensus they constituted a group who included individuals who had to be there because the rules dictated that this was the case, alongside a “working majority,” of people with shared the developmental goals of its key members. In W.W.D.P it wasn’t so much the case that the board came together to agree development goals that they could support but rather that the group came together because they agreed upon specific types of development goals as defined by the core members or because the core members felt compelled to include them.

6.5 Early days of the Partnership

The guidelines governing the way in which the Partnerships were to be established give the impression that this was to involve a process in which events followed in sequence. These were the formation of a board, the development of local plans and finally the implementation of measures. This model included a number of practical steps that each Partnership was

required to undertake. Initially these involved practical issues to enable it to implement the programme such as the formation of a board, its incorporation as a company limited by guarantee and the recruitment and appointment of staff. These were to be followed by a series of measures outlined by the Department and later by A.D.M which included the drafting of an area plan and carrying out an “initial contact programme,” with the unemployed. The area plan was a document outlining the Partnership’s proposals for the three years of the programme, the proposed actions to be undertaken together with the budgets required. In order to prepare this document some basic socio-economic data had to be assembled on the area. The initial contact programme was intended to involve a measure through which the Partnership was to contact and begin the process of working with its “target group,” the unemployed and those in danger of becoming unemployed. This was to involve identifying and meeting with this group in order to begin assessing their needs.

While on paper this process reflects a degree of order and sequencing the reality is that within a short space of time the Partnership was to be formed, recruit staff and begin drafting an action plan. As we have already seen the interest and involvement of many of those involved in the Partnership board lay outside of the area of unemployment policy. Rather they were interested in the economic development of the area and perhaps more centrally with supporting enterprise projects. Indeed given their background, their previous involvement in the failed attempt to access LEADER funds and the views expressed by some of those most involved in lobbying for the inclusion of the area in the A.B.R, it is reasonable to question the extent to which senior figures within the Partnership were committed to the core issue of addressing the needs of the long term unemployed at all. However having secured the programme for West Waterford they faced the task of planning and implementing it. The issue of how as a body W.W.D.P was to resolve the tension between the interests of its core board members and the requirements of the A.B.R is considered in the remainder of this chapter. Here, what is at issue is the way in which local actors involved in the development of the Partnership continued to manage this process, reconciling their own interests with the demands imposed upon them by being required to comply with the Partnerships model. This is done through briefly surveying some of the initial events that occurred during the life of the organisation; the appointment of a manager, the drafting of the action plan and related documentation and the carrying out of an initial contact programme.

Amongst the first tasks of the board was the appointment of a full time employee to act as manager of the Partnership. While it was the board who were to bear responsibility for the actions undertaken by the Partnerships, its members were either participating as volunteers or as part of their employment in other organisations. The full time executive was to take overall charge of the partnerships day to day operation. In addition to executing the wishes of the board in relation to the implementation of programmes and disbursement of monies, this would involve making interim decisions relating to management issues such as staffing arrangements. As full time manager, this individual would be a key decision maker determining how the boards' wishes would be implemented. Thus this was one of, if not the, crucial role within the Partnership structure.

As was required, recruitment to the position was via open competition. While the board was to have the overall say on the individual chosen, the chairman of the Partnership oversaw the recruitment procedure. The individual appointed to the position was an executive whose previous experience had been in business and who had a particular knowledge of agri-business. He had trained as a barrister but never practised. Prior to applying for the job in W.W.D.P he had worked in France for some time in a chamber of commerce in a rural area of the country. Before moving to France he had worked with Irish Leathers. This job had required him to spend time in Waterford and he knew and had had some dealings with Waterford Foods staff. In short he was an experienced business manager with little experience of working in programmes aimed at delivering services to the unemployed or dealing with the Irish public services.

His own view of himself was as an individual with a strong work ethic referring to his early experience while in college where he had worked his way through by taking a series of part time jobs. He also described himself as someone who had always worked in environments where he was required to get results. As regards the Partnership he also stated that in his view one of the principal reasons why the partnerships had been introduced was because of the difficulties in attempting to introduce new initiatives through the existing state bodies.⁹ In general he saw the state sector as being slow to change and largely perceived in the public

⁹ The manager referred to this in early conversations "Partly why Haughey, (The then Taiseach - Prime ministers) and Teahon (A senior Public Servant) are looking to the Partnerships is to by-pass the civil service and these agencies."

eye as inefficient. They were not in his view dependant on results to retain their jobs and therefore didn't feel the same level or types of pressures as he had experienced in the private sector.

This attitude was reflected in the way that he viewed W.W.D.P. From the outset he was anxious to distinguish it from other service delivery bodies as a non-statutory organisation operating independently. He repeatedly stated a view that the organisation should look to operate as a private company attracting funds from a wide range of sources. Rather than simply implementing the partnership programme for three years he had an eye to the long-term future of the organisation. He believed that these views were shared by the "key players," in the Partnership and felt that the board was primarily interested in drawing additional money into the area and spending it on good viable enterprise projects. Emphasising this point he habitually referred to the organisation as "The Company," emphasising the fact both that it was operating as a business and that it was an entity in its own right and not simply a means for implementing the partnership programme. The appointment of manager, a decision that was entirely within the compass of the Partnership Board, undoubtedly worked in favour of those on the board whose primary commitment was to the areas of economic development. The new manager's outlook and work experience were in business and he was familiar, and had worked with, figures involved in agribusiness in the county. He shared the view of many that the principal issue facing the area was how to promote economic growth.

On appointment the first tasks of this manager was to establish offices for the Partnership and begin drafting an Action Plan. It was decided to continue to make use of the Teagasc facility in Lismore as the organisations head office. From a practical point of view this decision posed problems. Most other services dealing with the unemployed in the area had offices in Dungarvan. In addition the town included over a fifth of those who lived in West Waterford including a disproportionately large number of those who were unemployed or otherwise fell into the Partnerships target group, "those in danger of becoming long term unemployed". While the question of where the head office was to be located was identified as an issue it was agreed at the time that Lismore constituted a more central location in West Waterford and thus would better "serve the rural areas". It was also felt by the manager that having the head office based outside Dungarvan would distinguish it from the state agencies who were all located in Dungarvan and most of whom had their regional head offices in Waterford

City. Subsequently, a second office was also opened in Teagasc in Dungarvan. Using Teagasc offices and basing the head office in Lismore reinforced the distinction between the Partnership and state agencies, emphasising the fact that it was a local agency based in and serving the whole of rural Waterford. It also reinforced the close relationship that the Partnership had established with the farming community.

The action plan was also drafted during the first year of the Partnerships operation as required by the Department of the Taoiseach. The plan was to outline the programme of work that was to be undertaken by the Partnership during the Programmes operation. In addition to providing the Partnership itself with a blueprint of how it would implement its programme, the plan had to be prepared for submission to the Department of the Taoiseach. It was to provide evidence that a planned programme of development measures were in place. Thus the plan was to demonstrate measures proposed by the individual Partnerships and show how these matched the criteria of the national programme. It provided targets that the Partnership was intent on achieving and also outlined the estimated expenditures intended under the programme. These targets and budget estimates served a purpose for the department and later A.D.M, providing benchmarks by which the Partnerships performance could be evaluated. Thus the plan formed the basis of future monitoring and evaluation of the programme necessary for both central government and the E.C. In addition the manager also saw the plan as a means for structuring the organisation, outlining its overall aims and goals as well as its management structure. Thus for him the plan was important in terms of establishing the partnership's role and identity. The manager and chairman both recognised that this was an important issue, so much so that they sought and were given the go ahead by the board to bring in an outside management consultant to work with the board in defining its overall goals and structure. Again the consultant drew his expertise from a background in commercial management having previously been employed by an electronics company and had no experience of working in the public service or with organisations that had a service provision role. Over a series of meetings which he facilitated the board and the manager agreed a mission statement embodying the organisations overall aim and identified a range of more specific goals and objectives that the organisation intended to achieve. In addition the board also agreed a management structure in order to implement its proposals.

The mission statement encapsulated the overall intent of the group, the statement defined W.W.D.P as a "*Locally based, dynamic organisation that will revitalise the Waterford area*

socially and economically by mobilising its people in order to optimise its wealth creating potential" (W.W.D.P 1991). Whilst such mission statements normally embody generalities rather than specific details about what an organisation intends to do, what is clear from this statement is the degree to which the emphasis in W.W.D.P was placed on wealth creation. No mention is given to the issue of unemployment and the primary focus of the partnership was to function as a means of mobilising the area's people to create wealth. The Partnerships manager was consistently to use this mission statement to describe the partnerships operational philosophy.

Following this statement the plan documented the Boards operational structure. The board remained the decision making body for the organisation, responsible for all projects undertaken by the Partnership and approving all monies to be spent. In addition to this, an executive committee made up of a smaller number of board members was to oversee the work of the manager between board meetings. This small group was headed by the Chairman and included the company solicitor and the chairman of Waterford Foods. The various projects that the Partnership was to undertake were divided into action areas. The partnership would be involved in delivering direct services to the unemployed, education, tourism and enterprise. Each action area had a subcommittee made up of members of the board. In addition each sub-committee included non-board ex-officio members appointed on an ad hoc basis. Each of these subcommittees was responsible for one of the areas of work mentioned above. Decisions in relation to specific issues that arose in relation to each of the subcommittee areas were subject to board approval. In the parlance of the partnership's manager the action areas within the company represented "profit centres". Each subcommittee and the employee recruited to work full time had the responsibility for generating activities and projects which would in time generate results and ultimately earnings for the organisation through increasing grant income. The theory being that the more effective the work undertaken in any of the action areas the more monies it would attract.

The plan then listed those activities that the Partnership was to implement in each of the action areas. The set of measures outlined were to be presented as those that the local board had decided upon. However besides the activities and projects devised, staffed and funded by the Partnership the programme included a number of activities that were required nationally in each partnership area. These included the preparation of a needs assessment survey and

also the carrying out of the initial contact programme. The planned programme of work also incorporated a number of programmes that had been introduced by other agencies in response to the introduction of the Partnership programme. Three state agencies, FAS, the VEC and the Department of Social Welfare introduced measures that were intended to operate in all Partnership areas. These measures which were to be introduced extremely early in the life of the partnership programme included the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (V.T.O.S). This was a V.E.C programme which provided long term unemployed people aged over twenty one the opportunity to return to second level education. The Department of Social Welfare also supported the V.T.O.S by allowing those participating to retain their welfare entitlements. The Department of Social Welfare also introduced the Area Allowance Enterprise Scheme (A.A.E.S), which allowed unemployed people the opportunity to retain their unemployment payments for a period of one year while they tried to start their own business. The partnerships took responsibility for administering the programme while the Department retained the final say over eligibility and also acted as the funding source. FAS's community employment and training scheme¹⁰ was also intended to operate in the Partnership area.

In addition to these measures a Centre for the Unemployed was to be established under the auspices of ICTU. This provided resources, mainly comprising basic secretarial services and information for local people who were unemployed. Such centres were provided in each of the 12 areas designated nationally. In some cases such centres had preceded the Partnership in others such as Waterford new centres were established. It was part of the ICTU contribution to the programme that there be such a centre in each of the Partnership areas. For their part all twelve partnerships provided some form of assistance to these centres. All of these measures were in place by the latter half of 1992. The service providers, principally FAS, the VEC and Department of Social Welfare introduced the measures listed above alongside the Partnerships own initiatives. In part at least this represented the organisations

¹⁰ This was a modified version of FAS Social Employment Scheme which operated in Partnership areas. Like the Social Employment Scheme this programme offered participants the opportunity to work on local projects on a half week basis while receiving an allowance based on their welfare entitlements. This modified programme placed a greater emphasis on training than the Social Employment Scheme and loosened eligibility criteria.

response to the requirements that efforts be made to “re-direct resources,” in the designated areas though views differed on this point¹¹.

The plan produced by W.W.D.P reflected these considerations. In the area of services to the unemployed the principal activities proposed were the drafting of a needs assessment survey that would also act as the Partnership’s initial contact programme. The Administration of the A.A.E.S, which involved the continuation of payments from social welfare and a small level of financial assistance to be made available to those who participated on the programme was also included within the remit of this area, as was support directed towards the I.C.T.U Centre for the Unemployed. The principal measure detailed in the area of education was the promotion of the VTOS together with enterprise training for those on the A.A.E.S. It was also proposed under this section that local community groups would receive enterprise training in the form of the FAS Community Enterprise Programme (C.E.P). This would involve a programme of management training for community groups that could result in the groups becoming involved in a community based business. At that point it would be possible for the group to receive grant assistance towards the employment of a full time manager. In the area of enterprise, the partnership proposed offering financial assistance towards new business start-ups and the expansion of existing businesses. This was to take the form of grant assistance and funding in the form of a low interest revolving loan fund, under which the Partnership would lend money to businesses under favourable terms. Repayments from this fund would return to the Partnership for use to fund additional projects in the future. The actions outlined in the tourism action area primarily focussed on grant and loan aid again. In addition the document also made reference to the need for more effective marketing of the local tourism product and proposed that this would be undertaken by the Partnership.

It was clearly the case that despite being described as a locally based initiative the programme introduced was subject to significant control at European and national level. Significant elements of the programme that were to be introduced were decided by outside entities including the Department of Social Welfare and FAS. Thus while it was presented as a local programme decided upon by the local board in reality the plan that they were required to produce could only represent a combination of measures including those that were

¹¹ It was the view of the manager of WWDP at the time that the Partnership was at least in theory to have more influence over a wider range of resources than those contained in these measures.

initiated by the Partnership in line with the departmental guidelines, those measures that they were required to be undertaken by the department, including the drafting of the action plan itself and the initial contact programme and other measures introduced through state agencies and other national bodies. Thus when considering the final shape of the local strategy that the Partnerships were to implement, we are in reality looking at a programme that was the product of a range of actors including, government departments, state agencies, the E.C. and the social partners at national level.

At the outset of this chapter it was argued that the local development organisation and in particular its board represent critical points through which the formal elements of local development policy discourse are introduced into actual localities. Because of this it is crucial to understand exactly what occurs at these points. It was further argued that inadequate attention has been paid to the actual events that occur during the formation and operation of local development organisations. Yet such research is crucial if the way in which such policies are actually worked out in practice is to be understood. Thus it is essential to understanding of how such policies operate to examine what happens at those events during which a range of local actors encounter these projects. This section has described events that occurred as the partnership formulated its plan and began operation.

Again referring to the argument that was presented at the beginning of this chapter it is possible to consider the events described above as the outcome of encounters at a significant interface during which the actors involved work out the actual meaning of the initiatives. Despite the existence of a formal development policy discourse outlining in clear terms what it was envisaged such projects should entail, a core group of local actors were able to establish considerable degree of influence over the partnership at this interface, defining W.W.D.P in a specific way which linked the idea of measures to combat unemployment to enterprise support and development. In this it is clearly evident that the principal actors within W.W.D.P's made use of a degree of room for manoeuvre in the early days of the Partnership resulting to a large degree in the organisation adopting strategies that advanced their development projects. Having established this, it became possible, indeed almost inevitable that certain measures would follow. These included the employment of a manager with business experience who's own views, experience and knowledge was closely aligned to their own, the selection of additional board members and the drafting of the action plan in a way which reflected their interests. All these activities ensured that, despite its adherence

on paper to the requirements of the Partnership model, the organisation retained many of the characteristics of the I.R.D Company from which it had evolved. Indeed a close examination of the process through which the partnership was established and began to operate suggest that in this case the introduction of the partnership strengthened the position of those actors on the board, and they were in the majority, whose primary interest related to the area's economic performance. Through the partnership they were able to define development in a way which effectively excluded other options.

It is worth remembering that some of the programmes introduced by the state agencies were of little relevance to the interests of the core figures in the board. The attitude of these board members, together with the appointment of a manager who was clearly most familiar and sympathetic with the economic goals of the core board members, lent themselves much more towards the organisation fulfilling a role as an enterprise development agency, despite the fact that as an Area Based Partnership the organisation's primary role was to be a source of support to the unemployed. The way in which the manager and board went about the production of the action plan reveals much about the way they regarded this exercise and indeed their attitude towards other actors in the development network. The plan itself was considered to be necessary not for its intrinsic significance to what the W.W.D.P would implement in the area as much as to ensure adherence to central government and E.U. reporting and monitoring arrangements. The steps taken by both the board and the manager reflected this. The manager was faced with the task of producing results that would gain the approval of the board and also satisfy the funding agencies in Dublin. In order to do so the manager devised a strategy that would produce visible results that would satisfy the local board. At the same time he attempted to interpret these activities as being in line with the series of measures outlined by the partnerships funders. While the plan itself conformed in certain respects with the general model of action proposed in the Gold Book, the manager and core board members took the opportunity presented by the planning process to advance a specific economic development project. They were able to define the role of the new organisation as an enterprise support agency using the services of a management consultant to do so. Yet, by listing the services provided by state agencies and other required elements of the programme as services to the unemployed, education and training measures, this plan also suggested that the organisation was in compliance with the national programmes requirements. As a consequence the Partnerships own resources could be ring fenced and targeted towards enterprise support. The organisations own published results showed that

outside of its administration costs some 80 % of all monies spent by the Partnership in its first three years of operation were spent on enterprise through the direct funding to new and existing local businesses, tourism projects or grants given to unemployed people starting their own business.

In addition the plan was used to structure W.W.D.P along lines that closely resembled those of a private company. In this way the manager was able to establish an identity for the partnership as an organisation that was distinct from public service providers. For him W.W.D.P was to be a performance driven company with each specific area of its operation driven by the need to act as a profit centre. In justifying these decisions he developed a specific ethical framework which focussed the merits of the private enterprise style of management and local representation involved in the partnership as opposed to the behaviour of existing state agencies. He argued that in maximising the level of the Partnerships commitment to enterprise he was respecting the wishes of the majority of the local board who according to him had no selfish interest in the organisation. In his view many of them possessed a knowledge of the area's economic and social needs that was superior to that of others and in particular state agency staff because this knowledge had been gained in commercial environments in which there was a constant pressure to "get things done". By contrast he regarded the relationship between the state agencies and the Partnerships as adversarial, because the staff of these bodies were full time public servants who had a vested interest in maintaining the status quo and preventing the partnership outperforming them. He believed the partnership would do so due to the fact that its employees did not have a "public service attitude". For him these features of the partnership made his efforts to cast the partnership in an enterprise support role entirely justifiable even if this involved complying with the letter and not the spirit of the A.B.R framework. In this instance he was able to adopt one aspect of the local development discourse, local participation in decision making, to justify the partnerships decisions to abandon another, the focus on marginalised groups. Developing a rationale for the partnerships dominance by members of the local elite in the process.

6.6 Needs assessment and Partnership Planning

In the previous section, two contradictory facts emerge. Firstly it is clear that within W.W.D.P certain actors demonstrated considerable skill in redefining basic aspects of the programme in a way which reflected their interests. Secondly however, it remains the case that regardless of whatever dominance these actors were able to establish over the local project, at least formally the organisation was required to comply with certain elements of the formal development policy discourse. This involved for example such requirements as the adoption of the partnership structure, the implementation of certain initiatives devised by state agencies, the adherence to a specific planning model and compliance with budgetary rules. It could perhaps be suggested that a considerable element of the skill demonstrated by local actors in W.W.D.P lay not so much in their ability to establish a degree of control over the project as in their ability to present this in a way that suggested it complied with the formal requirements of the programme's funders.

One particularly significant example of this dilemma concerned the relationship between the Partnership and one of the principal target groups identified for the A.B.R, the long term unemployed. Under the A.B.R services to the long term unemployed were identified as one of the key activity areas for the partnerships. Underlying the A.B.R approach to the issue of unemployment was a specific model of intervention. This involved the idea that a progressive series of measures were to be introduced tackling the problem of unemployment on a phased basis. The language of the partnership programme is dominated in many instances by the notion of a movement from a state of being unemployed to a state of being "employment ready". The notion of progression served a very practical purpose in relation to the evaluation and monitoring of Partnership performance making it possible to identify "progression paths" thus demonstrating that those who came into contact with the Partnerships had moved on¹². The logic of this analysis is that the Partnerships can provide assistance to the unemployed in acquiring the attributes needed to find employment and bears some elements of what could be described as a "Therapeutic Model" for dealing with unemployment.

¹²A series of seminars on the performance indicator measurements and recording methods was held by ADM during 1998. The writer was able to attend one of these held in Leitrim in August of that year at which the importance of "progression paths," was stressed on a number of occasions. In the list of reasons for developing the system progression featured prominently (Seminar Notes).

This approach was incorporated in simple form in the “Gold Book” together with the additional documentation that was supplied to the Partnerships by the Department of the Taoiseach/A.D.M. Thus, underlying the local development approach of the A.B.R was a specific model of employment support, which embodied the notion that the unemployed require an incremental series of inputs styled as points on a progression path and that through such measures, a process of transformation could address the problems of the unemployed individual. Thus the Partnerships general claim to incorporate the views and ideas of the community contrasted to a degree with their role as envisioned in the formal discourse. The Partnership’s ability to actually define problems locally and to respond accordingly needs to be understood in the context of the restrictions that this “Therapeutic Model” imposed upon them, in relation both to the way in which this model restricted the range of measures that could be implemented, and also the way that it conceptualised the problem of unemployment.

The particular model of intervention outlined in formal discourse informed the adoption of a number of specific measures that it was expected the Partnerships would implement, such as a needs assessment survey and programme of initial contact through which the target group made aware of the services that the A.B.R had to offer, the assistance they gave to the I.C.T.U Centre for the Unemployed and some measures related to self-employment, training and education aimed at improving the employability of the unemployed individual. As we have seen these measures, which were implemented in all twelve partnership areas, had been decided upon prior to the launch of the programme¹³. They conflicted strongly with the main thrust of the approach adopted by the board of W.W.D.P which support for economic enterprise as a means of creating jobs. For W.W.D.P the key objective of the local development entity was in the area of economic growth and wealth creation. The events during which W.W.D.P dealt with the challenge of reconciling the requirements of the A.B.R with its own enterprise support focus thus provide a useful window into considering the scope of local actors to influence the outcome of the programme.

The programme of initial contact was intended by A.D.M to start the programme of work with the unemployed in the partnership area, a suggestion that W.W.D.P accepted in a paper delivered at a Department of Social Welfare seminar held at the end of 1993 which stated

¹³ Although not mentioned by name VTOS and AAES were both alluded to in Section 7 of the PESP agreement.

that “*One of the first tasks outlined in the plan of work for the new Partnerships was to prepare a plan of action for the area, and to commence what was described as an initial contact programme with the unemployed,*” (McNamara 1993 unnumbered). While the partnerships themselves were free to decide on the methods to be used in the development of initial contact, the broad goals for all twelve Partnerships included the gathering of information as to the current levels of unemployment, the development of a profile of the unemployed in the partnership area and an assessment of their needs. Initial contact thus involved a degree of research and of making contact with members of the target group. In Waterford the initial contact programme was undertaken by carrying out of a needs assessment survey of the unemployed. At the same time, it was decided by the Partnership that a survey of local employers would also be undertaken, as these would also be clients of the organisation with needs that required assessment.

The survey of the unemployed was carried out between March and June 1992. The intended role of the survey was to “*Build up a profile of the unemployed,*” secondly to “*Give users of the services... ...the opportunity to express their views,*” and finally to “*allow the partnership to draw up a plan of action*” (McNamara 1992a unnumbered). The claims made above in respect of this document are significant. Firstly it is presented as a technical exercise in which survey methods are employed to produce reliable statements as regards the needs of the unemployed. Secondly the survey is presented as embodying an input from the unemployed as an opportunity to express “their views”. Finally the survey provides a rationale for future action based on an objective fact gathering exercise whilst also reflecting the views of the client group. This then is an important piece in the administrative jigsaw that informed the shape of development discourse as outlined by the W.W.D.P combining claims relating to the expert knowledge underlying the Partnerships decisions with allusions to the opportunity presented to the unemployed to express their views. The exercise is also one in which the unemployed are portrayed as active participants in a process of dialogue. Considered in this light the survey plays an important role in defining W.W.D.P’s function vis-à-vis the problem of unemployment.

The survey itself consisted of a questionnaire, comprised mainly of a series of closed questions. These included questions relating to basic personal information such as age and marital status. It also contained questions relating to the skills and educational status of the individuals concerned. Further questions asked the respondents what in their view constituted

obstacles to employment and what services they would like to see being introduced. In relation to the latter two points respondents were presented with a list of alternatives from which they were to choose options. In some cases provision was made for a more open ended response to these questions. The questionnaire concluded with the open ended question “Do you wish to make any further comments”.

The survey was designed and the research itself supervised by a recent graduate in Community Development. She was also responsible for drafting the report that was produced. The manner of data collection involved the administration of the survey by ten people employed through a Community Employment Scheme (C.E.) under the graduate’s supervision. The participants on this scheme were employed as trainees through FAS. They were recruited from among those who were unemployed and were in receipt of benefits. While on the C.E. scheme they were paid a training allowance that was slightly in excess of the payment that they received while unemployed¹⁴. None had any specific experience in administration or in carrying out social research. Indeed the scheme was operated as a means of providing training and work experience to people who were unemployed. In this instance they were trained for the specific task of administering and subsequently coding the survey.

In drawing up the sample the West Waterford area was divided into 9 geographical areas. Quotas of unemployed people broadly corresponding to the total of unemployed living in each area were selected. For practical purposes the initial sample of 600 was drawn from the local registers of people in receipt of unemployment payments amounting to a total population of 1554. Eventually 300 respondents were interviewed; half of the 600 people identified in the original sample¹⁵. In selecting the population to sample the survey implicitly accepted the official definition of unemployment as those on the live register. It did not for example include those in receipt of other benefits such as the single parents allowance or those who were active on FAS employment and training schemes as a result of being

¹⁴ This payment would have consisted of their social welfare rate and some small additional payment for lunch and travel expenses.

¹⁵ A reading of the document produced makes no mention of whether or not this represented a statistically significant proportion of the population. Indeed no discussion of possible problems with the sample itself were discussed with the exception of a mention of the problems posed in attempting to gain access to people living outside of Dungarvan.

unemployed. Nor the non-claimant partner in the case of a couple where both partners in a marriage were out of work and only one of them, normally the husband, claimed jointly on behalf of both. Thus the Partnerships survey of the unemployed is more accurately described as a survey as those unemployed and in receipt of an unemployment payment.

The Partnership's ability to meet with and interview those identified in the sample was inconsistent. The majority of the interviewers lived in Dungarvan, where forty per-cent of all those identified as unemployed from the register resided. The remaining sixty per-cent were distributed relatively evenly in the eight outlying rural areas. The office that was used by the survey team was also located in Dungarvan and the majority of those involved together with the graduate supervising the work also lived in the town. By contrast the other eight areas were rural in character with a small number of people scattered over a wide area. The team were limited in their ability to cover these areas as they had restricted access to transport. As a result whereas in Dungarvan return visits were easy to arrange, in the surrounding rural areas the team's ability to call back was restricted both by a lack of transport and their unfamiliarity with the area.

The views and experience of those collecting the survey data suggest that the process of data collection did not go smoothly. It must be recalled that they themselves were employed via a C.E.S. Their eligibility for inclusion on the project was based on their being out of work and on the live register. In informal conversations members of this group were able to give me some insight into the actual way that the survey was undertaken. One member of the group stated on a number of occasions that to a considerable degree their conduct of the survey was the result of their own informal practices. Their approach to the survey was that it was a job they were required to do. They employed a range of informal strategies with the primary intention of satisfying the supervisors' demands rather than with any concern as to the quality of the data or of the survey produced. One stated that he was able to identify people in the sample who were likely to cause problems for a number of reasons. Amongst these were people who he believed would be hostile to anyone asking questions for a range of reasons. He indicated that in such cases members of the survey team tended to avoid these people or record them as not at home. In addition to these, he mentioned people who presented difficulties because of changes of address which had not been recorded on the live register. Describing days which he and others spent "*going around knocking on doors where half the*

people were gone" and approaching other respondents who he described as being "*just plain odd*" to illustrate the impracticalities of the task they had been asked to fulfil. Another example of the type of difficulties he encountered concerned one individual who he claimed was included on the list despite the fact that he had learning difficulties. He used this case frequently as an example of how the live register details failed to reflect the reality of the situation of unemployed people in the area with which he was familiar. His account suggested that the needs assessment survey was an exercise in which his informal activities and those of other members of the team played a prominent role in determining the results. At the same time his account suggested that the woman supervising the research and drafting the report lacked the local knowledge he and other survey employees possessed. As he put it on one occasion "*She means well but in fairness you need to talk to local people, she sent me to one house where the person on the list is mentally handicapped and should never have been on that list at all,*"

Such problems were easily identifiable to the interviewers as they were familiar with the individuals involved and were thus aware of the problems that they were likely to experience. According to this individual the problems presented by the lists supplied by the Department of Social Welfare offices as a source of respondents were overcome through "*common sense*". People in the sample who were perceived as being troublesome, awkward or unsuitable for interview were avoided. It should be remembered that as participants on a C.E. scheme they were poorly paid and many stated that they had little or no interest in the research exercise. None perceived any benefits in terms of training. Again the same individual said that as regards the training component of the project he knew more about computers than she (the supervisor) did. Both he and another person who was involved stated that some of the C.E.S participants filled in the forms themselves rather than bothering to conduct interviews. These statements illustrate the extent to which local knowledge and personal interests of those responsible for the survey questionnaires had an impact on the conduct of the survey. The survey team had no intrinsic interest in the quality of the document that was produced. Rather the exercise was treated as something to be got through as part of the scheme. In the case of the individual mentioned above his approach was to point to the inaccuracies in the list and the supervisor's lack of experience to portray the survey in a negative light, contrasted with his own common sense and local knowledge.

Despite the shortcoming identified above none of these issues was mentioned in the document eventually produced by the Partnership as its “needs assessment survey of the unemployed”. The final report consists of a series of tables presenting the frequency distribution of responses to the closed questions as percentages and quotations chosen from the longer written answers presented as illustrations of the views of the unemployed. These percentages were based on the 300 respondents who did reply together with some commentary. No further analysis or statistical checks for validity were carried out or presented in the report.

The survey findings are unsurprising. The majority of those interviewed in the area were male, between 25 and 55 years of age and more likely to be single than the average population. It puts the numbers of those deemed to be long term unemployed (over one year) at fifty per-cent with a total of just over one quarter of those interviewed being unemployed for over three years. Both figures are similar to the national percentages for the same period. These findings certainly did not suggest that West Waterford was an area which could be described as an unemployment black spot. The survey indicated a strong correlation between unemployment and levels of educational attainment. However rates of educational attainment amongst the unemployed were not remarkably lower than in the wider population in Waterford. The report also highlights that the numbers who had completed the Leaving Certificate¹⁶ was in the minority. However it is the case that the rates were not remarkably low by national or local standards. Nevertheless the issues of early school leaving and educational attainment were both highlighted in the commentary as specific issues of concern in West Waterford that needed to be addressed. Given the comments already mentioned in Chapter five relating to changes in the areas industrial base it was again less than surprising to find that the survey found significant numbers of those interviewed had worked in manual occupations in jobs described as either semi-skilled or unskilled, though a significant number of skilled tradesmen, principally construction workers, also figured. The majority had worked in industries that were in decline or where demand for labour was shrinking or at best remained static, with a substantial number (thirty three per cent) listing redundancy as the primary cause of their unemployment. In addition to those described as early school leavers the long term unemployed were also highlighted as a cause for concern, fifty per cent of the areas unemployed were deemed to be in this category. Again the report found that the

¹⁶ The final secondary school examination in the Republic of Ireland

difficulties they experience were exacerbated by their skills level and standard of education. Generally speaking the longer unemployed had poorer skills and less education than those who were not unemployed as long. Again this reflects the case nationally. The survey found that the highest concentrations of unemployment in the area were in the urban areas of the county and in particular Dungarvan. Though given the likely sample bias due to the problems confronting the survey team in visiting the outlying areas this is hardly surprising. Within the town high levels of unemployment were to be found in local authority housing developments. Again it must be stressed that neither the unemployment rate in the County¹⁷ or in the Dungarvan area was remarkable by national standards.

The survey also sought to establish what services and training the unemployed most demanded through a series of closed questions which asked participants what services they would be interested in. The survey found that the vast majority indicated an interest in training. The training demanded by the unemployed was generally of a basic nature including clerical skills, computer skills and trades skills (in particular in construction and related skills areas). As one of those interviewed put it; "*A short training course on ordinary office procedure skills rather than highly technical skill,*" (McNamara 1992a). However while it is not highlighted in the report a significant numbers of those interviewed had in fact undergone some form of training. In the case of those in the age group 25 – 34 this was forty three per cent of respondents. Only one third of these had found any kind of work since receiving this training.

By contrast with the survey of the unemployed the survey of employers involved the carrying out of interviews with 35 small local employers. This survey was less structured. A questionnaire was sent out to employers consisting of a series of questions to which open-ended responses were sought. The employers were not subjected to the same style of questioning and indeed the survey did not seek to establish any basic quantitative data as regards employers. Rather they gave responses to questions that were primarily qualitative in nature. While the unemployed were presented with a series of closed questions and a choice from a limited set of responses provided by the researchers, employers were free to outline their own views on what they perceived to be the problems. Thus the employers had a greater degree of input into their own responses defining the problems that they most experienced.

¹⁷ The rate of unemployment was in fact well below the national average

Amongst the primary difficulties employers identified were the costs of taxation both of their businesses and of additional employees. In addition to this other problems that they outlined were lack of access to funding, red tape and difficulties with book keeping. Another issue that they referred to was the inaccessibility of the state agencies. Thus this research tended to concur with and build on the position of the board that an economic development strategy focussed on supporting local enterprise represented the best response to unemployment in the area.

The above data is presented in some detail since it offers a significant insight into the wider question of how W.W.D.P approached the task of complying with the formal aspects of the A.B.R programme. As we have already seen the formal policy discourse underlying the A.B.R placed considerable emphasis on the partnerships work with the unemployed. The initial contact programme was an important and required element of this work; a crucial first step through which the partnerships would establish contact with their target group. However in the case of W.W.D.P this critical task was undertaken in a very short time frame by a recent graduate in her first job, assisted by C.E.S participants who had no training in social research. Given the care with which the partnership approached other early tasks, such as for example with the employment of a management consultant to assist with the board structure and development of the action plan. The approach to this survey exercise, a key and required element of the partnerships work, appears somewhat lax. Yet the result was a survey which was both W.W.D.P's needs assessment survey and its initial contact programme. Given the significance attached to this document it is reasonable to note that the scale of the Partnerships commitment to this exercise was limited and furthermore to consider why.

Both the survey of the unemployed and the employers' survey were carried out under the auspices of W.W.D.P itself within a tight time frame employing the same staff member. The resources available to undertake this research were limited, while the situation is not entirely clear cut it is the case that many other partnerships contributed significantly more time and effort to the initial contact process. In addition to a survey, some initiated field work including in some cases one-on-one interviews between support staff and unemployed people. Neither of the W.W.D.P surveys was ever submitted for peer review nor were they intended to be viewed as research papers. However even given that these documents were primarily prepared for administrative reasons the data collection methods and validity of the

pieces seem questionable. However the primary reason for examining these documents here is not in order to consider what they say about the unemployed or local employers, its accuracy or otherwise, but rather to examine the role they play in relation to on-going encounters between the staff and management of W.W.D.P and other figures in the local development network. It has been argued that certain core actors involved in W.W.D.P were successful in capturing the initiative defining the project in a way which reflected their own interests, it has equally been shown that they nevertheless faced the challenge of demonstrating that the organisation was acting in compliance with the requirements outlined for the A.B.R. In this respect the production of these documents provide an example of how they went about this.

Regardless of the quality or accuracy of the work the pieces were submitted to the Department of the Taoiseach/ADM and provided evidence of the organisations adherence to the guidelines under which it was being funded. A.D.M itself later used such reports in its own accounts of the programme as evidence that the various local programmes had adhered to the national guidelines. It is unclear whether any of these documents were ever subject to additional review by actors in these bodies or by any other National or E.U. organisations involved in funding the programme. However these pieces of research did contribute to and reinforce a specific perspective on unemployment in the area at the time which was consistent with that outlined in the formal A.B.R discourse. The entire question of the unemployed and their needs was framed through research that focussed on barriers to labour force participation. Moreover these barriers were related to the unemployed individual. The lack of scope given to the unemployed in replying to the questionnaire largely predetermined that the “needs,” identified in the survey resided in just those areas where the partnership was primarily to operate. Indeed under the guidance of the Department of the Taoiseach/A.D.M, the Partnership along with other agencies was already engaged in introducing several programmes in respect of self-employment and education alongside carrying out the needs assessment survey. Thus the link between the results of the survey research, needs assessment and significant aspects of programme of measures that was planned for introduction as part of the A.B.R is tenuous at best. The needs assessment survey in Waterford produced an account of the unemployed that largely complied with that outlined in formal policy discourse. Where contradictory facts emerged, such as for example the fact that many of the unemployed had already been involved in training schemes, they had no bearing on the conclusions and/or recommendations presented in the report. The limited scope of the

survey and the fact that the questions directed responses towards specific issues directly relevant to the areas in which the A.B.R was focussing its attention helped to ensure this. In short the survey was a document that matched the formal policy discourse. It confirmed the validity of the A.B.R approach and endorsed the services that had already been introduced in the area by the state agencies. What this suggests is that while it was important to the partnership to produce such a document and it was equally important to the Department of the Taoiseach and A.D.M that such a document be produced, the value of this document as a piece of research and as the basis for practical action is not at all clear. What the document does appear to do is produce an account of a rather messy local reality in a format which is consistent with the requirements of formal policy discourse relating to the A.B.R and the nature of the unemployment “crisis”. Equally the Department of the Taoiseach and A.D.M were able to make use of such documents to provide proof that the basic idea underlying the programme were valid and also that the local groups were complying with the requirements of the programme. At each stage therefore we are dealing with a process through which reports produced accounts of reality which convey a sense of manageability over the local development process. It was the role that these documents played in this process in conveying the sense that events in the policy process were consistent with the sequence of events presented in the policy discourse that was the key to understanding their significance and also to understanding why while so much emphasis was placed on the production of these documents, in the case of Waterford at least, little emphasis was placed on the rigour or accuracy with which they were produced.

The preparation of these documents also gives some indication of the relationship that was to develop between the unemployed and W.W.D.P. It was to constitute the organisations only attempt to directly canvas the views of the unemployed on how the programme should be managed. This was restricted to giving them the opportunity to add “further comments” to the end of the written survey. Rather than a dialogue the partnership largely cast itself in the role of a service provider limiting and controlling the context in which information was to be exchanged with this, its principal target group. It should be contrasted with the way that the views of the employers were sought via an open ended questionnaire which gave them the opportunity to define their problems. In doing so they focussed not on any services that the Partnership was to provide but on what they perceived as being the major problems. These largely related to issues such as tax and red tape over which the Partnership had no influence whatsoever.

6.7 Conclusion

The new local development programmes could be described as social networks. The A.B.R programme was introduced into areas by actors who themselves had certain understandings about what these schemes involve, what their objectives were and of the process through which local bodies formed and operated. In doing so they sought to expand this network by enrolling other actors in a way which advanced specific projects. The development discourse claims a privileged position in this network providing certain actors with an important set of ideas and concepts through which their role and the roles they proscribe for others are to be defined; they constitute an expert system “*a system of technical accomplishment and professional expertise that organises large areas of the material world and the social environments in which we live today,*” (Giddens 1990 p. 27). The task of attempting to enrol actors in the local development network in large measure involve efforts to have them accept the “mode of ordering”, embodied in this expert system. This is similar to the process described by Van Der Ploeg as part of the current future oriented “post-modern”, trajectory in agricultural policy (2003). Local development projects such as the one examined here claimed to entail or at least to offer the possibility of bringing about changes in the relationship between the state agencies, social partners and the community. This sets them apart from previous programmes and policies and makes the responses of local actors all the more significant. In the previous chapter the wider local context in which these events occurred was examined. The chapter raised some questions about the relationship between the local development discourse and the nature of rural areas themselves. From its very inception, the applicability of some of the basic ideas underlying the local development model to Waterford was questionable. While Waterford does indeed include poorer areas and people who experience disadvantage the idea that it constitutes a homogenous, disadvantaged rural area is inaccurate. In reality the area is made up of diverse smaller areas and groups with different economic and social interests. This included people who possessed varying levels of wealth, political influence and interests. In addition the area had an existing and entrenched local state with its own staff and intervention strategies. This chapter has focused on the social processes during which the development policy network came into contact with diverse local actors and how these local actors formulated strategies in response to these endeavours. It is during these encounters that the actual shape of the initiative was negotiated and the resulting nature of power relationships between certain actors in the intervention was

established. In this chapter we thus deal for the first time with the actual process by which the ideas and administrative structures outlined in development policy discourse were implemented in the area, we see members of the local development network engaging with local actors in specific settings. \

Three specific issues have been examined in detail in order to focus on how this process was worked out. The first of these concern the process through which W.W.D.P was established and the board was formed. When looked at in depth it is clear that this process differed in many ways to that suggested in the policy discourse. Firstly it is clear that designation of the area as part of the programme had little to do with any formal selection procedure and much to do with the relationship between some powerful local actors and their ability to utilise existing informal networks. It was primarily through Waterford Foods representatives that the initiative was established in the area. Members of this local elite were able to exert a considerable degree of influence on senior decision makers. It was they who instigated the formation of Waterford I.R.D and they who lobbied for the A.B.R thus salvaging something out of the ruins of that organisations LEADER application. Their influence resulted in West Waterford being included in the programme despite the fact that the area did not constitute an unemployment black spot. Were it not for these actors the programme almost certainly wouldn't have been introduced in Waterford at all. The decision to include Waterford also suggests that at national level senior decision makers were themselves willing to override some of the basic ideas in the local development policy discourse when pressured to do so by certain actors.

Having established a considerable degree of control over the initiative this core group of board members were able to determine the selection of many of the other Board members. Again this process owed less to any formal model of partnership as it did to existing social networks to which the board had access. This led them to define development in a certain way and to identify potential members with similar interests and backgrounds. Even the area that was covered by the Partnership was shaped by local considerations reflecting the fact that Waterford Foods and the area's farming community is at its strongest in the West Waterford area. The programme covered this area and drew its voluntary and social partner members primarily from its rural parishes. There was thus a strong representation drawn from the farming community of West Waterford and perhaps most significantly members who had links to Waterford Foods. According to A.D.M the local partnership boards were

intended to reflect the views of the local community. However, the experience of W.W.D.P clearly highlights the significance of the social processes that occur during the formation and subsequent operation of a local development body. These may have a crucial role in determining the future outcomes of the programme. In the case of Waterford certain actors were clearly successful in utilising their contacts in existing networks and their local and professional knowledge to assemble a board and later appoint a manager whose understanding of development were aligned with theirs. By the time the board was in operation its make-up was largely a fait accompli. In Waterford therefore we see that the programme was largely brought under the control of members of the local elite. Its board was in large part made up of a group of people who represented the areas prominent farming and business leaders. It was clearly the case that the A.B.R guidelines regarding the formation of local boards did not address existing power imbalances. Indeed by including two groups with significantly greater potential influence, the state agencies and the social partners ensured their likely dominance of the programme.

From the outset we see that the W.W.D.P board and manager had views on the initiative which were at variance with those of the national co-ordinators. Area Development Management defined the initiative primarily as a programme of social, as well as economic measures for areas of social disadvantage. Yet W.W.D.P would concentrate on supporting enterprises. Thus in the case of W.W.D.P the adoption of the partnership approach, far from involving the enrolment of the locals into an expert system, involved the subordination of elements of that expert system to the interests of certain local actors. However regardless of the boards' interests and of the success of certain members of the local elite in capturing the initiative it nevertheless remained the case that the organisation was required to comply with the partnership model. This required them to operate a series of measures aimed at addressing the problem of long term unemployment. The second set of events examined in this chapter focus on the organisation's appointment of a chief executive and the subsequent development of an action plan for the organisation. These events shed further light on the organisations attempts to balance the interests of the board and in particular its core members and the requirements of the A.B.R.

It was clear that the Partnership board was adopting a strategy that while complying on paper with the requirements of A.D.M was more centrally concerned with supporting enterprise development. In order to do so senior figures within W.W.D.P demonstrated a considerable

degree of skill in making the fullest use of any available room for manoeuvre to their advantage. The first example of this was in there appointment of a manager. Such an appointment was clearly one of the areas for which the local board was responsible. Since it was they who made this selection it is only to be assumed that their specifically pro enterprise bias would inform their views as to who would constitute a competent manager. In the event they did appoint a manager with views and work experience that were largely in sympathy with the interests of the board members who were committed to the enterprise approach. Once appointed this individual continued to promote the potential role of W.W.D.P as an enterprise support agency. The Partnership rapidly moved towards this position through the preparation of an action plan. This exercise was undertaken with the assistance of a management consultant and followed the lines of a business planning exercise. The result was a plan which included a mission statement and later strategy that focussed on the issue of rural decline, giving this far more emphasis than the level of unemployment in the area which was in theory the *raison d'etre* of the Partnership in the first place. Rural decline for the Partnership was equated with the need to develop new local businesses. As a rural area, vacancies in the county remain below demand regardless of the relatively limited number of jobseekers¹⁸. In this context alternatives to employment support activities through measures to support job creation and self-employment were inevitably seen as being of importance in the area. This required, the Partnership argued, that it work proactively with existing employers as well as the unemployed. Such an approach fit well with the Partnerships real interest in economic development. It is important to note however that while the Partnership was able to draw emphasis to specific areas which it wished to work on it did so in a way which remained compliant with the requirements of the national A.B.R guidelines. Again the manager and core members of the board were able to maximise the room for manoeuvre afforded by the programme to do so by, for example, undertaking required activities but using them to push their own projects (the planning exercise which was used to copper-fasten the enterprise oriented role of the organisation serves as an example of this strategy). On other occasions the programme was presented in a way that demonstrated compliance with the national framework but allowed W.W.D.P to retain a degree of control its own funds, such as for example by using the state agency initiatives as

¹⁸This was a view shared by local staff in FAS, and the Department of Social Family and Community affairs expressed in interviews with representatives of the Department of Social Family and Community Affairs , FAS, a board member of W.D.P and the Manager of W.D.P in interviews held in 1995.

evidence of W.W.D.P's commitment to adhere to the national guidelines while reserving its own funds for enterprise.

A further example of how the Partnership was able to do so was provided by the conduct of its needs assessment of the unemployed. W.W.D.P was required to undertake such a survey under the terms of its contract to operate the programme. However, the manner in which the document was prepared, and the tenuous links between this document and the Partnerships subsequent actions, suggests that in relation to this exercise W.W.D.P was just going through the motions. The survey was provided with limited resources and the quality of the data collection methods reflects this. In terms of reflecting the perceived needs of the unemployed the nature of the questions asked severely constrained the nature of the dialogue. However, despite the flaws in the document it did enable W.W.D.P to demonstrate that it was acting in line with the requirements of the A.B.R complying as it did, with the national programme model for addressing the problem of unemployment. It also allowed them to demonstrate that they had sought the views of the main client group, the unemployed.

It is equally worth noting that this document was accepted by A.D.M, whose model of the unemployment problem it reflected, with little difficulty. Indeed, and despite its flaws, the document became part of subsequent submissions by W.W.D.P to other organisations¹⁹ as well as featuring in A.D.M literature demonstrating the progress the Partnerships were making. While the A.D.M designation was granted prior to any research being conducted in the area, and later work hinting that the low level of unemployment made the areas inclusion in the programme questionable (Craig 1994) this did not detracted from the success of W.W.D.P or its successor organisations in attract further funding²⁰.

¹⁹ The particular emphasis on the skills base and level of educational attainment of the unemployed was included by the Partnership in its the 1994-5 local development plans and in subsequent submissions made to BIM, The Department of Enterprise and Employment and in a joint proposal submitted for an article 10 submission made in 1995.

²⁰ Later applications would no longer be able to claim that Waterford was an area of high unemployment. However by then the Partnerships had modified its position arguing that while the levels of unemployment were low rationalisation in the industrial sector and restructuring of agriculture and fisheries have resulted in the decline in traditional forms of semi and unskilled work. "The ability of the unemployed to avail of such new employment opportunities is limited by their lack of appropriate skills. As a result new growth in employment does not benefit the long term unemployed," (WDP 1996 unnumbered page in the local employment services plan)

Unlike the needs assessment survey of the unemployed, the employers survey was not required as part of the A.B.R guidelines. The decision to conduct it was made by the board itself. The survey results highlighted mostly general issues for local businesses relating to taxation in general, the ability of small businesses to access funding (be it in the form of grants or loans) and basic problems with management skills and book keeping. These findings supported the Partnership's policy of adopting a role as a support organisation for these small businesses, the supposition being that strong local businesses would eventually improve the entire areas economy thus addressing the unemployment problem through a general increase in the areas well-being.

The results of the activities described above had a profound influence in shaping the Partnerships priorities. Uniquely among the partnerships, W.W.D.P expended considerable effort and over seventy per cent of its operating budget on providing financial assistance to businesses and measures aimed at trying to encourage these businesses to improve their management and marketing skills. This trend was reflected in later developments including the organisations decision to apply for LEADER II funding and the 1996 launch of "Enterprising Waterford," an INTERREG funded exchange programme aimed at fostering local and transnational networks between businesses, and delivering training to those businesses. Clearly therefore in Waterford certain elements of what could be described as a local elite were at least partially successful in capturing the programme and defining it in terms which justify the allocation of its resources in ways which vary with the basic ideas underlying the A.B.R. At the same time it remained the case that at national level the Department of the Taoiseach and subsequently A.D.M had clear guidelines relating to the A.B.R. Despite the emphasis that had been placed on the "local" nature of the partnerships, the areas of activity, which it would later be necessary for the Partnership to address, was clearly outlined by these guidelines. In this context, the demands of the national programme relating to the sequence of events, such as the requirement that a plan be drawn up and an initial contact programme be implemented as first steps in the Partnership's operation remained important. There was a particular emphasis on the production of documentation including both an action plan and a needs assessment survey. This documentation constituted an accounting procedure. The production of surveys to justify plans and the clear indication that these plans were being implemented in accordance with central government guidelines was vital to A.D.M. creating an overall impression of manageability. These requirements thus placed constraints on the Partnerships requiring a certain set of tasks to be fulfilled such

as the formation of the board, its agreement with a specific set of actions and the making of initial contact with the unemployed.

In the case of W.W.D.P it is clear that the some actors were able to find sufficient room for manoeuvre in the process of the formation of the board and preparation of these documents to present the organisations activities as being in line with the national programme whilst also pursuing their own objectives. The survey and action plan both complied with the A.B.R suggesting that as an organisation the Partnership operated in line with state guidelines, while the organisation was still able to pursue large elements of its own local agenda. What is equally evident is the relative ease with which these documents were accepted in this context. As has been noted the relationship between research and action in the partnership was somewhat tenuous. There is no evidence that the validity of the needs assessment surveys were ever examined in detail or that the partnerships were required to make clear links between their needs assessment surveys and the subsequent actions of the partnerships

The data in this chapter thus suggests that the expansion of the development network involves two sets of tasks. The first of these relate to the working out of the “real” project. These are the actual social processes through which actors engage with objects in that network. In the case of W.W.D.P we see elements of the local elite in particular defining development and the development project in a specific way which is in line with their own projects. The second is the set of tasks that are involved in the production of a pseudo-project. That is the production of an account of these activities which is consistent with formal policy discourse. While these “accounting tasks,” very much relate to the process, knowledge and skills which make up the local development “expert system” the former pragmatic tasks involve informal activities and a body of informal knowledge which is of fundamental importance in determining the outcome of local development projects. The success of certain figures in capturing W.W.D.P lay in their command of such informal knowledge and practices and their ability to successfully re-interpret these in a way which complied with the requirements of the formal discourse. In part their success in doing so may be related to another consideration, the extent to which A.D.M and other senior decision makers are themselves aware of the existence of these twin sets of tasks. It is certainly not evident that these organisations themselves ever insisted that the W.W.D.P rigorously apply the findings of its needs assessment survey or checked its validity. Indeed the fact that Waterford was designated appears to suggest that in certain circumstances these decision

makers themselves do not act in ways that are always consistent with the development policy discourse. Such an interpretation may account for the fact that while A.D.M was very insistent on the partnerships producing survey evidence of its contact with the unemployed, it was not the case that it insisted that these surveys form the basis for action. The surveys' were important as "accounting tasks" and not as the basis for practical action.

In the initial stages of the W.W.D.P's formation the control exercised by a small core group of board members was such that the organisation achieved a significant degree of agreement. The early days of the W.W.D.P saw little evidence of conflict. The manager largely confirmed this, in his view conflict didn't arise because the organisation was new and it had not yet been perceived as a threat to any other interests. However despite the control they were able to exert at this stage subsequent events at board level were to reveal significant levels of conflict between different actors on the board and other local stakeholders. In part this was related to the ambitions of the manager, who with the agreement of the core board members wished to expand the organisation. Such an expansion presented issues to a range of other actors, amongst these the manager identified some state agencies who would be particularly difficult to deal with. It was these organisations that had the most to lose by the Partnership "invading their turf". W.W.D.P as a small organisation focussing its efforts on helping the unemployed was of only limited significance. However a W.W.D.P. that was interested in expanding its role to encompass a large range of activities in areas such as enterprise support and threatened the "space," in which other agencies operated. In addition any effort to expand the organisation potentially meant increasing its level of activity, requiring the extension of the network organised around W.W.D.P to include a wider range of local actors. Such efforts at expansion would thus increase the potential for encounters between W.W.D.P and actors with radically different projects. In 1993 the Partnership became involved in an action that was to provoke just such a situation; it applied for LEADER II funding.

Chapter 7: Following the LEADER Programme

7.1 Introduction.

When the way in which W.W.D.P was established is considered in detail it becomes evident that some of the basic ideas underlying the local development paradigm are open to question, particularly those concerning participation. As we have seen incorporating recipient groups and the wider community in the decision making and implementation process would, it was envisioned, result in locals feeling a sense of ownership of the development process (See for example Shortall 1994). This would in its turn enhance the ability of local programmes to deliver positive results. Much of the emphasis in achieving development was thus placed on the involvement of local people in programmes operating locally relevant strategies. The data presented in the previous chapter began the task of examining these ideas, applying the research approach outlined in chapters one and two, to an analysis of the formation and early development of W.W.D.P. This analysis revealed a far more complex picture than is suggested by formal policy models of local intervention. In this instance, the creation of a local development body created a context in which questions of local influence and power were of great significance. In the case of W.W.D.P the result of establishing a local development entity was arguably not to expand the level of local participation or local ownership in the project but rather to consolidate the position of an identifiable group of actors. This was a group who already enjoyed a considerable degree of influence over local affairs through their role in major local businesses and agriculture. They also enjoyed close personal and business ties and shared a similar outlook on the best way to develop the area. The previous chapter demonstrated that this group was able to exert that influence in the partnership shaping the early formation of the organisation in a way which ensured the dominance in its proposed plan of actions, of measures which supported their projects. In doing so it could be said that they constituted a local elite with considerable ability to influence local events.

In the preceding chapter it was argued that these events can best be understood as a consequence of efforts to expand the local development network. Specific critical points or interfaces can be identified during this process. Encounters involving a variety of different

actors occur at these interfaces, and it is during these encounters that the actual meaning of the programme was worked out. The data presented in the previous chapter related to one such interface. It showed that while the activities that occurred at this point had a bearing on the actual shape that the policy took, they also contributed to the official account of the outcome of these programmes. The chapter concluded by arguing that the local elite was successful in defining the development programme in way which aligned it with their own projects not simply because of the skill with which they were able to enrol other actors, but also because of the ability that they displayed in relation to the accounting tasks necessary to support a particular pseudo-project. That is, their ability to produce a particular account of the actual events that occurred in the project which complied with the formal policy discourse.

The previous chapter demonstrated that while certain visible features such as local boards, locally held money and support for certain types of projects may be associated with local development programmes. The presence of these features cannot be used to draw inferences about what actually happens in encounters which occur during the implementation of these programmes. In the case of W.W.D.P the result of these encounters was the dominance of certain members of the local elite and this in turn resulted in the organisation adopting a stance which reflected the projects of these actors. Those same individuals were subsequently able to have a major impact on the shape of the local programme. In forming its decision making structure they were able to draw together a board that was supportive of their aims and interests. They selected a like-minded manager and defined the organisation's role in terms of enterprise support. The organisation was structured and operated in a way which closely resembled the private commercial companies with which these individuals were familiar, ensuring that within the W.W.D.P good practice was equated with business practice. Simultaneously the board was able to utilise and indeed expand its room for manoeuvre to provide the national administrators with further evidence that it was complying with their agenda. They did so through a series of symbolic events in the form of submissions of documents that met the national co-ordinators requirements, consolidating the local development pseudo-project. Ironically in this case certain features of formal development policy discourse, such as for example those relating to local participation, were used by members of a local elite to capture and largely control the direction of the local initiative. They exercised a considerable degree of autonomy to shape an initiative that, while being funded to work with the unemployed, largely targeted its actions at supporting enterprise.

While some of those who have championed the role of partnership (and in particular its role in combating social inclusion) suggested that one of the partnerships weaknesses were that they remained “*Primarily a creature of central government, and are heavily dependent on external funding and direction for their activities,*” (Walsh, Craig and McCafferty 1998 p. xv), in the case of W.W.D.P the local board displayed both a desire and an ability to exercise a degree of autonomy in its dealings with the A.B.R. Indeed it could be argued that a more compliant board or one operating under a more direct form of central control may have pursued a policy more in line with the programme’s original brief, targeting its efforts directly at the long term unemployed¹. If nothing else the case of W.W.D.P suggests that there is no strict correlation between local decision making and policies which promote equality and inclusiveness. The experience of W.W.D.P also illustrates the central importance of the wider local context. Seen in isolation, the introduction of new local boards may appear to be a convenient mechanism for facilitating local involvement but in Waterford the on-going structure of local power relations within existing local social networks were of great significance in determining who controlled the programme and ultimately what that programme became.

Once established the partnership had to go about the business of being a development organisation. This involved undertaking a range of activities under various headings such as administration, project implementation and evaluation. This involved employing staff, attracting clients and enlisting the co-operation of a range of other players including local community groups, local businesses and the state agencies. The local development network had to expand and in doing so enrol new actors; this necessarily involved actors in a range of new encounters at other interfaces. As was the case in the events examined in the previous chapter this involved a range of actors in encounters during which the meaning of objects in the local development programme were worked out. This included the various staff members employed both by the partnership and other state agencies that came into contact with it. Indeed the staff occupied a particularly significant position in the partnership process being involved directly at the interface between the partnership and other local actors. In addition they had a very specific interest in the outcome of the partnership process. Besides the staff a range of other locals also came into contact with the partnerships at such interfaces including

¹ Indeed during and since the study the organisation has occasionally been subject to some pressure from national administrators to pay more attention to “the social agenda,” its capacity to withstand this is testament to the ability of its manager and board to come up with strategies to deflect this pressure.

members of its putative “target groups”, community bodies and representatives of other organisations. Many of these actors had interests which were affected by the introduction of the new organisation. These included actors with alternative projects which were radically different to those being advanced by W.W.D.P and who potentially had the capacity to contest the views of those actors involved in efforts to enrol them in the development network. Therefore these encounters had the potential to influence the shape of outcomes of the programme. This chapter now turns to these events with a view to considering what impact such encounters actually did have as the organisation set about doing its business in the wider local world in which it was located. Was it the case that W.W.D.P board was able to formulate and pursue a strategy that simply facilitated the interests of the all-powerful local elite figures described above? Or were these exchanges during which other local actors retained the ability to redefine elements of the W.W.D.P programme in ways which aligned it more closely with their own personal projects? In order to examine these questions this chapter concentrates on a specific series of events in which these questions came very much to the fore when between May 1993 and January 1994 a planning exercise was carried out by W.W.D.P, intended to provide the basis for the submission of a funding plan for the second LEADER programme (LEADER II).

7.2 Going for LEADER II - Bureau building or respecting local priorities?

In its earliest days what opposition the Partnership experienced was limited. Where issues did arise these were generally with people who were closely connected with the board and related to specific disputes over the allocation of funds and personnel. There were also some early disagreements with FAS, the state agency responsible for industrial training and manpower services. FAS’s day to day operations brought it regularly into the local development arena in which W.W.D.P was to operate. As a consequence the two organisations “rubbed up against each other,” relatively often and tensions developed between them. The Partnership’s manager attributed these to “empire building,” on FAS’s part. However in general during the early stage of its operation the Partnership was able to proceed largely along lines that it had set for itself. In part the manager saw this as a result of the fact that as a new entity other local actors and organisations had little knowledge of the potential implications of the Partnerships for their own organisations and projects. At this time the Partnership was still regarded as a pilot initiative that was to run for a limited period of time. As one FAS employee stated it was expected that at the end of the programme the

“the blow ins, would blow out again” leaving the established local players in the positions that they had occupied prior to the Partnerships arrival. However as the organisation became established, formulating and pursuing strategies in order to fulfil the terms of the A.B.R programme and, more significantly, the agreed objectives of key actors amongst the staff and the board, its activities brought it into contact with a wider range of local actors. These encounters occurred at entirely new points or social interfaces. Inevitably this increased volume of interaction increased the chances that W.W.D.P insiders would be involved in encounters with actors with very different projects increasing the potential for conflict over specific issues of interests to the actors concerned.

When in 1993 the manager, with the support of the board decided to apply for funding through the LEADER II programme, this marked a dramatic change in the W.W.D.P’s operation. From its formation up until this point the Partnership had operated solely on funds allocated under the A.B.R. By mid-1993 its manager was stating that the W.W.D.P had achieved a significant degree of progress. It had, as was shown in the previous chapter, successfully concluded its “initial contact” programme and drafted survey reports on the unemployed and employers. It had also been involved in the launch of the three state agency programmes VTOS, the A.A.E.S and the CEDP. The ICTU Centre for the Unemployed in the Dungarvan had also been established with partial funding from the Partnership. W.W.D.P had also launched some high profile, low budget initiatives including a schools enterprise competition and a marketing project with a group of farmers producing vegetables². However, by far the most significant achievement by that stage had been the organisation’s allocation of financial support to small enterprises. W.W.D.P. had by this stage spent the bulk of the programme funding allocated to it. In the main this spending took the form of the provision of grants and low interest loans to private enterprises. This strategy reflected the manager’s belief that, if the organisation was to be successful, it must demonstrate a high degree of efficiency. Of critical importance to him in this respect was ensuring that the budget was fully spent. This would allow the organisation to demonstrate that it was capable of getting things done with state money within given time frames. This in turn would enable the national co-ordinators to demonstrate that the national programme was capable of drawing down and using funds allocated from European programmes. It was his view that

² However this along with many of the partnerships enterprise activities at the time this was delivered in conjunction with FAS.

this outcome was in line with the views of the Board who wanted to see money being invested in the area on what he described as “*substantial business projects*”. It was also apparent from an early stage that the manager was considering strategies to extend the lifetime of the organisation. It was again his view that in doing so he was reflecting the wishes of a board which wanted to see W.W.D.P maximise the level of investment that could be brought into the area. In this instance, his own interest in seeing W.W.D.P survive was in perfect agreement with that of the board that the organisation should continue and should do so in an enterprise support role. By early 1993 with the bulk of the funds allocated to W.W.D.P. under the original area based programme spent and a year remaining of the proposed three for which the A.B.R was to run, the manager was stating that the original action plan was no longer in operation and that the organisation was actively pursuing new programmes. Central to his plans at this stage was the preparation of the application for the second round of the LEADER programme (LEADER II).

LEADER was widely regarded as being more enterprise focussed than the A.B.R. a strategy for which there was broad support within the Board of W.W.D.P, particularly amongst those key figures involved in the failed application for the first LEADER programme. The first programme was due to conclude at the end of 1993 and it was widely expected that a second programme, LEADER II, would be announced. Like its predecessor this would be a largely enterprise focussed programme that would run for a number of years ³. By deciding to apply for LEADER II W.W.D.P was through its manager, staff and board adopting its own operational goals, chief amongst which was that goal of organisational survival. The organisation was now fighting its own corner, looking to identify funding opportunities that would ensure its continued operation irrespective of its status as a pilot programme under the A.B.R., ironically while the manager criticised FAS for what he regarded as its empire building activities it could be argued that he himself adopted a bureau building strategy. This strategy involved the organisation devoting time and resources to the preparation of an application for LEADER II, something that was not part of its role as an A.B.R funded organisation and would necessarily mean that the partnership would be doing work which was not strictly speaking within its remit.

³ It was initially expected to be a three year programme however it eventually became known that this would be a five year programme.

In justifying the decision to do so the manager made selective use of components of local development discourse to support this strategy claiming that the decision to seek more funding through the LEADER II programme reflected the wishes of the board. It was certainly the case that the decision to apply for LEADER II enjoyed considerable support amongst the core members of the boards and particularly those with connections to Waterford Foods. Indeed the decision of W.W.D.P to apply for LEADER II illustrates the extent to which the organisations actions supported the projects of particular actors and also provides an insight into how this impacted on the organisations activities. As part of the A.B.R programme W.W.D.P had received funds to operate a programme intended to address unemployment. Yet as we saw in the previous chapter, the board and manager defined the organisation as an economic development agency and sought to direct its activities towards an enterprise support role. The initiative had been to a certain extent captured by these influential local actors. Their dominance over the organisation had a fundamental impact on its culture and the style of intervention that it would adopt in the future. Given these facts it is scarcely surprising that a decision was taken to apply for LEADER II. The programme was specifically defined as a rural development programme with a focus on economic development. This perfectly matched the interests of many members of the board of W.W.D.P. It also matched the views of the manager who stressed W.W.D.Ps status as a company and operated it in much the same way as a for profit commercial organisation. By doing so he sought to distinguish it from public sector bodies linking the future of the organisation closely with performance. Within this framework the idea that the organisation should seek to expand its operation by increasing its sources of income was not only reasonable, it was also desirable. In much the same way as any other company would attempt to expand its operation by establishing new markets he regarded the idea of applying for LEADER II as good business practice which reflected the wishes of the board. In this instance the congruence between the wishes of the board and the wishes of the manager was unsurprising. Had the manager not possessed a background in business and views that were closely aligned to those of the board it is unlikely that he would have been appointed to the position at all.

Their decision to apply for LEADER II also confirms that in this instance local actors acted with a considerable degree of autonomy within the development policy network, redefining certain objects in that network in a way which aligned them with their own projects. At the same time we again see that an element of their success in this respect related to their ability

to exercise a degree of “editorial control” in the way such events were accounted for, at least to some degree this enabled them to portray their activities as being consistent with the ideas and guidelines included in the local development discourse. Two concepts which were particularly significant in this respect were the notion of development itself and also the notion of local participation. By defining the concept of development in specifically economic terms the manager and certain board members were able to exercise a considerable degree of control over way in which the organisation operated. In this way it appears that at times they were able to subvert what had originally been a programme to address the problems associated with long term unemployment in order to use it as an enterprise support programme. The fact that these decisions reflected the wishes of a board in which locals were active participants helped to make this possible. To the manager the economic development strategy adopted was clearly linked to the wishes of the local board and, it could be suggested, formed the basis of a specific alternative to formal policy discourse which had at its heart an ideology of locally driven enterprise development.

The decision to apply for LEADER signalled the intent of the board and the manager to move the organisation away from its original role and also their desire to secure its longer term future. Both decisions had the potential to create conflict. Board members who were sympathetic to the original aims of the partnership could have objected to the decision to change the organisation’s focus, while members representing state agencies could have resisted the change in direction this decision signalled and perhaps more significantly the prospect of an extended presence for what had originally been a temporary pilot project. It is perhaps testament to the degree of control that the board’s key members had achieved over the organisation that there is almost no evidence of formal opposition to the decision to apply for LEADER II at board level. The way in which board members had been selected meant that many of those representing the community and social partners were supportive of the board and the LEADER II application. At national level many of the state agencies were also committed to supporting LEADER II applications. Locally they also supported, or at the very least were not prepared to openly oppose the LEADER II application. However it was also clear during the application process that outside of the core group there was little sense that the board collectively supported the application. Many board members dissociated themselves from the application process or opted to maintain a watching brief. Subsequent conversations with some of these board members suggest that they had regarded the LEADER II application as very much a project of Waterford Foods and the manager.

7.3 The LEADER application process.

As discussed in detail in chapter four, the first LEADER programme was proposed in 1988 and introduced by the E.U. for the period between 1991 and 1994 as an E.C community initiative⁴ to provide funding for groups involved in locally initiated rural development programmes. LEADER's aim was to provide a funding framework for measures to address difficulties in rural areas associated with peripherality and changing patterns of social and economic development. Funds were to be made available to locally based development organisations. These, together with locally sourced private and non-governmental funds and funds from the state, were intended to finance integrated local development programmes aimed to encouraging the development of rural areas. This would involve a series of measures intended to enhance the local rural resource base, both human and natural through measures to assist in the development of new economic activities in the area.

The allocation of funds to specific groups under the first LEADER programme was formally decided on a competitive basis. Submissions were sought in the form of a business plan. While there was some latitude allowed in the format of these plans, most started with some form of "strategic analysis," of the area. The plans then proposed a programme specifically tailored to the development needs of the area. In line with the guidelines for application issued by the Department (Department of Agriculture 1991) the plans had to be "*Multi sectoral, broad based, coherent and integrated,*" specifying the actions to be undertaken and the targets to be achieved. According to the subsequent evaluation of the programme the plans were assessed by an independent consultancy firm and areas were chosen on the basis of objective selection criteria based on the quality of this plan. The E.U. permitted administration costs amounting to some 20% of the overall budget, which would go directly to the local organisation, thus providing these organisations with a strong incentive to ensure that their applications for the programme were successful. Once funding was allocated it was left to these organisations to administer the programme in their own area. At national level,

⁴ Community initiatives were a particular funding mechanism through which the E.C./E.U. can fund specific projects directly. They are designed and implemented outside of mainstream E.U. Funding mechanisms such as, for example, The Common Fisheries Policy. For the E.C./E.U. they have the added advantage of enabling it to become directly involved in supporting projects at sub-national level in the member states.

an intermediary body would monitor the progress of the programme, to ensure that funds were used correctly and to co-ordinate the programme. This body would act as an agent of the E.U. providing oversight and ensuring that the local groups conformed to the E.U's rules and guidelines. In Ireland, a unit in the Department of Agriculture acted in this role during the course of the first and subsequent LEADER programmes. Under the terms of the programme the E.U. contribution to the programme of fifty per cent had to be matched. This required the raising of a further fifty per cent of funding within each state. In the Irish case the vast bulk of this funding was sourced from private commercial investments, principally through providing funds to match a LEADER contribution of up to fifty per cent of specific private investment expenditures.

As has been discussed, the groups that applied for funding under the first programme had a wide variety of structures. However all were non-statutory bodies and most, including the Waterford I.R.D group which subsequently formed the core of W.W.D.P resembled what the N.E.S.C describe as local development coalitions, a combination of local interests which operate in support of "agreed goals of development". Most included representatives of the state agencies, local business interests, community organisations and farming groups⁵. A significant number were the 1988 I.R.D programme groups. Others varied in composition and origin, at least one was a Community Development Programme then administered under the Combat Poverty Agency and funded by the then Department of Social Welfare⁶. While some of these organisations were well established and had a track record in local development others were formed at short notice and on an ad-hoc basis solely in order to apply for LEADER. The operation of the programme was thus the responsibility of a range of formally autonomous non-governmental organisations which incorporated a range of local interests and implemented LEADER in their area under contract.

⁵See Kearney et al 1994 and 1998 for a more detailed description of the composition of groups funded under both the first LEADER programme and LEADER II.

⁶The manager of this group indicated that the original backers had problems with the organisations decision to go for LEADER II. Community development projects operating under the scheme then administered by the Combat Poverty Agency tended to be principally concerned with what are described as "social measures," that is with social services or actions to address locally perceived social problems. In addition this programme has tended to operate principally in disadvantaged urban areas. For such a programme to involve itself in a LEADER II application was not the norm and could be considered to be outside of its remit.

While more recent accounts of events at this time suggest that the formation of these groups represented a deliberate effort on the part of some actors to introduce a form of corporatist governance at the local level (See for example Keating 2009, Taylor 2005), empirical data relating to the formation of these groups suggest that, initially at least, this was not the case. In many cases key corporate players were excluded, farming organisations had limited representation and even more so unions⁷. In the case of Waterford I.R.D for example no groups representing either the unemployed or the unions were consulted. Indeed the case of this group suggests that despite its claims to be interested in integrated rural development it defined this in very narrow terms which excluded the participation of local actors who were not directly involved in certain areas of economic activity (see chapter four). Decisions as regards the make-up of these groups owed a significant degree to expediency and the role to be played by private investment. In a number of cases, including Waterford the local groups were strongly backed by major agribusinesses ventures, in the main Dairy Co-operatives or PLC's.

The manager of W.W.D.P anticipated that the selection of groups for inclusion under LEADER II would largely follow the format of those which had been successful under the first LEADER programme. Thus his initial preparation for the application for LEADER II

⁷Farming organisations and farmers in general had a mixed experience of LEADER I. The independent evaluation indicated that the bulk of beneficiaries were either business people or large farmers. Smaller landholders did not substantially benefit from the programme. In the case of one LEADER group farming representatives were deliberately excluded as it was felt that they “were involved in enough already”. In the study area fears were expressed by members of W.W.D.P staff that farmers would “hi-jack,” the initiative if they became involved. Farming interests themselves had a mixed view of the programme. Reservations were expressed as to whether the development of alternative off and on farm activities could replace traditional farming as a realistic source of income. One farming representative in the case study area put it this way “you are talking about all these new enterprises, if it wasn’t for farming there would be nothing in the country.” He then pointed to the decline in milk suppliers in his own area from around one hundred and twenty five, ten years ago to around twenty in 1993 and suggested that money would be better spent subsidising small milk producers and keeping people on the land rather than expecting people to adopt new economic activities. This point was made on a number of occasions by representatives of the I.F.A as they emphasised the need to view the retention of on farm employment as an important way of countering rural unemployment. The dilemma for the farm organisations was that they were primarily committed to protecting the interests of farmers. Rural development programmes such as LEADER predominantly supported off-farm enterprises and explained their activities in the context of a decline in farming. This emphasis did not coincide with the interests of the farm lobby.

funding was based on what was known or could be learned about the first programme. W.W.D.P's strategy for preparing its application was decided after a range of both formal and informal channels were used to gather information about the first application process and operation of the seventeen successful groups. Copies of successful applications from the previous LEADER programme were obtained and studied. The methods and structure employed in the development of these plans varied across groups, but in general involved some form of baseline review of the area and a list of private enterprise projects that would be funded under the programme. In addition other sources of information about both the first programme and the likely structure of a second were sought. Of particular significance was a visit to another local body that was supported under the first LEADER programme⁸. In this case the plan was drawn up by a group of three, following a consultation process involving the "community". It was described as a strategic analysis of the area involving a strengths and weaknesses opportunities and threats (S.W.O.T) analysis applied to local development. On the basis of this a number of potential projects were identified in agriculture, fishing, tourism and small enterprises in general. The manager of this organisation stressed the role of LEADER an enterprise development and innovation programme. In his view, LEADER applications needed to "unashamedly," highlight their proposed role as an enterprise support agency. Although in the initial E.U. documents the range of measures outlined included a much wider range of potential measures and stressed the importance of issues such as capacity building and technical assistance, direct grant aid to individual businesses was in his view the key element of LEADER⁹. In this regard he emphasised the importance of ensuring that the proposals contained in the plan were realistic and that the actions contained in the local programme could actually absorb the proposed budgets. It was in his view vital that the money would get spent. He stated that the format of the draft itself should be as a strategic document with only a small number of specific projects included. This was in marked contrast to many of the other plans prepared for the first LEADER program, including the unsuccessful one in W.W.D.P's own area, which had sought proposals for specific projects. He also made a very clear distinction between the realism and knowledge of the planners and the demands and expectations of the community groups. He advised the W.W.D.P staff that

⁸ The group in question was unique at the time as being the only one in the country which had both LEADER and A.B.R.

⁹The evaluation of the first LEADER programme showed that grant assistance to individuals was also the key element of the programme from the perspective of the majority of those residing in the Leader areas.

the need to get groups in the wider community to be realistic in their expectations was a major problem to be overcome in the planning process¹⁰.

The views that were put forward by the manager of that organisation were pivotal to the approach taken by W.W.D.P in the preparation of its LEADER II plan. The decision to undertake this visit and other informal “fact finding” itself also illustrate another important feature of the application process. This was the extent to which this process was shaped by informal lateral contacts between W.W.D.P and other applicant groups. W.W.D.P based its application and consultation process on that of the group it visited. Indeed amongst the plans of the 48 groups that eventually did apply for LEADER II, the evaluators found that *“In general there was quite a similarity between the objectives outlined across the majority of Business Plans. They were much more homogenous in character than those in LEADER I,”* (Kearney et al 1998 p2). The evaluators attributed this to the fact that *“the Guidelines issued by the department were closely followed”* (ibid). However the data presented above suggests that in the case of W.W.D.P at least, the organisation’s approach owed as much to its ability to informally network with other groups, a fact worth noting given the enormous resources that were subsequently expended on establishing formal networking or “link,” programmes for the LEADER programme and other local development organisations.

Following this meeting W.W.D.P staff developed what they proposed would be their approach to the planning process¹¹ mirroring that which had been adopted in the area they had visited. It was proposed that W.W.D.P application should take the form of a business plan. This plan would be primarily a “strategic document,” which would entirely focus on proposals outlining how the partnership would support the economic objectives associated with LEADER. The plan would include a baseline study of the area. On the basis of this a SWOT analysis of the area would be drawn up. This would form the justification for the measures outlined, which would correspond closely to the categories of eligible measures listed for inclusion as part of LEADER II. Based on the experience of the first LEADER programme these were expected to be;

¹⁰The manager suggested that had the communities initially got their way the area would have been ringed with “a chain of heated swimming pools”.

¹¹ In some cases the plans outlined detailed and specific proposals for projects on the basis that these were the projects that would be funded. In other cases specific projects were only included with loose estimates of cost and were described as indicative i.e. examples of the type of projects that would be funded.

- Technical support for rural development
- Training and recruitment assistance
- Rural tourism
- Small firms, craft enterprises, and local services
- Local exploitation and marketing of agricultural, forestry and fisheries projects
- Preservation and improvement of the environment and living conditions.

It was expected that the bulk of resources would be directed towards the third and fourth headings with an emphasis being placed on the provision of grant assistance to enterprises. It was generally agreed by both the staff and manager that, as part of the application process, no specific proposals would be sought from individuals and that the final document would not detail the specific measures to be funded under the programme. Again W.W.D.P followed the example set by the organisation its staff had visited by only choosing to present a few projects as examples of the type of activities the partnership would include in its programme or as they were described “indicative projects”.

In addition to these steps however a further consideration emerged. This arose from the views of the manager and board that if the programme was to be successful the W.W.D.P application must achieve two things. The first was that it should be the only applicant group in the area. In order to do this the manager felt that W.W.D.P needed to pre-empt any possible rival bids. Of particular concern to him in this regard was the possibility of a competing application being put together by groups in the east of Waterford which was not included in the W.W.D.P catchment. While he did not believe that an application from groups in this area would be successful the manager felt that it would nonetheless damage W.W.D.P’s chances. For this reason he felt that it was important that one application be made covering the entire county and that W.W.D.P. make it. Besides reducing the possibility of the emergence of a competing application, broadening W.W.D.P’s application to include a larger area had a number of benefits for W.W.D.P. Firstly it would increase the number of local groups that could be lined up in support of the application. Second a larger area could be used to justify a larger budget for the proposed programme. An even more significant issue was the desire of both the manager and the board that the plan be seen to have the support of the wider local community. In order to achieve this, one staff member was given

responsibility for initiating a consultation process with local groups. This would involve a series of meetings to which representatives would be invited from selected community groups in the area. The meetings would take the form of workshops where the A.B.R and LEADER would be discussed. Most partnerships had begun to initiate their own Community Development work by this time. Indeed A.D.M published a document outlining the role that such methods could play in the A.B.R (A.D.M 1992). By contrast W.W.D.P had done little community development work. Furthermore W.W.D.P's interest in bringing together groups to participate in a LEADER II application programme was not consistent with the aims or role of the A.B.R. In fact, A.D.M was at this point keen to stress the differences between the work done by LEADER and the A.B.R groups. Thus the decision to undertake this consultation was one which had the potential to create difficulties for W.W.D.P with A.D.M. The consultation programme was thus initially presented as having a dual role as both a LEADER II consultation and the start of W.W.D.P's own community development initiative. Again we have an example of a situation during which the manager, utilised the room for manoeuvre within the programme to advance his and the boards project by organising the consultations deemed necessary as part of the application process, while at the same time demonstrating to ADM that the organisation was engaging in community development. The suggestion that the consultation process would have this dual purpose was also important to the staff member responsible for organising the consultation for different reasons. This individual had trained as a community development worker and had expressed a desire to see more of this type of work undertaken by the partnership. Initially she regarded the consultation as an opportunity to initiate this work.

7.4 W.W.D.P, FAS and the community

The decision of the board and manger to apply for LEADER II on behalf of the entire county and to undertake a consultation of the wider local community in order to enhance the likelihood of succeeding, involved activities during which the local development network was expanded to incorporate additional actors. Now it was W.W.D.P which was faced with the challenges of enrolling local actors possessing a range of different and possibly contradictory projects into an expanding local development network. This was a potentially challenging task for W.W.D.P. In order to achieve it, the Partnership had decided on a consultation process through which it would meet and conduct workshops aimed at enlisting

the support of these community groups for the LEADER II application. Essentially therefore the consultation process represented the Partnerships attempt to “manage,” encounters with other local actors. This created a situation at which events at the interface between the organisations staff and board and these local community groups could take place in a context and manner which was defined and controlled by the Partnership.

However the challenge facing the Partnership in relation to the consultation was made even more complicated by the relationship that the organisation had with state agencies and in particular its previous decision to involve FAS in community development in the area. Prior to this point and with the exception of the groups represented on the organisations board, W.W.D.P had only had limited contact with community groups. Indeed, despite its role as a local development organisation W.W.D.P had shown limited interest in community development. When groups contacted W.W.D.P in relation to specific projects the partnership had adopted a practise of referring them to FAS who operated the Community Enterprise Programme (C.E.P). This program represented FAS’s approach to community development. It was a training programme comprised of a set of modules taking groups through a phased programme which began by assisting them to form and begin to establish their goals through to the point where the groups attained a level of competence sufficient to establish a community enterprise. At this point financial assistance could be made available from FAS for the purposes of employing an enterprise officer¹². In addition it was possible for such groups to make applications to W.W.D.P for funds, though few did and even less were successful. The scheme had initially been regarded as useful by W.W.D.P’s manager because it was “*effective in giving groups a structure*” which he in turn saw as a vital precondition to any group being considered for funding by his organisation. However it is important to note that groups were not guaranteed funds from either FAS or W.W.D.P as a result of their participation in the C.E.P, nor was it the case that following their involvement in the scheme the manager of W.W.D.P would necessarily accept that the group had succeeded in having developed to the stage that it could operate a community enterprise.

¹²Funding for enterprise officers was on the basis of a three year period subject to annual review after which period the group was expected to be in a position to generate its own income. Although officially the programmes enterprise officers were employed to manage a community business it was normally the case that the group’s activities faced a considerable amount of difficulties in attaining commercial viability. Indeed many of the enterprise officers devoted a substantial amount of their time to identifying and applying for further grant aid. By 1997 no projects in the study area, were in a position to pay its manager independent of state aid.

The C.E.P was operated by FAS's external training department. In the region in which W.W.D.P was situated the C.E.P was administered by the regions head of external training. The programme itself was delivered by facilitators who were employed on a part time basis. Among the individuals employed by the C.E.P were a number with links to other local organisations. In the Waterford area FAS operated the C.E.P with the assistance of an enterprise officer employed under the programme by the Waterford City Chamber of Commerce. As the title suggests the C.E.P programme had originally been introduced as a community enterprise programme in the early 1980's as one of a number of responses to the then perceived youth employment crisis. However, with the growing popularity of community development it became standard practice for the organisation to describe it as a community development service. The staff referred to themselves as community development workers. Within this framework community development was equated with enterprise development illustrating the extent to which concepts of community development had by this time become equated with economic development in Irish local development practice. During the entire period covered by this study the C.E.P in County Waterford dealt exclusively with local groups which were interested in local economic development projects. In the W.W.D.P area the groups referred to the C.E.P had been generally based in the smaller rural villages. Most were primarily interested in tourism or related activities or in other economic development ventures. Almost all of the groups were area based organisations drawing their membership from the communities in which they were located; people who owned their own businesses or were employed as senior professionals figured prominently in their membership. Most of the groups were either recently formed and most had or were then becoming legally constituted as companies limited by guarantee¹³. Following their participation in the C.E.P the majority had expanded on their original areas of concern to embrace goals relating to the economic development or general wellbeing of their areas and claimed to have an interest in a range of development objectives relating either directly or indirectly to the economic sphere. However, despite the wider statements about development

¹³The legal form established was generally that of company limited by Guarantee. On a subsequent occasion another group expressed an interest in establishing itself as a Co-op or friendly society. However, one member of this group stated that this idea drew opposition from W.W.D.P. As a result the group felt compelled to establish a company limited by guarantee. On many occasions these groups replaced informally structured groups or committees some of which had been active for a considerable length of time. The selection and creation of a legal form was one phase through which groups participating in the CEP were expected to pass.

objectives contained in formal plans and statements, most of the groups remained committed to the specific local projects or issues which had brought them together in the first place. In the case of Ardmore, for example, the group was and indeed remained a tourism group primarily interested in developing a tourism office and promoting the round tower located in the area as a visitor attraction. The group based in Tallow were mainly concerned with developing the enterprise centre that they had established there. Thus despite any reappraisal of their role that resulted from the involvement of these groups in the CEP, it is fair to say they retained a commitment to certain specific local projects.

Referring groups to the C.E.P became a routine practice in the partnership. While this may have served a useful purpose in enabling the Partnership to source technical support for local groups without tapping into its own funds, this approach meant that prior to the LEADER II application process W.W.D.P's involvement with community groups had been limited. This had the further effect of linking the community's future access to W.W.D.P to their participation in a programme that was operated by separate agency. The decision to undertake a county wide consultation, and the manner in which this consultation was conducted were informed by a growing concern that the manager of the Partnership had about this situation. Through encouraging the local community organisations to avail of the CEP, W.W.D.P. had inadvertently placed a lot of influence in FAS's hands in an area of work which the Partnership was expected to pursue. Furthermore at this time the relationship between FAS and the Partnership began to deteriorate. This was, in the view of W.W.D.P's manager due to FAS's reluctance to allow another organisation to muscle in on what that organisation saw as its area of responsibility. In support of this view he regularly cited examples of what he saw as FAS's reluctance to co-operate with the Partnership. One such example related to an occasion when he suggested that local groups had been informed by W.W.D.P, who had themselves been informed by FAS, that their projects had been approved for support through the FAS's CEDP programme¹⁴. When it subsequently emerged that this

¹⁴C.E.D.P replaced the Social Employment Scheme in Partnership areas. The scheme was administered by FAS; in addition it received support from the European Union. As with SES It offered employment to the long term unemployed on projects sponsored by a range of bodies including community and voluntary organisations and local authorities. Whilst employed on such schemes participants were paid an allowance equal to their social welfare payment and in some cases small payments for expenses such as travel and lunch. In addition to work experience the sponsors were expected to offer training modules in part resourced by FAS. This represented a shift from the SES in that the programme lay a greater emphasis on training. The scheme differed from the SES in that secondary benefits were retained and eligibility criteria were looser in addition lone parents were entitled to participate. The programme operated until it was replaced by a national C.E (community employment) programme in 1994.

was not the case W.W.D.P had been left “take the flak”. By which he meant that his organisation had to deal with the ire of the disappointed groups. The manager held the view that FAS had reneged on verbal undertakings given to his organisation in relation to this particular case. He also cited other examples of what he regarded as bad faith such as FAS’s continued approval of S.E.S schemes in the Partnership area even though such programmes were to have been replaced by C.E.D.P’s¹⁵. In general whilst FAS had on a number of occasions indicated that it was actively supporting W.W.D.P the manager felt that his and the organisations efforts to secure support or the re-allocation of resources to the partnership from FAS had not been positively received¹⁶. FAS had in his view been reluctant to make commitments in writing. His concerns about the growing rivalry between his organisation and FAS and his perception of the threat posed by the role of FAS’s C.E.P programme in the area were to have a profound impact on W.W.D.P’s approach to the programme of local consultation proposed in early 1993.

The manager above all else was concerned about what he perceived to be the threat that the C.E.P posed to the LEADER II application, particularly since in deciding to undertake an application for the entire county W.W.D.P was faced with the challenge of overcoming the traditional division between East and the West Waterford. This issue was exacerbated by failure of the Waterford I.R.D group’s previous application for the first LEADER programme. This application had also been made on behalf of the entire county but the bulk of proposed spending in that application was concentrated in the West, the area most closely linked to the IRD¹⁷. When W.W.D.P was established as a Partnership it was restricted to the West of the county increasing the likelihood that W.W.D.P’s LEADER II application would be viewed as a “western” one. Furthermore in the area of the county outside W.W.D.P’s designated remit W.W.D.P staff had no contact with community organisations but C.E.P workers did. This immediately generated the problem for W.W.D.P of dealing with potentially difficult actors, in the shape of the FAS and its C.E.P programme staff. These were actors who, the manager believed, were antagonistic towards his organisation, claimed to be involved in community development in the area and had interests which clashed

¹⁵Nationally SES schemes continued to operate in a number of partnership areas.

¹⁶In the final evaluation the study area had an extremely low level of increase in participation in FAS courses. An overall decrease in training activity occurred over the period of the programmes operation. In subsequent submissions and in public meetings the Partnership staff and in particular the manager re-iterated this view arguing that the re-allocation of resources from state agencies represented a particularly difficult area for the partnership (Craig et al 1994)

¹⁷This was clearly shown in the plan itself.

directly with those of W.W.D.P. From the managers point of view the C.E.P had the potential to enrol actors within a potentially competing local development network in East Waterford linked through FAS to national funding agencies. Because of this he felt it was important that during the consultation the Partnership would establish direct contact with the community groups as far as was possible and establish itself as the only body in the county competent to make such an application. These concerns thus formed the context in which contacts between the C.E.P and W.W.D.P occurred. The strategy the manager of W.W.D.P adopted was to preempt this possibility, firstly by requesting that the C.E.P provide a list of groups in the East. W.W.D.P's manager approached the enterprise officer employed by the Waterford Chamber of Commerce, asking him to provide the names of a number of groups in the eastern part of the county who would be invited to participate in workshops. This immediately provoked concerns in FAS and the C.E.P in relation to the areas of responsibility of the different organisations and in particular the role of W.W.D.P in drawing up a plan for the whole county.

The response his request generated confirmed the managers concern about the potential difficulties posed by the C.E.P and FAS. He thus decided to approach FAS with a view to agreeing that the C.E.P programmes staff would assist in an application submitted by W.W.D.P. By enrolling the key actors in this potentially competing network he was hoping to limit opposition and gain their support in efforts to extend the local development network in which W.W.D.P was located into the East. After a week a meeting was held involving a F.A.S representative, the enterprise officer from the Chamber of Commerce and two other people who worked in the C.E.P program in the area, together with the manager and two staff from W.W.D.P. Prior to the meeting W.W.D.P's manager informed staff of his concerns relating to FAS and indicated that as a means of overcoming these problems he intended that W.W.D.P would take over full responsibility for the application, ensuring that at least there would be a clear demarcation as to the agency submitting the plan. In turn this would mean that the W.W.D.P staff member responsible for preparing the consultation would need to be able to manage this process, co-ordinating the work done with the groups across the county. This would include the work done in the East by the C.E.P.

He outlined these proposals at the meeting. W.W.D.P would make the application for the entire county and would accept responsibility for organising the consultation process and also for drafting the plan, while he requested that the FAS C.E.P staff would assist by enlisting

the support of groups in the East. FAS and the Chamber agreed that groups in the East of the county would be assisted through the C.E.P to prepare local plans that would be used as contributions to the County LEADER Plan. All of the parties also agreed that regardless of the success or failure of the LEADER II application this process would benefit the groups by aiding their development. Thus for the C.E.P as for W.W.D.P the proposed work would have a dual purpose as part of the application procedure and as a community development exercise. At the meeting the issue of ensuring that the East was not treated as it had been during the first application was stressed by the C.E.P staff. The Partnership gave assurances that the groups in the East would have adequate representation, that draft copies of the plan would be available to them and that they would be given feedback on the application process. Despite the clear evidence that it had caused problems in the past, both sides also minimised the issue of a division between East and West Waterford and agreed that it was in the best interests of the County that the organisations involved work together. However this division was emphasised and continued to form the basis of the demarcation between East and West as the respective operational areas of the C.E.P and W.W.D.P. It was agreed that a W.W.D.P staff member would co-ordinate the process and that the staff would meet regularly to discuss progress. Despite this agreement the manager still had his doubts about FAS. He was insistent before and after the meeting, that as W.W.D.P had taken responsibility for the programme and had the most at stake, his staff would have to "*drive the process forward*". In particular this meant that the staff member responsible for co-ordinating the consultation should in his words "*manage*" the process. Privately the staff member concerned expressed doubts about the practicality of the role she was expected to play and she adopted a much more compromising approach toward the C.E.P staff indicating that she had no intention of telling fellow professionals in another organisation how to do their work.

7.5 Identifying participant groups.

Following this meeting the staff concerned began to prepare for the consultation process. A first step in this process involved the staff in identifying and contacting a list of community groups who were considered as suitable for inclusion in the process. Having identified suitable groups the staff also planned the consultations. It was W.W.D.P that took responsibility for this aspect of the programme. The C.E.P staff had no input into the design of the meetings. The management consultant, who had been previously employed by

W.W.D.P to act as a facilitator and to advise W.W.D.P on the structure of the Board and action plan, was again employed to assist with the preparation of the consultation process. On this occasion he advised staff as to how to organise the consultation with groups. Initially it was decided to hold two public meetings for the invited groups to initiate the consultation. These meetings were to take the form of workshops. After brief presentations on LEADER and the A.B.R the audience was to be divided into smaller “breakout groups,” which would discuss the presentations and formulate questions on local development that arose from them. A final session would allow these questions to be discussed. During their discussions with the consultant the need to prevent individuals raising issues relating to specific projects was raised, together with other concerns relating for the need to prevent the meetings being disrupted by individuals attempting to use them to air specific grievances. It was agreed that the focus of the meetings was to be on generalities; for example, no details of the Partnerships current work were to be addressed. Nor were questions on specific development projects permitted. They were to be followed by a round of “follow up,” meetings with individual groups, intended both to develop their submissions for the LEADER II plan and to initiate a W.W.D.P community development programme in West Waterford. As the consultation was to partly involve development work with groups it was envisioned that the latter element of the programme would be open ended and no firm deadlines would be fixed for the conclusion of these meetings.

The approach to these consultations was informed by the research that the staff had undertaken on groups which had successfully applied for the first LEADER programme. It focussed on the need for a successful application to reflect the primary role of LEADER as a local economic development programme. A plan that proposed forms of investment that could produce tangible outcomes was regarded as the best strategy for winning approval. This provided a very specific set of criteria to the staff in relation to what groups should be involved. Such groups needed to be of a type that were viewed as being capable of delivering practical results in relation to planning and enterprise development. There was thus a general acceptance amongst the staff of both the C.E.P and W.W.D.P that these criteria should apply in the selection of groups for inclusion in the consultation process because the plan needed to show a degree of community organisation of the type that matched ideas implicit in the LEADER programme. In relation to LEADER the concept of community development as used to describe this particular exercise was inextricably linked with enterprise development. In informal discussions the manager echoed this view. He emphasised the need to get groups

which included the "*right people*" that is people who would effectively work with the organisation towards the development of the area's economy. As a result the staff identified existing groups with whom they already had contact and which had expressed an interest in economic development, or were at the very least visibly organised and could be expected to produce something within the given time frame. In fact many already had plans formulated for their areas as part of their participation in the C.E.P. There is something of a circular argument in this approach. The groups with this level of organisation and thus with which W.W.D.P and the C.E.P needed to work were the groups that W.W.D.P and the C.E.P had already worked with. Thus the groups which formed the backbone of the consultation programme were universally area based local development organisations made up in large measure of local business people, professionals and other people of relatively high status occupations, and which had in many cases been formed with the assistance of the C.E.P.

In the context of achieving the preferred outcomes of a LEADER application and the expressed views of the local board this approach made perfect sense. As the manager put it "*you can't expect someone with a broken leg to get up and run.*" By this he was questioning the logic of an approach that expected the least affluent and most disadvantaged to initiate viable economic development projects. It also bowed to the overriding reality that any projects a future LEADER II programme was likely to fund would require the provision at least 50% of the proposed expenditure by the promoters. The requirements of the application process, the nature of the programme itself and the imperative to ensure that any monies allocated to the area were spent were an effective barrier to participation by those who were not deemed likely to meet these criteria. The Chairperson and manager of W.W.D.P also made it clear that influential local figures and groups, needed as they put it "*to be brought on-side*". In their view the success of any plan required a wide body of support amongst those who they saw as being locally influential. The possibility of including groups who represented the socially excluded or the unemployed was only discussed by the staff once. On this occasion it was agreed LEADER II was unlikely to be relevant to such groups and as a result no efforts were made to include them.

W.W.D.P's decision to apply for LEADER II and the strategy it adopted in making that application was being shaped on the ground with reference to local interests and future and past funding opportunities. This illustrates the point made by Norman Long that "*Interventions are always part of a chain or flow of events located within the broader*

framework of the activities of the state and/or international bodies and the actions of different interest groups operative within civil society,” (Long 2001 p 32). In this case it was quite clear that the most significant interest group within civil society consisted of members of what I have described as a local elite. In this case local participation in decision making did not result in the empowerment of excluded groups. Rather the decision to apply for LEADER could be understood as representing the culmination of a process that commenced with the decision by members of the board of the Waterford I.R.D to lobby senior policy makers for the inclusion of the area in the A.B.R. Through this process the A.B.R programme was partially captured by members of the local elite in Waterford who sought to implement it as an enterprise support agency of the type that reflected the projects of this group. The process appears to be cumulative because actions at each stage form the basis for the set of later decisions and actions. In this case powerful local figures with an interest in a particular type of development approach were able to initially capture and define development in a certain way. Having done so they were able to identify and incorporate additional members with similar projects onto the board. This larger board in turn confirmed “local demand,” for enterprise development which in turn informed the manager’s actions and the development of specific ideology which he employed to justify his decision to focus on enterprise development. A word of caution is needed here. Their success in this respect was partial. Firstly because despite the degree of autonomy they did display they were still required to comply with certain elements of the formal local development discourse, and secondly because networks are continually changing and as they do so the impact of the objects within that network on the projects of new and existing actors may change, creating situations in which actors may contest the current meaning of these objects.

The decision to apply for LEADER II created just such a situation. Particularly when following the visit to a group funded under the first LEADER programme group two facts became clear. The first of these was the “unashamed,” enterprise focus of LEADER. The second was the clear need for the applying group to display a significant element of local support for the programme in the form of a consultation process. The decision by W.W.D.P staff to undertake such a consultation meant that inevitably, the LEADER II application would involve an expansion of the W.W.D.P network. Increased numbers of actors would encounter the policy network due to W.W.D.P’s decision to conduct a widespread consultation together with the decision to expand the application to cover a wider area. Amongst this increased range of local actors two specific groups were mentioned above.

These were the staff of the FAS C.E.P programme and members of a range of local development and community groups. We have already seen that to the manager of W.W.D.P the C.E.P posed something of a threat as it represented a group which also claimed to be involved in community development with strong links to a network of local groups and was part of FAS a nationally based agency which, the manager felt, had not in the past been sympathetic to the Partnership. The manager's strategy was to pre-empt any possible efforts by the C.E.P to launch a competing application by having them agree to be involved in his, thus bringing them into the network forming around the W.W.D.P bid. In doing so he had to agree some concessions to groups in the East. Formally at least, the consultation process outlined above appears relatively straightforward piece of work to be done by the two bodies in co-operation. Both W.W.D.P and the C.E.P staff stressed the idea that this was a discreet piece of work being undertaken for the good of the county. However again to quote Long it is impossible to separate out and treat specific interventions in isolation as he puts it "*Interventions are linked to previous interventions,...have consequences for future ones, and more often than not are the focus for inter-institutional struggles or represent areas where battles over perceived goals, administrative competencies, resource allocation and institutional boundaries are fought out,*" (Long 2001 p 32). In this case it was inconceivable that the organisations would not link the current process with their previous experience of dealing with each other. Indeed as the manger demonstrated this is exactly what they did.

The staff expected to operate the consultation agreed a similar set of ideas and conceptual approach concerning the aims of the consultation, the groups who should be involved and the desired outcome. However a number of potential areas of conflict between the organisations existed. They had different professional backgrounds and employment circumstances. They also had different understandings of what local and community development constituted. The officer in charge of the C.E.P's contribution to the exercise had lengthy experience of the C.E.P programme that involved working groups through a modular programme. Aside from this practical experience he had no formal training in community development work¹⁸. By contrast the W.W.D.P officer had an academic qualification in Community Development but no practical experience of group work of this type. The staff employed by both W.W.D.P and the C.E.P were on short term contracts. This was another source of tension. The question of activities which would result in the expansion of either agency at the others expense, would

¹⁸ He had in fact trained as a catholic priest

potentially threaten the staff of the other agency whose future employment depended on maintaining and even expanding existing levels of activity. At senior level tensions also existed from the outset. Despite having secured the CEP's formal agreement that W.W.D.P would submit the application, W.W.D.P's manager indicated his concern on a number of occasions that FAS and the Chamber of Commerce did not share his own interest in the success of the plan. While he felt that he had had no option but to bring them into the application process he recognised that here was a group of actors whose projects were not aligned with those of the Partnership. The relationship between FAS and W.W.D.P was poor. He expressed the view that F.A.S, perceived the Partnership as a threat and he certainly perceived FAS as one. It was not in the interests of FAS or its employees to gain the support of groups for the Partnership's application. The fact that W.W.D.P had assumed overall responsibility for the final submission while necessary and desirable also carried risks as he described it allowing the FAS supported C.E.P staff to "take none of the responsibility (if the application failed) and all of the credit (if it succeeded),"

Following the formal agreement with the C.E.P the staff of both groups began preparing for the consultation process. This involved two sets of activities. The first of these involved designing the meetings and the second involved drawing up a list of suitable groups who would be contacted and asked to take part. The consultation involved encounters between actors, chiefly the staff of W.W.D.P and the C.E.P who were part of the local development network and a variety of local actors during which the very nature of that network was the subject matter. The objective of the staff of W.W.D.P was primarily to produce a submission which indicated a wide level of local support for their activities. This involved enrolling these local actors into the common frame of meaning in the network. Another way to describe this activity would be to suggest that the staff were embarking on a process which would if successful result in these local actors accepting a certain "translation," of the process of development and by extension the LEADER II application and ultimately the local groups own role within it in a way which was consistent with the project of local development as defined by senior figures in W.W.D.P. The preparations that the organisation undertook ahead of this consultation process need to be understood in the context of the desire of these actors to create conditions at this interface which would facilitate this process. In order to do so they fell back on aspects of the formal policy discourse to present the meetings in technical terms which extended a significant degree of control to them as the professionals over the local groups. In the name of efficiency the agenda for both the public

meetings was put together in a way which limited the scope of local groups to raise specific issues of interest to them. Little provision was made to facilitate the input of local representatives at these meetings. Instead such input was deferred to vague talk of groups later preparing “submissions” with the support and supervision by professional staff. On this occasion it is possible to see that the staff were attempting to employ elements of the formal development policy discourse themselves to advance their own strategies.

7.6 Staff designs and management interventions.

In the previous section we saw how the selection process, the community consultation came to be dominated by groups with a specific interest in economic development. With this the extent to which the process could also be regarded as the start of a community development programme faded into the background. The series of events that followed over the next few weeks was to further accelerate this process as the proposed format for these meetings underwent considerable alterations. This began when a rumour circulated (or was possibly leaked) that the LEADER II program would be advertised by September 1993, with a deadline allowing only for a few months of preparation. This effectively meant that the original intentions to operate the meetings both as part of a LEADER consultation process and as the beginning of an on-going community development programme were dropped in order to concentrate on having a consultation process for LEADER II completed in a time frame that would permit the inclusion of the results in a LEADER II application.

While the original process had been envisioned by the staff member responsible as a community development exercise with selected groups, both the Manager and Chairman began to add to the original list in ways which further diminished this prospect. The manager grew anxious to ensure that every part of the County be seen to be included in the plan and urged his own staff to ensure that the consultation involved area based groups from every area of the county. W.W.D.P sought to identify such area based local groups and where such a group had been identified, invited. There was thus an increased emphasis on the consultation as a representative process. In addition the chairman (who was also employed by Waterford Foods) asked that a number of farming organisations be involved.¹⁹ In addition he

¹⁹ These included the U.F.A, I.F.A, I.C.M.S.A, I.C.A and Macra Na Feirme.

asked that the Waterford Foods farmer's advisory committees should also be included. Finally local Chambers of Commerce were invited. This resulted in a considerable increase in the number of organisations invited and in particular an increase in the number which had no previous contact with W.W.D.P or the C.E.P amongst which were economic interest groups (chiefly farming groups) some of whom wielded considerable influence in their own right.

The inclusion of these groups transformed the meetings and indeed the entire consultation process. Many of these organisations bore little resemblance to the community groups originally envisioned in the programme and were clearly not in need of the type of developmental inputs envisaged by the staff involved. Far from being in a position to facilitate these groups to formulate their own local programmes these new groups were invited in order to ensure the consultation could demonstrate the maximum level of spatial representation and also the involvement of certain economic sectors of the population. This resulted in a further shift in emphasis away from the type of community development process originally envisaged with more of an emphasis being placed on the need to ensure the two public meetings went smoothly. The "workshop," element of the meetings was considerably watered down. Instead the meetings became "information sessions" aimed at gaining support for W.W.D.P's proposals. The responsible staff member in W.W.D.P saw this abandonment of the development aspect of the work negatively as a resort to what she called a "fire brigade effort," rather than "real community development."

For the staff, the meetings were W.W.D.P's first large scale public fora. From the an early stage this led to considerable concern on their part to ensure that W.W.D.P itself was portrayed positively and this in turn led to a focus on minimising the possibility of controversy at these meetings. Informal discussions between W.W.D.P staff, had from an early stage, focused on the possibility that the organisation would "look bad.". Initially these discussions had focussed on the potential for the C.E.P or one of the existing groups to raise contentious issues. As the numbers of groups involved and the difficulties of organising the meetings increased, these concerns grew. Once again actors within the network, in this case the staff of W.W.D.P and to a latter extent the C.E.P, began to focus on the specific organisational interests of the body rather than on the formal goals of, in this case, the consultation. Besides the East-West division, a number of other contentious issues were identified and discussed. These involved disputes between W.W.D.P and specific groups

believed to be potentially troublesome. The fear grew that groups would use the opportunity presented by the public meetings to raise these issues. The inclusion, at the W.W.D.P Chairman's request, of farm groups also provoked fears that farming interests had "hijacked" the meetings. This is a particularly significant point given that LEADER was after all a rural development programme. Throughout the process both W.W.D.P and C.E.P staff continued to indicate a preference for dealing with area-based development organisations. Finally it was feared that the meetings would be used by groups or individuals to push their own pet projects. This had always been a fear but the problem of controlling the meetings expanded with the numbers involved magnifying the scale of this problem. Given that the partnership intended the plan to be of a general nature, avoiding the possibility that the meetings would be disrupted or blown off their planned course became a major pre-occupation of the staff.

Discussions concerning the potential problems facing the consultation process also came to involve staff of the C.E.P and, as these concerns grew, so too did the emphasis in these discussions on the issue of controlling the meetings. As these discussions continued it was notable that they came to be increasingly couched in a form of language that suggested a degree of technical expertise. Concerns over the groups raising irrelevant or contentious issues were related to their lack of understanding of the wider context of planned development. On occasions the staff, when discussing these issues, adopted language which was almost paternalistic in the way it referred to the local groups. They were seen as enthusiastic but lacking the realism and skills of the professionals and to be generally concerned only with specific issues or projects. On other occasions they were referred to in a technocratic frame of reference which referred to the stage of development that they had achieved. The problems posed by the groups were expressed as stemming from their lack of organisation or inexperience in dealing with development issues. The likelihood that they would use the opportunity to raise controversial issues, the potential that the groups would be "focused on projects," or that they would only highlight the interests of their own area was linked to their lack of understanding of the complex issues of planning and development. This occurred despite the fact that as the list of groups expanded it began to include many, such as farming organisations, which had few of the characteristics of the type of development organisations which this language best described. Again in the face of a potentially difficult situation the staff fell back on elements of the development discourse, to

suggest that they represented components of an expert system contrasted with the supposedly ill-informed and poorly organised local groups.

In doing so the staff of both organisations continued to employ a form of professional discourse which was similar to and based on that employed in the C.E.P and more generally in community development literature. Their continued use of this approach in discussing the consultation programme, despite the increasingly diverse nature of the groups included within the process is interesting. This is particularly so given the concerns expressed informally by the staff member in charge of the process that the later changes meant that the process could get out of hand and that its value as a community development exercise had been negated. One result of the decision of the manager and chairman to increase the extent of representation in the process was to increase the staffs concerns about the possibility of public shows of dissent or other occurrence during this meeting that would make the organisation look bad which in turn led them to focus increasingly on the need to control the meetings and in particular restrict the scale and nature of participation. In short the task facing the staff was to conduct a process which would simultaneously suggest that it was a representative forum and at the same time produce an outcome which supported the partnership and its role in the LEADER II application.

It was for this reasons that the use of this discourse remained significant to the staff even though the account it produced of the groups and their capabilities was at variance with that of the groups themselves. Even among the area based enterprise groups, which had been the original target of the proposed consultation it was not accurate to say that they were all entirely unfamiliar with planning and development exercises of the type being developed as part of the consultation. Or that they were particularly uninformed or ill equipped to participate in such a consultation thus requiring the “support” of the professional staff. In fact as we have seen these groups contained significant representation from amongst those whom the manager of W.W.D.P described as the county’s “able dealers”. Collectively many of the groups had been involved in some form of planning before ²⁰ and others had members who

²⁰ Of some 14 community based groups that fully participated in the consultation process, 10 had been involved in a C.E.P at some level, 8 had completed local audits, 6 had initiated projects, 3 applied for Global funding for amounts of between 50,000 pounds to 1.5 million. Of the groups that opted not to participate one had an ongoing project up and running and another completed local plans in 1988 and 1990.

were involved in similar planning exercises or in situations in which they were involved in funding decisions on a regular basis²¹. Seven had members on the board or one of the sub-committees of W.W.D.P Three had members who had a close relationship to the City Chamber of Commerce. Both the area based groups and indeed some of the farming organisations that were later invited to attend the meeting had members with close personal or business ties with members of the board of W.W.D.P. Indeed in some cases it was these associations and the feeling of both the manager and chairman that such groups needed to be brought on side that had prompted their inclusion in the consultation. Thus the participation of at least some of these groups reflected their present position in local networks that placed them into contact with many of the key figures in the Partnership. Indeed considered in this light the shape of the local project can be truly seen to comprise part of the “*flow of events*,” located in a “*broader framework*” (Long 2001 p.71).

However presenting the exercise as one in which a number of disparate groups with little experience of local development programmes were being brought together for a planning exercise under the supervision of professional development “experts” was important in the way the staff addressed the potential problems that might arise in the meetings. The account of the groups as disorganised and lacking know how was juxtaposed by a view of the partnership workers as development professionals with a specific competence in the field of development and the preparation of plans. This know how was contrasted with the “inexperience,” of the groups as justifying the control the professionals would maintain over the process. As professionals they were seen to lack the kind of local commitments and interests that hampered the groups in their efforts at participating objectively in the overall development of the plan for the area. This helped the staff maintain a level of distanciation, which was seen to be of importance in ensuring that meetings were held and proposals submitted in the absence of points of controversy that could disrupt the proceedings. By so doing the staff established a model in which the possible introduction of personal interests or concerns by members of the local groups was deemed inappropriate. An additional result of this approach was that they provided the staff of both W.W.D.P and the C.E.P with a common language through which to communicate and at the same time relate any difficulties

²¹ One feature of the groups was the large number of business people involved. There was also a large number of professionals and state agency officials in the groups.

they faced to the challenges of working with groups rather than to any specific criticisms of each other.

This perspective shaped the staff's thinking on the meeting format and the way that they would manage the actual meetings themselves. On paper at least these arrangements allowed the staff a considerable degree of scope to control events as they carried out their work with the groups. Despite the disruption caused by the addition of new participants and the shortened time frame the meetings continued to be treated and organised by the staff as tightly structured development workshops with much use being made of terminology drawn from group work and management theory. Emphasis was placed on the need to run meetings in a highly controlled manner if the aims of giving information and enlisting support were to be achieved. The agenda, the format of questioning and the subject matter of the meetings were all decided by the staff. This enabled them to ensure considerable control in deciding which issues could be raised.

Through this strategy the staff mobilised specific forms of knowledge in an attempt to control the interface in a way that reflected their interests. The first of the two meetings was to be about the LEADER and the second about the area based partnership arrangement. The format involved a number of presentations by guest speakers, including senior representatives of both programmes who would be brought in from Dublin to address the meetings. Following this the audience would be broken up into 6-8 smaller "break out groups". It was intended that the representatives of various different local groups would be split up so as to allow a greater level of exchange of ideas between different groups. It also had the added benefit of minimising the ability of any organisation to dominate one of the breakout groups. A staff member would facilitate these "focus groups," During this time it was intended that these groups would prepare a number of questions and would select one person as a spokesperson. The questions were then sent to the guest speakers who would select the most appropriate questions. Again the reasoning behind this was that it would ensure the discussion would proceed along relevant lines and not be "side-tracked". The groups would then be brought together and each spokesperson would be asked to read out a selected question. The guest speakers would then respond to this. While justified on technical grounds the idea to screen questions in this manner also limited the possibility of concerted criticism from the floor.

Prior to the meetings staff met to discuss the way that the meetings would be run. Again on these occasions they primarily focussed on the potential of issues such as, for example, the east-west problem or the prospect of the concerns of the farming lobby or of other groups “side tracking the meetings”. The W.W.D.P staff member responsible for running the consultation again referred to this in terms of the danger of groups “hi-jacking,” the meetings. In addition particularly troublesome groups and individuals were again identified as were particular personal or local disputes. The staff warned each other of such individuals and issues and developed responses that would be used should these issues arise. While it was clearly the case that the problems the staff were identifying related to their own concerns with the practicalities of running the meetings smoothly they again interpreted these in terms of elements of the professional development discourse. They were depicted as problems that would harm the consultation as a development exercise rather than in relation to the potential problems that this would create for the organisations involved.

7.7 Conclusion Working Towards the LEADER Programme

The encounters discussed in this chapter occurred at a crucial time in the life of W.W.D.P. The preparation of a LEADER II application represented an opportunity for the partnership to access greater levels of funding to support enterprises and also an opportunity to extend its projected life span beyond the original period of its operation. Thus in applying for LEADER II it was seeking to secure its survival for at least another three years. It was also fulfilling the wishes of the bulk of its board members. In order to ensure that it was successful in this endeavour it had to mobilise a wider level of support within the area for its activities and for its future proposals. Ironically therefore an organisation which included community development as a major operational concern within its existing brief and which was also established as a mechanism for facilitating local involvement in development policy had its first large scale contacts with community groups only as a result of the requirement to do so in order to apply for further funding. In doing so it had to expand the number of people who could be shown to support its endeavours. Thus we are dealing with an exercise through which those already involved in the local development network were faced with enrolling others in support of the W.W.D.P development project. The means by which they sought to do this was through a formal planning exercise, in which the views of other local people would be incorporated via a consultation process. Various forms of consultation have been

significant in a wide range of local development programmes and numerous important claims have been made for such programmes based in part on their capacity to involve local actors through such forms of consultation providing, as they do, evidence of the “participative,” nature of such programmes. The data presented in this chapter examines some of the ideas associated with local consultation by focussing on events as W.W.D.P set about the task of preparing to engage with the wider range of local actors in the area in order to make a case for extending both its life and geographical area. Having done so this final section returns to the question posed at the beginning of the chapter. How did these events influence the future shape of W.W.D.P. and what does this tell us about the local development process?

In broad terms three sets of issues are considered. The first concern the board’s initial decision to apply for LEADER II and the subsequent interventions in the design of the consultation programme. The second relate to the action of the staff of W.W.D.P. The third concern the events that occurred when the partnership sought to secure the support of FAS and the C.E.P for their application. Events at each of these stages played a part in determining the final shape of the proposed consultation programme. Initially at least the decision of W.W.D.P to apply for LEADER II appears to confirm the dominance a certain local elite over the local development programme. There can be little doubt that the decision to apply for LEADER II was inspired by and would help advance the projects of, a key group of individuals. Most notable in this respect was the role played by a key group of board members and, amongst this group, a number with ties to Waterford Foods. It is also clearly the case that this idea also fitted in with the interests of staff members and particularly the manager who had a direct interest in seeing the project expanded. In this case therefore we see that the board and manager provided an impetus for the organisation to devise and pursue its institutional survival irrespective of the requirements of the A.B.R programme. It was the capacity of these actors to capture the initiative and also to repackage aspects of W.W.D.P in a way which complied with the development pseudo-project which enabled them to do so. The manager in particular pursued a particular type of “reconstitution strategy” (Pfaffenberger 1988) selectively deploying terms from development discourse such as local participation and the existence of a local board structure to create support for and justify his decision to pursue a local development strategy defined in exclusively economic terms. With the agreement and at the behest of the local board these arguments were employed to justify the decision to go for LEADER II to the staff, the existing funders of the programme and later to other local actors and state agencies. Through this alternative perspective the manager

was able to justify the decision to apply for LEADER II both on the basis that it reflected the majority wishes of the board and because within this framework it represented the best option for local development. It appears to be the case that a degree of ambiguity surrounds ideas such as participation and local autonomy in local development. In part the manager's success in "managing" this ambiguity enabled him and the board to pursue a strategy at variance with that outlined for such organisations in the A.B.R.

The same key group of local actors who had supported the decision to apply for LEADER II also supported the decision to undertake the consultation programme. Chief amongst their reasons for doing so was a recognition that such a consultation had occurred in other areas which had received support under the first LEADER programme. Thus the primary motivation for the consultation was a pragmatic one, that of responding to what it was anticipated would be required in a LEADER II application. Members of this key group "worked towards" the LEADER II programme. Recognising its potential to advance their own development programme they sought to maximise their chances of making a successful case for funding under LEADER II by demonstrating their ability to comply with the criteria under which they anticipated areas would be awarded funds. It was thus in the interests of both the local board and manager and indeed of national and E.C. officials to suggest that a programme which was intended primarily to facilitate a certain approach to the development of rural areas enjoyed widespread local support. This in turn affirmed the manager in his view that the "right type," of group should be included in the consultation. Thus we see how the informal expectations of the Partnership board generated an impetus toward the creation of a formal mechanism that would present evidence of local support for an enterprise driven local development programme. While the managers stated reason for doing so were pragmatic this approach excluded local actors with projects which were not aligned with this agenda from participation in the consultation. However this process was still depicted as a comprehensive local consultation aimed at generating data on the expressed needs of local people. Compliance with a national model rather than dialogue became the priority for the consultation process. What is particularly noticeable in this process is the absence of any formal "top down," influence. While it was clearly the case that the board and manager were anticipating the likely shape of the national programme and that the format and proposed agenda of the consultation was driven by such considerations, formally at least the decision to conduct a consultation was that of the board and the outcome of this process was represented as the result of a consultation conducted locally which would arrive at locally

agreed conclusions as to what form development should take in the area, while of course providing evidence for those actors involved in the promotion of LEADER II of grass roots support for the programme.

Subsequent events during which the board and manager made decisions which affected the staff involved in preparing a consultation process, largely consolidated the dominance of their outlook internally within W.W.D.P. A particular area of tension was related to the issue of representation and the type of groups that were to be involved in the consultation. Initially the staff and management had conflicting ideas about the organisations role and the purpose of the exercise both as "workshops," and as representative meetings. The staff had originally favoured the idea of workshops involving a small number of community groups. This would have been more controllable and would have enabled the staff to deploy community development models of group work. The wider community meetings demanded by the manager and chairman served to give W.W.D.P increased legitimacy as a representative body. It was particularly important to the manager and chairman that the farming organisations be well informed and represented. It was also seen as vital that the meetings enable W.W.D.P to establish its credibility and good faith vis-à-vis the eastern part of the county. These decisions had a cumulative effect. The more the process swung towards being perceived as a representative exercise, the more important it came to be for the manager and the board that all of the "relevant" groups in the county be included in this process. This in turn resulted in the staff member who was in charge of the process becoming increasingly concerned with the problems this expanded format posed. Dealing with these potential problems took over as the objective for the work she and the other staff were undertaking. The staff developed strategies relating to these concerns. In doing so the emphasis in her handling of these meetings switched away from any concern with the potential these meetings offered for dialogue and community development to an emphasis on handling dissent. The question of avoiding issues being raised that might cause loss of face for the Partnership became a dominant theme. This rather than any interest in facilitating the developmental needs of the participating groups informed the design of the public meetings and the conduct of the staff during them. Ironically in order to achieve this, she was able to make use of elements of professional development discourse. The planning of the meetings was conducted in the technical language of development with the assistance of a management consultant and the staff. Thus staff members utilised a definition of their roles as technically skilled development workers to control these meetings and avoid any potential

difficulties that might emerge from the groups. However in doing so the extent to which these events could facilitate genuine consultation is open to question. By defining the application process rigidly and drawing up agenda's which specifically excluded the possibility for groups to raise contentious issues the extent to which the groups were able to have an input in the process was significantly reduced. To the staff and the board however this point was largely irrelevant as the criteria for success would ultimately be a successful LEADER II plan and to this end the staging of a "consultation process," was the significant issue not the quality of consultation that took place. Thus it was again the case that decisions which supported the pragmatic needs of the project, in this case to conduct a consultation which was tightly controlled and could serve as evidence of widespread support for the LEADER II application with the minimum of dissent, was justified formally as part of a development process, in which groups would be facilitated to make a useful contribution.

At the meetings with FAS staff the criteria, in relation to the types of groups targeted for inclusion in the consultation were also revisited. This led to the re-enforcement of the idea that the principal groups selected should be area based economic development groups. In addition the exclusion of other groups representing the disadvantaged was made explicit. LEADER II it was agreed was not for them. This marked a confirmation that despite the fact that the entire exercise had been described as having a dual role as part of the LEADER II application process and the start of a partnership community development programme, the primary focus of this exercise would be on the economic development of the area.

The strategies adopted by the staff in relation to these meetings largely paid off. The two public meetings were held with relatively little criticism of the Partnership, while the various strategies employed to control the discussion at the meetings had the effect of minimising criticism. At their conclusion the W.W.D.P and indeed the C.E.P staff concerned were able to show that they had conducted a programme of local dialogue which was aimed at encouraging wider local participation in the LEADER II application and that this had resulted in an application which represented local views on the areas development. However in order to achieve this outcome the degree of dialogue that did occur was considerably restricted. The meetings became an important symbolic event while little real consultation took place. Such an outcome was not inconsistent with the requirements of either the Partnership board or the staff. The objective of the exercise had been to demonstrate that a

local consultation had taken place and that this was representative of a wide range of local actors rather than to generate debate and discussion on the issue of development.

When carefully considered the W.W.D.P consultation appears to be a deeply flawed process, particularly given the fact that as it progressed, the process assumed a quasi-democratic role. The demands of the manager and chairman to make the consultation more representative, led to a conflation between the developmental and representative goals. While the process was depicted as evidence of wider community support for the LEADER application it was conducted in a way which was more consistent with a public relations exercise than a popular dialogue. In designing the process, the staff imposed severe constraints on the types of groups invited and what these groups could say.

In considering the way in which this process was designed and undertaken a clear indication of the extent to which the Partnerships own conceptualisation of development contradicted the approach embodied in the A.B.R programme which funded it is evident. We also see clear evidence of the way in which this process served to channel consultation in a certain way which complied with formal policy discourse. The process appears to have its own cumulative dynamic through which a certain perception of what local development is leads to decisions which strengthen that perception. The fact that LEADER II was awarded to areas competitively based on the proposals for local economic development created an incentive to applicant organisations to exclude non-economic development priorities. In the case of the W.W.D.P the consultation process was conducted by invitation and with little scope for the participants to raise other issues increased the extent to which the initiative defined development in specifically economic terms supportive of the project of certain local actors a preponderance of whom enjoyed considerable influence through their professional connections and involvements in large local enterprises. Of particular note in this case was the influence of one company in particular, Waterford foods PLC, in this process.

The tendency of community based programmes to fall under the control of local elites is a perennial one (See Waseem 1987, Arce et al 1994 and Thuesen et al 2010). In the case studied here however it is not only the case that they were able to do so but were facilitated in this by the formal development discourse itself and actors within the development network, most notably the staff of the initiative, who interpreted this discourse in a way which made this outcome likely. It appears to be the case that in deciding to apply for

LEADER II and the drawing up of a design for the shape that this process was to take certain key figures at board level as well as the W.W.D.P manager were largely successful in setting an agenda that supported their project. While privately other staff may have had different ideas about this process their primary practical concerns focussed on the manageability of the consultation process they had been asked to undertake. Thus during the encounters examined in this chapter it would appear that, with some minor adjustments, the consultation did indeed reflect the interests of the local elite. It must be remembered however that this was only the first phase of the consultation and one which was very much under the control of the staff and the board. Following the consultation it was proposed that local groups would attend follow up meetings and having done so agree to prepare a local submission.. It was in fact through these encounters that the key evidence of local support for the LEADER II application in the form of local submissions to W.W.D.P would be generated. While it had been successful in structuring initial stages of the consultation these follow ups constituted yet another set of encounters during which the staff in these instances had to engage with local groups individually the key question which is addressed in the next chapter concerns the extent to which the control exerted by certain actors over the consultation was maintained during these encounters.

**All of the People all of the Time?
Configurations of actors, knowledge and space in the
making of local development.**

**Volume 2 of 2
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Chapter 8: Leading the Follow Up Meetings

8.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with events during which the decision by W.W.D.P to apply for LEADER II was taken and a consultation process involving local community groups in support of this application was decided upon and planned. At the conclusion of the last chapter, it was suggested that the format for the consultation process that emerged out of these events was one which was dominated by the interests of certain actors. These actors were concerned with ensuring that the final outcome of the consultation process would, in so far as was possible, support W.W.D.P's case for inclusion in the new LEADER II programme. They thus sought to ensure that the consultation process would indicate strong local support for a development strategy which focussed on enterprise. This had an important influence on the shape this consultation took and on the type of groups that became involved. In devising a particular format for this process, they were anticipating the type of proposals and plan which they thought would appeal to those assessing proposals for inclusion in LEADER II. The irony was that both the first LEADER programme and LEADER II were depicted as programmes that were intended to support local development by local organisations and driven by specific locally identified development needs and opportunities. By anticipating the LEADER II programme, conducting a local consultation and developing action plans which they thought would match LEADER II funding, groups such as W.W.D.P appear to have voluntarily restricted themselves to a very specific model of local development. This model, which suited senior figures in the board and management of W.W.D.P, prioritised enterprise and simultaneously excluded the groups who may have supported other development priorities or had the potential to raise other potentially divisive issues during the consultation. Even having done so the concern of these figures to ensure a high level of support led to a tight rein being kept on those groups that were involved in the consultation process. Another seemingly contradictory feature of this process was that in order to ensure that the consultation was successful dialogue was strictly controlled.

The way in which this process was undertaken was justified by the manager as a pragmatic response to the emergence of a new funding opportunity. For him and also for key members

of the board, the primary objective of W.W.D.P was to support the development of the local economy and one of the principal ways in which such an outcome could be achieved was through maximising the amount of investment the area could attract from funding mechanisms such as LEADER II. The board of W.W.D.P together with the Manager had an understanding of the relationship between the formal requirements of such funding arrangements, with their stress on the need for organisations to demonstrate local support for an application, and their own practical development projects. In order to achieve the latter they had to undertake the former, in this case in the form of a consultation process. In doing so they attempted to ensure that in so far as was possible the consultation resulted in local support for their project. For this reason they attempted to ensure that the consultation process produced an agenda for development that was clearly tied to their own projects. Ultimately Waterford's communities could have any development they liked as long as it was enterprise development.

In many ways the data presented in the previous chapter reveals a situation which is reminiscent of that described by Van der Ploeg (2003) arising out of the dominance of expert systems in what he calls the post-modern constellation. "*when expert systems become dominant, in the sense that they reduce the expanding set of future possibilities to one exclusive alternative, selection changes its nature. Then there is no longer concern about an ex post facto selection, but rather about an ex ante selection: only those actions that correspond with the preferred future count as valid. All others are delegitimised from the very start.*" (2003 p. 10). It certainly seems to be the case that the process through which the consultation was undertaken represented an attempt to impose the dominance of one particular approach to development in this area. The staff of the organisations concerned selected groups for inclusion in the consultation not because they had important views about development which W.W.D.P felt constrained to take account of, but because they had views that were in accord with those of the partnership. The outcome of the process itself, a particular economic development agenda, was effectively a fait accompli.

However tempting as it may be to regard the observations presented in the previous chapter as evidence of the presence of a totalising discourse, the data presented in the previous also suggests that this is not the whole story. Questions remain concerning the nature of the "dominance" that the development expert system achieved. The first of these concerns the relationship between the ideas and knowledge employed in preparing the consultation and the

staff themselves. The data presented in the previous chapter seems to suggest that those involved in planning the consultation process were not themselves locked in to this expert system. Rather they employed elements of it strategically in ways that supported their own interest and project. When considered in detail staff members appear to be as capable of slipping between project and pseudo project as the board of W.W.D.P. This raises an important question concerning the way in which professional development workers employ their status as such and also their access to a specific stock of expert knowledge. We see them employ these resources in order to advance specific personal projects rather than that of the programme. They too are capable and knowledgeable actors who formulate and pursue strategies independently from the projects that employ them.

A second question concerns the role that this expertise plays in the life of the local group members. The consultation represented an effort by the staff and the organisations to squeeze local ideas about development through the nozzle of enterprise support. However, and despite the claims of the Partnership in particular to have done so, is it possible that all relevant local views are in fact diverted through this channel or is it the case that certain local perspectives leak out through other avenues? If so what happens to these alternative perspectives? Furthermore what happens to this process when the professional development workers are no longer in a position to maintain the same level of control over local groups as they do during the formal public meetings at the start of the consultation? This raises the question posed by Rossie; “*Can ‘dissenting’ actors, who fail to abide by the rationality of overarching discourses, ever make a difference to policy?*” (Rossi 2004 p 9). Certainly in the initial stages of the consultation process undertaken by W.W.D.P the potential for ‘dissenting’ actors to do so was severely limited. The overall result of the Partnerships public meetings was to convey the idea that a significant local consensus supported the goals of the Partnership. However the question as to what happens to dissent in this process remains unaddressed.

Such questions are important because of the claims made in local development as to its representative and participatory nature. As an autonomous local organisation it can be and indeed was, argued that the Board of W.W.D.P was entitled to agree and pursue its own particular agenda. Having set out its stall as a local development organisation which was intended to support enterprise W.W.D.P was simply fulfilling the wishes of its board by pursuing a strategy aimed at winning more enterprise development funding. However a

critical issue here is that in order to do so the organisation undertook an exercise through which it presented a series of tightly controlled meetings as evidence of widespread local support for a specific project. Simultaneously this process sought to ensure the dominance of a certain approach to the area's development while conveying the impression that this was the result of a consultation process through which local consensus had been achieved as to the agreed development priorities of the area. In suggesting this, the board and manager of Waterford Foods were attempting to exert a considerable degree of power over the shape of the local development process in county Waterford.

Initially at least this strategy appears to have been successful as the groups which attended the public meetings largely acquiesced with the format and agenda that the Partnership had prepared for these meetings. Furthermore at the end of these meetings the majority of the groups agreed to organise follow up meetings with a view to preparing submissions to the LEADER II application. The preparation of these submissions would add considerable strength to W.W.D.P's bid. As part of the consultation process it had always been anticipated that these follow up meetings would be arranged with individual groups. Indeed The fact that such meetings were to be undertaken became an important part of the strategy used for forestalling discussion of particular issues relevant to individual groups during the larger public meetings. These follow up meetings in turn constituted yet another type of arena in which individual groups came into contact with individual members of staff, of the Partnership and in the area outside of the original W.W.D.P catchment of the C.E.P. In these arenas groups were in a position to "unpack" the ideas about development which had been presented to them at the public meetings in a context where they were negotiating local submissions. Potentially, this was a scenario in which the staff had far less ability to control the nature of the exchanges with the local groups. In this chapter these encounters are examined with a view to what they tell us about the way that staff employ elements of local development discourse and of how local groups responded to these efforts. During these encounters was the situation that was created in the public meetings continued? Were the staff able to maintain the control they had exercised in the initial phase of the consultation or did they pursue new strategies with different objectives? Or was it the case that these meetings offered a greater possibility for 'dissenting voices' to emerge in the consultation process? In this chapter, attention is thus given to encounters that occurred during the follow up meetings which occurred with individual groups following the consultation with a view to

establishing the extent to which these encounters had the capacity to influence the distribution of power and control over the development endeavours of W.W.D.P.

8.2 Planning the follow up meetings.

It had been stated during the large public meetings and also in correspondence with individual community groups that follow up meetings would be held. It was further suggested that during these meetings, groups would be given the opportunity to make their own contributions to the proposed LEADER II application. However, little specific discussion about either the form of these follow up meetings or the shape that the group's contribution would take occurred either in encounters between staff and community groups or between the staff themselves prior to, or during, the public meetings. In part, this was due to the view adopted by the W.W.D.P employee organising the consultation. As already mentioned, she felt that the whole consultation had been reduced to a fire brigade effort. As a consequence, her principal objective was to get through the two larger meetings without incident prior to addressing the question of what would happen afterwards.

Immediately after the initial meetings, staff of both W.W.D.P and those employed by the C.E.P met to consider what the follow up meetings should involve. At this meeting the concerns about handling contact expressed at the outset of the process resurfaced. It was agreed that the style of planning suggested for the application meant that specific proposals for projects were not to be encouraged and that contact with the groups was to be conducted accordingly. The staff agreed that the groups would be asked to prepare a local audit/area plan which would be incorporated into the document outlining an area profile. This plan would include some demographic information, a summary of existing commercial and social infrastructure and a list of local problems and issues. This local profile was summarised in a hand out that was adopted as the format for local plans to be presented by the staff to the group¹. It was expected that some groups would not complete the entire process. As a minimum, a local audit briefly outlining the area and its resources would be requested. In addition, the groups would be encouraged to produce a "S.W.O.T" analysis. While it was

¹These proposals were a summarised form of the guidelines for LEADER applicant groups which was issued in 1991 (D.O.A 1991) and was adapted as a hand out for local groups.

initially not part of this proposed structure groups were subsequently encouraged to engage in some form of wider local consultation in the form of a basic survey or local meeting.

Again, during the preparation of these follow up meetings, the approach adopted reflects the concerns of the staff. At this point three specific concerns were raised. The first of these was the need to conduct meetings in a way which was controlled by the staff. The challenges this issue posed were increased by the fact that staff were not all experienced community workers or indeed familiar with planning processes. There was a concern that if not properly "structured", these meetings could provide an opportunity for local actors to resurrect old disputes relating to projects proposed in the past or that the consultations would be turned into a free for all of grant applications at a time when no actual money was on the table; an issue that had created bad feeling after the previous Waterford I.R.D proposal. The second issue concerned the need to incorporate all of the submissions into a single plan. The third issue, one which was not raised with the C.E.P staff directly, was a concern that the groups in the east of the county would be working with members of the C.E.P staff who would not necessarily feel under any obligation to conduct these meetings in a way that reflected the goals and interests of W.W.D.P. The manager of W.W.D.P in particular, was concerned that the C.E.P staff would build up the expectations of groups in the east to a level that W.W.D.P would be expected, but unable, to deliver on. By focussing on the production of a general development plan, the approach limited the extent and ways in which it was possible for the local groups to raise specific issues. It also privileged the role of the staff as the development professionals, defining this role with considerable clarity as involving a series of tasks e.g. assisting with questionnaires, attending meetings, presenting information at a public meeting etc. in which they had expertise which the groups lacked. Thus, the adoption of a particular format for these local submissions again represented restrictions on the nature of the participation of local groups in the consultation.

The local audit/area plan thus became central to the way that the staff structured the agenda and conduct of contact with groups, with at least one staff member saying that "*at least they (the guidelines) give the groups something to do*" in the form of a tangible set of tasks that could be undertaken and in relation to which the staff had a clearly defined role, albeit recognising that groups would vary between on the one hand those who would provide complete plans and others that would only partially comply with the planning procedure outlined. Based on this outline the staff developed a specific set of tasks they had to

undertake with the groups. This involved an initial meeting at which the need for planning was discussed, a public meeting at which the planning initiative was outlined to "the wider community" and the undertaking of a survey of each areas. Finally this was to be written up into an area profile in which the areas strengths and weaknesses were summarised and potential opportunities and threats identified (the S.W.O.T analysis). The inclusion of specific development projects was discouraged in this framework, as it was regarded by the staff as incompatible with the planning process and would distract the groups from planning in a systematic way.

This format for local submissions to the LEADER II application was to be presented by the staff member to the group. Whilst the planning procedure was related to a specific format it must be remembered that the staff had agreed that the meetings with groups had a twin purpose both as part of the planning process and as the basis of a community development programme. Even though for all practical purposes the staff had largely abandoned the idea that the consultation could achieve the latter aim, the staff continued to employ the technical jargon associated with community development practice. The staff's role was to facilitate; they were expected to "*lend assistance*", the responsibility for decisions made was ultimately said to lie with the groups. Staff assessments of groups and the approach they took in the meetings were depicted as constituting a developmental "process". Within this approach, little scope was allowed for the groups to counter with alternative models of planning or to raise criticisms of the Partnership. Participation was to be on the basis of the definitive terms of the local plan.

This approach was reflected in the system the staff developed for accounting for the progress of these consultations. Adopting terminology that was similar to that used in the delivery of the C.E.P they devised a system for classifying groups which assessed their level of organisational development in relation to practical steps such as the adoption of a legal form, the identification of a business opportunity etc. and associated this with levels of cohesion and discipline within the group. At meetings between the staff the groups were classified on a scale from A to F. One feature of this approach was that emphasis was placed on the organisational structure of the groups in line with the stages depicted in the C.E.P framework rather than on the actual social or economic development achievements of these groups; much less the level of support they enjoyed in the community. At staff meetings the participants also distanced the exercise from the rivalries that existed between their

respective organisations. As professionals they agreed to regard such issues disparagingly as silly or counterproductive.

8.3 Consultation and inclusive mobilisation.

The events described in the previous section occurred as part of the staff's preparations for yet another series of encounters, this time with individual groups. The public meetings and subsequent follow up meetings had a specific purpose in relation to the preparation of the Partnership's application for LEADER II. Through them W.W.D.P was endeavouring to demonstrate that its plan had the support of and reflected the interests of a range of local actors who had been involved in a representative process of consultation. The first phase of this process, the public meetings had been relatively tightly controlled and the scope for wider local input was limited in part because, according to the staff and the Partnership, these issues would be addressed during the follow up meetings. However the function of these follow up meetings was not simply to provide local groups with the opportunity to vent issues which were of concern to them. Rather it was also intended that they provide evidence that the LEADER II application had the widespread support of the local community and also, that the plan had been prepared with its active involvement. This was not a requirement that was explicitly outlined by the E.C. in relation to the LEADER II application process (which in fact at this point had not been made public) but was based on perceptions shared by many of the staff, as well as the manager and key board members, about what would be required in such an application. Again we see an example of agency staff and clients "working towards the LEADER programme". In practical terms the perception that the plan had to demonstrate inclusivity contributed to the movement from an interest in the consultation process as a community development exercise to that of a representative one. In the process the idea that these groups could be considered as representing the opinions of the community in their respective areas appears to have been incorporated into the process without any discussion about their ability to act in this capacity. Later the LEADER II funded organisations and indeed the LEADER evaluations built their assessment as to the extent of stakeholder involvement in the programme as a whole, on the claims made about the nature of representation in exercises such as this local consultation, again pointing to the cumulative effect of claims in the development policy discourse, through which the range of possible policy options or choices is reduced until one appears to be the "self-evident" and "natural" choice. The ideal outcome of the follow up meetings would have been the submissions of

local documents which supported the approach proposed by W.W.D.P in its application. However in approaching these meetings the staff were concerned about the extent to which they would be able to exert control and their employment of elements of professional development discourse to define themselves and the planning process was intended to enhance their capacity to control events in these encounters. However, their ability to do so depended on what actually happened at these encounters regardless of how tightly they may have sought to structure these encounters in advance. It is thus to these encounters that we need to look to in order to examine how effective this strategy was in practice.

8.4 Doing it our way? Initial responses to the follow up

For the W.W.D.P staff the first contact with the groups, mainly by phone, occurred while the preparations were going on for the large meetings. Following these large meetings the groups that had agreed to send representatives were contacted again and arrangements were made for follow up meetings at which the format for local submissions outlined above would be explained to them. During this process the staff of the two agencies continued to meet in a number of different contexts that included formal project meetings and more informal encounters at which they "touched base" with each other. In these informal contexts, where senior management weren't present, the staff would share notes on the groups, focussing not so much on the technocratic process described above, but rather in terms of the practical difficulties and challenges each group posed. Reference was made to the role of certain personalities and to the internal politics of the groups. Of particular note was the tendency of staff to single out the key figures in each group and their "hidden" agendas. In these conversations, the connections between group members and other organisations, businesses and significant individuals, as well as the relationship between groups and other interests in the area were also discussed. In the W.W.D.P offices a member of staff, who was not directly involved in the programme, was involved in many of these discussions. As he was a local with extensive knowledge of the area and was also a Fianna Fail Councillor, his inside knowledge of the areas was valued and he was consulted in relation to the particular issues relating to specific groups and individuals within them. In these situations, the primary emphasis was placed on the practical problems of "handling," groups to ensure that the programme ran smoothly.

Thus while the staff had devised a formal approach to the planning process which defined the follow up and submissions in a specific way and which outlined the manner in which it was expected the groups should behave, they also made use of a second and informal body of knowledge. Within this body of knowledge it was clearly recognised that the specific characteristics of individuals and groups might have a bearing on the outcome of the follow up meetings. The likelihood of a variable response by groups to the follow up meetings was thus fully recognised and while they persisted with the model outlined above it was anticipated that variation in outcomes would occur. Thus on the ground and informally there was some recognition of the reality that local actors would respond in these encounters in variable ways. This raises an important question concerning the extent to which the format presented for the follow up meetings was accepted by the groups and what if any impact this had on the nature of the submissions made. This is an important issue, since it helps to shed light on how events at this particular interface impacted on the overall shape of the local development programme. In order to gain an insight into this question four groups and their responses to the follow up process are considered in more detail here.

Tallow Enterprise Group

Tallow enterprise group had been formed under the leadership of the full time manager of the local credit union and the group retained a close bond with that institution. Though the credit union Tallow claimed a comparatively long tradition of local development activity (30 years), the enterprise group itself was however of more recent origin. The stated intention of the group was to support local people involved in small enterprises. In this capacity it had encouraged local people to apply to W.W.D.P funding². The group had also participated in the C.E.P and had identified a number of projects that it could itself support. Amongst these was the creation of an enterprise centre which the group had established in a refurbished building in the village. At this point the group was in the process of applying for funding for a second building. In the context of local development in Ireland this track record was impressive³. It had, the group claimed, largely been achieved without the assistance of state

² The manager of W.W.D.P had an alternative explanation for the group's formation. According to him the group had been formed at the Credit Union manager's insistence in order to pay to refurbish a derelict house which was impacting on the value of her own and the credit unions property.

³The group has in fact been the subject of another research programme and was generally viewed as very progressive by commentators involved in co-operative and credit union movements.

agencies⁴. The group's senior figure was a significant influence on the way it operated as a whole. Her involvement grew out of the Credit Union in which she had been, and continued to be, a leading figure. On its formation she was made a member of W.W.D.P enterprise subcommittee. To the manager and staff of the W.W.D.P, she was the group's "driving force", without whom it could well collapse. The group had had differences with W.W.D.P; in particular this related to funds which the group claimed it had been promised by W.W.D.P to employ a manager for its enterprise centre following completion of a C.E.P training programme. This was denied by W.W.D.P⁵ who viewed the group's manager as a troublesome and demanding "un-elected local representative".

Dunhill-Fennor-Boatstrand-Annestown (D.F.B.A)

D.F.B.A formed just as the LEADER II consultation process began in the east of the county with the support of the C.E.P programme. It lay outside the area included in the W.W.D.P operated A.B.R and hence had little contact with W.W.D.P or its staff prior to the LEADER II submission. It was, and for the purposes of the consultation, continued to work with staff employed by the C.E.P. It was also in the process of applying for the GLOBAL grant funding programme launched by A.D.M in 1993⁶, intended to provide funds that were at A.D.M's disposal to community bodies based outside partnership areas. During the early part of the consultation, D.F.B.A also finalised and submitted an extensive proposal for funding under that scheme⁷. The group, although only of recent origin, was considered to be very influential, made up of people with extensive experience and a high level of skills. One of the group's main figures was prominent in Waterford City Chamber of Commerce. A number of the other members were highly placed in the local economy, with particular members of the group employed by Waterford Foods, other major local industries as well as in local state agencies. D.F.B.A like W.W.D.P itself, emphasised the importance of having people with a proven track record in business in the group or as they put it "*senior successful, some early*

⁴ The accuracy of this claim was a matter of debate, at the time it was made FAS was funding their managers salary and many of businesses the enterprise group supported had been assisted by W.W.D.P

⁵ This was one of those occasions referred to by the manager of W.W.D.P when F.A.S had created problems for the partnership. Subsequently FAS did fund the manager's job for this group.

⁶ In addition to the funding made available by the E.U. to support the A.B.R further funding for smaller community organisations was made available to A.D.M through E.U. GLOBAL funding. These grants were much smaller in scale than the finances available to the A.B.V.R and were allocated through a once off GLOBAL grant scheme during 1993.

⁷Their proposal consisted of broad outlines of seven projects requiring grant aid in excess of three million Irish pounds; it was not accepted.

retired who have amassed a wealth of experience expertise and contacts" (D.F.B.A address to a local development seminar), involved in local development. Despite having had little experience or achievements to its credit, the group was held in high regard throughout the consultation process and it became customary for staff to refer to them, as "*an excellent community group*".

Bonmahon

Bonmahon were a tidy towns group that had initially formed some two years prior to the study period. They were many ways the antithesis of D.F.B.A in the sense that they had the least contact of any of the groups with state agencies and their membership was not experienced in the type of activities and negotiations that took place in state agencies or business. Bonmahon was an area that was experiencing significant socio-economic problems. The main economic activities in the area, farming and fishing were in decline contributing to a failing local economy and population loss. The group's members were predominantly female and, by contrast to the D.F.B.A group, had no contacts with senior levels in local business or the local state. The chairman and a number of the members were members of households with no or low incomes. This group covered a much more limited area than D.F.B.A, a single village with limited resources and poor access to both Waterford City and Dungarvan. It also lacked members with the level of experience in business or the public service that groups such as D.F.B.A and Tallow Enterprise Group possessed. This may have contributed to the views of the staff that the Bonmahon group was "*weak*" and would need "*a lot of development*". The staff member in charge of the consultation describing it as "*just a tidy town's committee really*" suggested that it would be an achievement to get the group to produce anything in the way of a submission.

Ardmore

The Ardmore Enterprise Group was established in 1989 and had been in contact with both W.W.D.P and the preceding I.R.D since the inception of both organisations. The primary focus of the Ardmore Enterprise Co-op was on the development of tourism in the Ardmore area. As with the Tallow group they were in dispute with W.W.D.P over a particular issue

relating to an application for funding which had been refused⁸. As in the former case, it was felt that W.W.D.P was not supporting the development initiative of the local group adequately. The chairman of the Ardmore group held a senior position in a semi-state organisation and he also had an involvement in a local tourism related business. He had also been involved in a number of local bodies such as the I.R.D. His pivotal role was in no small part due to the position he held in these local bodies and his professional status. He was a member of W.W.D.P's tourism subcommittee and was chair of the autonomous tourism body (West Waterford Tourism) established by W.W.D.P to develop and market tourism in the area. In addition, he was involved with the separate county tourism committee associated with S.E.R.T.O. He was considered one of the more active figures amongst the community representatives on the W.W.D.P board, though like the representative from Tallow, he was regarded as troublesome by W.W.D.P staff.

Each of the groups listed above was contacted prior to the large public meetings and again following these with a view to organising follow up meetings. Their responses varied widely from what had been anticipated in the structure outlined for the follow up meetings. Tallow in fact, declined the invitation to the public meetings. Their chairwoman stating that the group was involved in its own project and didn't have time to become involved in meetings. She elaborated on the group's reasons for not attending at a seminar some time later. These related to a range of problems she said that the group had experienced with W.W.D.P. concerning specific issues which primarily focussed on finance, mentioning a number of occasions on which W.W.D.P had failed to respond sympathetically to their proposals. Referring to the first LEADER programme application she spoke about the fact that on previous occasions the group had prepared local planning documents but had not been given sufficient support financially as a result. She also referred to the fact that the group had participated in the C.E.P program for thirty six weeks, at the end of which, they expected to receive assistance towards the cost of employing an enterprise worker. However, at this time W.W.D.P and FAS made an agreement to co-fund a single enterprise officer to work in the designated area which W.W.D.P operated in, who would be employed by the partnership. This appointment was regarded as sufficient for the needs of this area as a whole including Tallow, whose own application was not approved. She mentioned a general criticism of the role of agencies such as W.W.D.P asking "*why they (the government) can't give us the*

⁸Their proposal was for bathing facilities but this was considered to be outside the remit of W.W.D.P.

support rather than setting up these organisations". When contacted with regard to the question of follow ups the group stated that while they would consider submitting an application they did not need assistance to do so and would only agree to hold a meeting at the end of the process, at which W.W.D.P could make a presentation about its application.

D.F.B.A was one of the groups contacted by the C.E.P. Its initial and subsequent involvement in the programme was ambivalent. This was a matter of considerable concern to the manager of W.W.D.P. This was particularly the case when he discovered that with the assistance of the C.E.P, D.F.B.A, along with the six other groups based outside W.W.D.P's designated area had come together to form an umbrella committee representing their common interests. At meetings with staff from W.W.D.P the C.E.P staff justified the development of this umbrella group on the grounds that it would enable the more effective co-ordination of the groups for the LEADER II consultation, a suggestion that W.W.D.P staff felt compelled to accept. Despite this, the W.W.D.P manager was of the opinion that this development posed a threat to W.W.D.P, particularly when he learned that these groups were also in contact with a group looking at the possibility of establishing a rival body to W.W.D.P in the east of the county⁹. For this reason, he became even more anxious to attempt to establish direct contact with these groups, bypassing the C.E.P workers in the process. However, when the C.E.P staff member concerned was asked if the group was willing to meet with W.W.D.P staff directly, he responded by saying they had already prepared a local plan which he would ask the group to forward to W.W.D.P. Throughout the entire consultation period D.F.B.A maintained contact both with W.W.D.P via its LEADER II consultation and with the group formulating proposals for the city and its hinterland via the umbrella group. The formation of this umbrella group helped to affirm the separate status of the groups outside the designated area and of the C.E.P staff's involvement in the programme. For the manager of W.W.D.P, its emergence confirmed his fears about the C.E.P staff and the potential problems this posed. He continued to make the point that it was he and

⁹ Around this time a Waterford city Partnership group was being established with a view to a future extension of the A.B.R. However this organisation was primarily based in Ballybeg an area of predominantly local authority housing in the city. This organisation was exclusively focussed on delivering assistance in identified "disadvantaged," urban neighbourhoods within the city. While a meeting between this group and the East Rural groups had taken place at the C.E.P's suggestion with a view to considering if these could be included in the city scheme the idea was never seriously considered. The extent to which this group would ever have had an interest in supporting enterprise in rural areas of Waterford is highly doubtful.

his organisation that held responsibility for the LEADER II application. If at the end of the day things went wrong, it would be W.W.D.P and not the C.E.P staff that would take the blame. For their part, the C.E.P staff could argue that they had operated outside W.W.D.P's designated area and that the decision to form the umbrella group had been made by the groups themselves and supported by the C.E.P for sound operational reasons. Irrespective of whether there was ever any real possibility that an alternative to W.W.D.P could be put together in the east of the county, the formation of the umbrella group meant that the groups concerned, including D.F.B.A could exercise a greater level of leverage over the way that the programme operated. One result of this was that it placed D.F.B.A in a much stronger position to win concessions from the partnership in exchange for their support for the LEADER II application.

Bonmahon as previously noted were the least experienced group in dealing with state officials. Their initial reaction to the proposal to become involved in the planning process was to highlight a number of projects that needed financing. As their chairman said something "*needed to be done*", plenty of things "*could be done*" in the area if only finance was made available. Their agreement to participate in the planning process was primarily on the basis that it would act as a first step toward obtaining funding for their proposals. On subsequent occasions, members of the group expressed fears that they would lose out because of the presence of other groups in the area with a higher profile than themselves. In particular, they mentioned D.F.B.A, whom they felt had greater "pull", i.e., influence on the local bureaucracy than they did. They used this point to demand a greater level of input from the professionals and also to attempt to secure guarantees that they would be seen as the representatives for that particular area. They argued that this was necessary because the D.F.B.A plan which they had been told about by members of the D.F.B.A, in order to pressure the Bonmahon group into joining the eastern umbrella group, contained proposals for Bonmahon impinging on what the Bonmahon group saw as "their" area and which they believed would absorb the total of any funds allocation for that part of the County¹⁰. This incident illustrates the extent to which the consultation had drifted away from its originally intended objectives and had instead begun to focus on the question of representation and a concern with who would be recognised as speaking for specific areas.

¹⁰ It should be noted that despite these suggestions at this time no monies were actually being allocated anywhere under any plans.

The W.W.D.P manager considered the Ardmore group and particularly its chairman to be highly significant figures who posed particular problems. He described the group's chairman as another unelected public representative with considerable experience in dealing with state agencies. Although the Ardmore group had been invited to attend the public meetings only the chairman attended on its behalf. In addition another group from the same area had also attended. Following the public meetings, the chairman failed to respond to a number of efforts to contact him with reference to holding a follow up meeting. The manager of W.W.D.P then insisted on contacting the secretary of the organisation in writing rather than the chairman in order to ensure that a different member of the group was informed and that a written record of W.W.D.P's efforts to contact the group existed. His insistence on this approach was informed by his concerns about the group and in particular the chairman. He was concerned to have a record of his version of events because as he put it "*when you are dealing with people like that you have to make sure that everything is above board*". W.W.D.P's dealings should be seen to go "by the book," and leave no room for subsequent criticism of the procedures used. This was in contrast with the procedures followed with other groups where contacts were undertaken via the phone and carried none of the formal overtones of the contacts that occurred with Ardmore.

As well as writing to the secretary, she was contacted by phone on a number of occasions. On each occasion she made it clear that any decision to meet would have to go through their chairperson. Eventually a meeting was agreed at which the chairperson was highly critical of W.W.D.P. He began this meeting by pointing to what he perceived as a lack of support from W.W.D.P for the organisation's efforts in the past. He then posed a series of questions such as what other groups in the Ardmore area had been asked to participate, what help was being given to them and if W.W.D.P had specific requests for their group to conduct public meetings or other activities. He said that the group were reluctant to become involved in the process due to the poor experience that they had had with W.W.D.P. He also referred to the treatment of the group by the IRD which W.W.D.P had succeeded. The IRD LEADER plan had drawn heavily on proposals submitted from Ardmore that had not subsequently been funded. In addition some resentment was expressed that final draft of this plan had not been made available to the group following submission and that they had received no information as to the outcome of that application. He then outlined conditions under which they would participate, including board representation, the regular provision of information, access to a

draft copy of the plan with permission to make amendments with respect to their own area and recognition for any contribution that was made. The following day the manager of W.W.D.P agreed to most of their requests with the exception of Board representation, which was, he said out of his hands. He also pointed out that the Ardmore group currently did have a degree of Board representation through their participation in the tourism subcommittee. Despite these assurances the group did not maintain contact with W.W.D.P on a regular basis. At no point attempting to prepare a local submission in line with the format suggested by W.W.D.P staff, they took the view that they had done so already and that further efforts in this regard would duplicate previous work. One point of interest was that during these meetings the Chairperson of the Ardmore group, who was on the W.W.D.P tourism subcommittee board distanced himself from that organisation stating that he had little influence on its decisions.

The reaction of the four groups outlined in detail illustrates that groups' responses to W.W.D.P's attempts to enrol groups into the local development network were highly varied. The follow up meetings had been planned as a very specific series of activities through which the professional inputs of the staff would be deployed to assist the groups in submitting plans that were consistent with the Leader application. The groups would, it was anticipated, agree to undertake these actions contributing to the goal of producing an overall LEADER II plan. More specifically, the consultation process and subsequent submission of local contributions would enable W.W.D.P to demonstrate that a degree of local consensus and agreement on local development objectives had been achieved. That is, they would demonstrate inclusive mobilisation.

However, the actions of the W.W.D.P staff in attempting to gain the agreement of local groups to participate has many features of what Rossi describes as sensitization "*a set of practises aimed at making the project beneficiaries willing to accept change and encouraging their problems in conformity with the prevailing development discourses*" (Rossi 2006 p 27-28). In so doing, they attempted to portray the process as a discrete technical activity unrelated to other events and issues of immediate concern to the groups themselves. The experiences of the four groups listed above suggest that the partnership manifestly failed in this respect. The follow up meetings proceeded in ways that differed radically from that suggested in the planning model. None of the groups agreed to put together the type of submission that the model suggested. Instead, they continued to pursue

strategies which were primarily focussed on the achievement of their own locally formulated projects and utilised a variety of arguments and actions in order to do so, drawing on just that combination of local concerns and previous experience that the staff had sought to avoid. Rossi again makes the point that during the implementation of projects clients “*learn to reproduce development rationalities. Yet they do so in an instrumental manner, they manipulate this system so as to unfold idiosyncratic trajectories; that at local level, allow them to improve their conditions*” (*ibid* p. 28). In the case described above however, it is possible to suggest that something a little more dramatic is occurring. The capacity of the groups in question to influence the outcome of this exercise meant that at local level they were not able to just manipulate, but to fundamentally change aspects of the proposed programme. The ability of certain groups to do so was in no small part linked to two considerations. The first was the ability and knowledge of actors within these groups and the second was the partnerships self-imposed requirement to achieve inclusive mobilisation of the community it served. This created the imperative that the entire county be represented by area-based development groups. This left staff in many instances in a much weaker negotiating position than the communities they worked with.

The staff did however retain a considerable degree of control over how these events would be portrayed in other arenas. Despite the events described above staff, accounts of these encounters continued to reflect the technocratic features of the local development discourse. In the formal staff meeting, which was held after the first round of meetings with groups, the failure of some to co-operate was attributed the stage of development of the groups concerned. This was conveyed through phrases that reflected the needs of the group, often suggesting that components of the C.E.P programme could prove useful in *assisting* groups to participate in the plan. In the case of the problems encountered, with what were described as the stronger groups, the demands made or a rejection of the planning process was in some cases attributed to over enthusiasm combined with a lack of awareness of the value of planning. In the case of others the refusal to become involved was represented as a legitimate independent decision by the groups. This was considered as a reasonable result of the facilitation provided by the staff. Actual issues of conflict such as the disputes mentioned above were de-emphasised.

As it became clearer that not all areas would be able or willing to make local submissions along the lines proposed, staff of both organisations began to change the way in which they

discussed the consultation, emphasising that the meetings were part of a development process which would not necessarily result in all groups achieving the same level of progress. This was increasingly used to explain the difficulties encountered in getting information from some area. Nevertheless the significant variance between the proposed consultations as outlined on paper and the actual response of different groups did begin to generate concerns about the progress being achieved. During August 1993 the senior staff of both organisations expressed concerns about the deadline and the level of further assistance needed. At a meeting towards the end of that month a new set of guidelines were agreed. Rather than their progress in preparing a local submission in line with the guidelines originally suggested the groups were ranked in accordance with the level of further assistance each needed. These rankings were:

- A. Groups which would only require a few phone calls.
- B. Groups who might need some additional visits to finalise a submission.
- C. Groups who required a substantial level of assistance (defined as two or more visits).
- D. Groups which were so poorly organised that they would not be expected to submit much more than a broad statement about the area.

This classificatory scheme again intrinsically linked the performance of the groups in relation to the planning exercise with the extent of their progress in developmental terms. Its effect was to formalise aspects of the planning style being used to refer to the groups' progress in a way that met the requirements of the managers in terms of the time and resources required.

Tremendous significance was attached to these criteria. For similar reasons to the original local plan outlines, the new categories allowed the organisation of the work expected of the staff into a series of clear tasks and created a further device by which they could distance themselves both from the groups and the outcome of the process. The researcher was informed about it three times by different workers and the details were recorded in the minutes taken at these meetings and subsequently distributed to all the staff involved. However it also continued to be the case that in more informal conversations the staff did refer to specific issues within certain groups as the cause of difficulties rather than any generalised development model. For example, the Tallow group's refusal to become involved was linked both to disputes over grant aid and to specific features of the group, most notably the fact that the group and the area bore a degree of antipathy towards the rest of the county

and W.W.D.P. In Particular, D.F.B.A's reluctance to get involved was related to the fact that they were contacted by the C.E.P and to professional rivalry between key members of that group and the board members of W.W.D.P. In both formal and informal encounters, the staff were not critical of the development process itself, nor was the failure of groups to participate linked to the staff's performance. As the W.W.D.P staff member in overall charge put it "*Not all of the groups will work out, I don't see that as anyone's fault, these things happen when you work with groups*". The failure of groups to deliver was seen as resulting from the weaknesses of specific groups and in part at least as an acceptable outcome of a consultation strategy during which groups were perfectly entitled to choose not to comply. The responses adopted by the staff shed light on how the process of policy implementation is both negotiated and then redefined through the accounting tasks that occur during development programmes. In this instance it was clearly the case that the staff had not succeeded in enrolling local actors in a way which supported the broader project of completing the LEADER II application. However the staff still needed to present these events in a way which was consistent with the development policy discourse. In order to do so they utilised elements of that discourse to produce a new account of these events that maintained its integrity. The high degree of significance that was attached to the process of classification was important because it re-established the manageability of these events by staff. The formulation of categories gave them a way of doing so. However, while in certain settings the staff were anxious, and indeed went to great lengths to interpret these events in line with the development policy discourse, it was equally the case that in other situations they did not, instead falling back on their own local and informal knowledge of specific groups and individuals in the development process.

This raises another important issue, Staff members themselves utilise aspects of development policy discourse strategically. As Rossi puts it "*in their institutional role, grassroots development bureaucrats claim they must 'sensitize peasants,' in order to modify 'peasant mentality' and to lead them to accept change according to the criteria underpinning project intervention. But on different occasions they are willing and able to deconstruct development rationales and act according to alternative criteria*" (2006 P 27-28). In the case of W.W.D.P, we see a clear example of the staff doing exactly this slipping into the formal policy discourse to produce an account of the events that actually happen in a way which fits their needs and is compatible with the overall aim of producing an application which has local support.

8.5 The submissions

The previous section suggests that, despite the efforts of the staff, the responses of local groups to the consultations varied significantly from that outlined in the consultation model. This raises an additional question concerning the impact of these variations on the actual submissions received. In the end groups submitted a range of documents that varied widely in composition. They included new documents that were in line with the planning model outlined by the staff concerned, proposals prepared by the groups on previous occasions and also applications for funding of specific projects, including both community projects and individual projects (this despite the staff's initial concern to avoid such specific proposals). The groups did not complete these tasks to any given standard or necessarily with any particular adherence to the format for local submission outlines supplied by the staff. The table below (Table 8.1) presents a summary of the various submissions against the various elements of the partnership planning model outlined above.

This table illustrates the point that the planning process produced outcomes that did not on the whole correspond to those depicted in the staff template with only five adhering with any degree of rigour to it. It is worth noting that three of these groups were of very recent formation and had previously had only limited contact with W.W.D.P. Amongst the others responses varied widely. It is worth noting that longer established groups including Tallow and Ardmore generally failed to comply with the proposed planning exercise. Four groups submitted projects prepared on their behalf through West Waterford Tourism some time previously which were specifically related to the tourism industry. As already stated despite their claim to have extensive contacts with existing community groups in the east of the county, three of the C.E.P.'s groups were established on an ad hoc basis solely to participate in the planning exercise. None of the eastern groups submitted plans that complied with structure originally proposed. Rather these groups submitted lists of possible projects with, in some cases, a basic description of the project and in others simply the title of the project and sum of money required.

Despite the clear variation between submissions it was agreed that the local submissions would be compiled into a separate volume and presented alongside the rest of the LEADER II application. None of the project proposals were actually included anywhere else in the Application, nor were any details from any of the groups local audits included in the LEADER II strategic analysis. The local plans were used solely as evidence that local consultation had taken place.

Agency	Set up	Specific to LEADER II	P Meeting	L Audit	Swot	Projects
1 CEP	For plan	Y	Yes	No	No	12
2 W.W.D.P	1 Yr	Y	Yes	Yes	Yes	None
3 W.W.D.P	1 Yr	Y	Yes	Yes	Yes	None
4 W.W.D.P	<5	N	No	No	No	1 *
5 W.W.D.P	<5	N	No	Yes	No	None
6 W.W.D.P	1Yr	Y	No	Yes	Yes	3
7 W.W.D.P	2 Yr	Y	Yes	Yes	Yes	8
8 CEP	For plan	Y	Yes	Yes	No	5 +
9 CEP	For plan	Y	Yes	No	No	11
10 CEP	<5	Y	No	No	No	15
11 W.W.D.P	1 yr	Y	Yes	No	No	1 *
12 W.W.D.P	<5	N	No	No	No	1 +
13 W.W.D.P	<5	N	No	No	No	1
14 W.W.D.P	<5	N	No	No	No	1 *
15 W.W.D.P	2	N	Yes	Yes	Yes	3
16 CEP	3	N	No	Yes	Yes	5
17 W.W.D.P	1		Yes	No	No	1 *

Table 8.1 Summary of submissions. * Groups submitted plan done for West Waterford Tourism + groups identified additional projects but no details.

The W.W.D.P manager felt that his earlier fears about the extent to which the C.E.P workers and FAS would wish to co-operate had largely been borne out by the submissions received. He expressed a fear that the C.E.P staff had “Wound Up”¹¹ groups in the east, encouraging groups there to simply submit “wish lists” of projects and raising their expectations as to what would be funded; a situation he had wanted to avoid. This prompted him to again ask the staff of W.W.D.P to begin initiating their own contacts with the groups in the east.

¹¹ Built up their expectations and demands to unrealistic levels.

Despite this, the member of W.W.D.P staff in charge of the process remained reluctant to intrude into the C.E.P's patch or to be critical of the C.E.P staff. As we have seen, there was an informal recognition amongst these staff that the practises used in accounting for contact with groups at staff meetings were different to those adopted by them on the ground. The W.W.D.P staff member with responsibility for the programme expressed the view that she had had to accept that the C.E.P staff were doing the job as they saw fit. Despite these objections, the manager decided that all the groups, including those that had been in contact with the C.E.P, should be sent summaries of the outcome of the consultation in the form of a synopsis of the proposed application together with a request that the group meet with W.W.D.P. The C.E.P were again asked to forward the names of the groups that they were in contact with to W.W.D.P. Initially they avoided doing this suggesting instead that they be given a summary of the plan so that they could inform their groups. W.W.D.P's manager responded by saying that as the organisation responsible for the plan they needed to keep the groups informed directly. The C.E.P staff finally complied but had by this time obtained copies of a synopsis of the application that they distributed at a meeting of the umbrella group before W.W.D.P could contact the groups and request individual meetings. In the event the manager of W.W.D.P was thwarted in his efforts to meet all of the groups individually; some declined to meet him while three of the groups had by then dissolved.

Earlier in this chapter it was suggested that an important feature of the way in which the consultation process functioned concerned the staff's utilisation of various different ways of accounting for events strategically. In certain situations, they employed a form of language and forms of knowledge in ways which suggested that the application was progressing along the lines suggested in formal local development policy discourse. However, it was also clear that in informal situations they referred more often to the specific problems they encountered in dealing with individual groups and to powerful individuals within groups. In reality, the preparation of submissions involved a process of negotiation in which they were dealing with actors who were themselves capable of manipulating features of formal discourse together with forms of knowledge and ideas drawn from a wider range of local and professional networks to challenge the formal language of the development discourse. This suggests that events at interfaces such as this can be highly fluid involving (in this case) a number of actors with a capacity to utilise different forms of knowledge. Indeed, in this case, it almost appears as if actors slip from one side of that interface to the other. Experts in the form of staff can speak act and behave as local actors while many of the actors who were also members of

local groups possessed a range of skills and experiences which enabled them to act as experts. This in turn has a bearing on the way in which interfaces themselves are understood, not so much as the points at which separate worldviews meet (Long 2001), as points at which the separate meanings of distinct actor networks are brought together through encounters involving actors in each.

The details of two events illustrate this point. The first relates to an exchange involving staff from W.W.D.P, C.E.P and the eastern umbrella group at a meeting held at the end of the consultation period in order to update the umbrella group on the applications progress. As noted it had been the expressed desire of the manager to meet all the groups individually. However the Eastern groups opted to operate through the umbrella group and with the support of the C.E.P staff offered to meet W.W.D.P as part of this group. Eventually the manager of W.W.D.P agreed to this and attended in person. The meeting, which was held in the City headquarters of the C.E.P was dominated by the representative of D.F.B.A. At the outset he challenged the credibility of the W.W.D.P effort, he contrasted the lack of funding for local groups with the apparent profusion of state sponsored development agencies and official services and questioned the value of such services describing them as an obstacle rather than a help. He went on to refer to their need for technical support, as an organisation they had up, until that time acted in isolation. They now felt that they required professional assistance in order to "*bring the rest of the community along*," by developing their base of support locally. It was suggested that the area had been neglected by W.W.D.P although in fact the area was not in the W.W.D.P designated area. They also expressed concerns that no representative from the East was on the W.W.D.P board again the fact was, that at this time it was outside the W.W.D.P area.

At this point the C.E.P worker made an intervention. Agreeing with the position adopted by the group she pointed out that she was in a difficult position and would like to do more work for the group, but was prevented from doing so because of decisions taken at other levels within the organisation. She claimed that the additional work she was doing outside office hours was unpaid and that her position within the organisation was under threat. The D.F.B.A members present supported her, asking why D.F.B.A should support the W.W.D.P effort when the only help they were getting was from an unpaid C.E.P worker. The manager of W.W.D.P immediately agreed to provide some funds for this work. Following this gesture

the D.F.B.A agreed to support W.W.D.P's application¹². The relationship between the D.F.B.A and the staff member from the C.E.P program mentioned above suggests that the respective agencies credibility to a large extent depended on the relationship between the particular staff members and the group involved. In this case the staff member adopted a strategy that strengthened her links with the groups.

The practices of another C.E.P staff member also illustrate this point. In encounters with groups his style was informal, meeting the groups socially and using his knowledge of the area to engage members in local gossip prior to beginning the meetings. He also stressed that he was there to support the group rather than as a representative of any agency or body and sympathised with the difficulties posed to groups by the bureaucratic workings of the organisation he represented. He suggested that his experience in the field and 'common sense,' was more important than technical skills. In both situations the staff presented themselves as being on the group's side they also centrally concerned themselves with issues surrounding the allocation of grants and sought to present the actions they engaged in and the practices which they wished the groups to adopt in terms of the practicalities of getting funding. When working with the groups they depicted themselves as being in sympathy with the group with a desire to help them maximise the benefits that could be derived from the professionals employed by the agencies. In doing so they illustrated an ability to work with different and indeed potentially conflicting discourses. In this instance, these alternative criteria involved the local interest of groups and the frank realisation of the primary importance to them of funding. This allied with an equally frank recognition that W.W.D.P needed to demonstrate some level of formal support on the part of the Eastern groups for its application and of its likely willingness to make concessions to the group; and based on this requirement, enabled them to exert a degree of leverage over W.W.D.P which had little to do with the formal development process. In practice therefore, both these staff members' style

¹²The researcher subsequently mentioned this to the C.E.P worker in an informal conversation she described her intervention which had resulted in the on the spot decision of W.W.D.P to fund her as a "nice stroke and that she intended to approach W.W.D.P and other local development agencies in the future to fund the C.E.P programme. A year after the planning process she had indeed attempted to generate income in a couple of areas, outlining the services she provided and agreeing to work with the group then informing them that she did not have a budget to work with them and suggested they approach W.W.D.P to secure funding. In one case this was successful since it had been W.W.D.P who had asked her to become involved and the group was considered to be potentially awkward. All other instances were refused outright.

of working with the groups, contrasted sharply with what they adopted in both formal and informal encounters with other staff when they presented their contacts with groups in radically different terms.

8.6 Conclusion.

The events examined in this chapter can be broadly separated into two distinct sets of interactions. The first concern those between the staff of W.W.D.P and another state agency, FAS, during the consultation process and the second those between members of local groups and members of the staff of both W.W.D.P and FAS, as both organisations sought to implement this process.

The first set of interactions examined in this chapter concern the W.W.D.P staff and those of the FAS C.E.P programme. These staff had to deal with the task of undertaking the consultation in a context dominated by inter-agency conflict. The lack of clear demarcations between the role of the organisations and their different professional and organisational backgrounds meant that even agreeing criteria by which to co-ordinate the work undertaken or even as to what its final outcome should be had the potential to pose problems for those involved. The approach to the consultation process agreed between the staff was couched in language which depicted the exercise as involving a discreet piece of development work with specified roles for them as professionals and for the groups as clients. This made it possible for the staff to agree a common approach to the process which simultaneously distanced them from responsibilities for any failures that occurred (these could be attributed to the groups lack of development) and established that they were doing community development work in those specific locations in effect pre-empting intrusions from the other organisation. This framework also created a series of steps that they could use to describe their progress with specific groups. The activities of both organisations in adopting and adapting elements of local development policy discourse in their approach to the consultation is reminiscent of what is described by Dunleavy (1991) as bureau shaping, as these organisations sought to establish a role for themselves in relation to the new development initiatives and funding arrangements emerging at the time. While both W.W.D.P and FAS were “co-operating”, they were also effectively staking a claim to be “covering” their area and within these areas acting as the community development experts.

In addition, the staff faced the task of balancing the demands placed on them by management in terms of the actual production of plans with the realities and difficulties they experienced in working with the groups. Central to this process, was the use of informal practices in dialogue with other staff. The meetings with groups generated a number of issues for the staff, only a limited number of which related directly to the considerations outlined in the local planning model they had devised. The fact that the groups produced submissions that diverged widely from the planning process was openly discussed in informal conversations when members of staff reviewed the actual meetings and the practical problems that arose. It is quite clearly the case given the nature of the submissions and the actions of the staff that on many occasions the process of securing local submissions involved a range of strategies on the part of both the staff and the groups. Despite this variation, the agency staff presented these outcomes in formal encounters and in particular with their managers in terms of the local planning model. When it became clear that many groups would fail to deliver on this, they created a second way of classifying groups which again accounted for the failure of some groups to provide a submission of the type originally planned in terms of the groups own lack of competence rather than in terms that related to the performance of the staff or of the groups possible lack of willingness to participate in the planning process. In this instance, the power of development discourse lay in the ability it gave agency personnel to produce an account of these actions consistent with the style of local consultation envisaged for the LEADER II application.

This leaves the second set of encounters discussed in this chapter, those between the staff and groups. It is clear that in certain contexts the staff employed the formal development discourse as a powerful resource. It was shown how they used this to re-present their activities in a way which was consistent with the expectations of their managers and fellow staff members. In their dealings with local groups we see how they employed it to define their encounters with local groups as elements within a consultation process. By doing so they were in effect attempting to create a mechanism through which encounters with these groups could be “managed,” making it potentially easier to enrol the local groups into the development network in a way which supported the interests of the staff. Although they utilised terms such as participation and empowerment this approach provided the staff with a powerful array of strategic resources. It allowed them to develop paternalistic or technical ways of looking at groups which denied the groups the ability to respond critically and also legitimised this perspective. In some ways the process is similar to what Latour describes as

"Shifting out" (1988), during which certain forms of discourse are used to indicate different relative positions between actors and objects. Rural development discourse enabled the staff to avoid the issues of their own and each other's role in the process the staff were able to "shift out," and discussing their dealings with the groups in a way which suggested that they were to a degree detached from these events. Indeed a similar process occurred during formal meetings when staff distanced themselves from intra-agency tension by defining the consultation as a technical exercise in which the staff were jointly utilising a body of value-free development knowledge, neatly divorced from specific local issues or the friction that underlay the relationship between their employing organisations.

Within this framework, the role of development skills and planning techniques were emphasised, skills and knowledge which the groups lacked and which professional development workers had. In the previous chapter we examined how elements of this discourse had the effect of reducing the space for legitimate dissent on the part of the groups during the public meetings. In this case, the structure of the meetings suppressed the scope for open dialogue while it remained possible for the partnership staff to demonstrate that they had undertaken a consultation process. In this chapter the staff's attempts to extend this approach to the follow up meetings was examined. The staff employed knowledge that was drawn from the local development discourse in order to create the conditions favourable to their projects. This was used to good effect as an explanatory tool for accounting for the diverse responses of communities to the consultation process and for handling groups during encounters. Groups which had proved awkward tended to be, described as poor groups. Thus definitions of good or bad groups reflected their compliance with the initiative. When groups attempted to raise issues lying outside the scope of the consultation this was ascribed to their lack of skill and development knowledge rather than a valid conflict in priorities. The technocratic design of the meeting de-legitimised opposing views on the issue of development.

In the follow up meetings, it was clear that far from being accepted by local groups and individuals, the staff's approach to the consultation was constantly challenged. The staff and the organisations had an interest in producing a LEADER II plan which embodied inclusive mobilisation of the local community and also demarcated a specific role for them in the future development of the area. However the credibility of the staff's approach faced challenges based on the local knowledge of members of the groups. During these follow up

meetings local actors were able to employ this knowledge to “deconstruct,” the initiative devising strategies to make use of the opportunity presented by the follow up meetings to their own advantage. The encounters with groups during the follow up meetings involved negotiations during which the actors involved adopted various strategies that resulted in diverse local arrangements. One feature of this process was that the longest established groups which had already been in contact with W.W.D.P and the CEP showed the greatest tendency to depart from the formal framework for the submission, demonstrating that on this occasion if familiarity did not breed contempt it at least encouraged a willingness on the part of groups to question the intentions of the development professionals. This resulted in some groups forwarding sets of proposals for projects that the groups wished to fund rather than the type of plan outlined by the Partnership. Others were even more effective, recognising the importance the partnership placed on proving its plan involved the inclusive mobilisation of the areas communities. They were able to negotiate concessions from the Partnership in return for their support.

A feature of all of the encounters discussed above is that the bodies of knowledge employed by the various actors are not set in stone. Rather we see them employed strategically by actors in encounters which concern the meaning of this development project. The actors do not draw on a rigid set of texts based on discrete, separate stocks of knowledge. Rather the different sets of concepts and ideas that are available to an actor are drawn contingently and in strategic terms, as they are needed. Each interaction gives rise to new combinations of statements and meanings. The technical concept of a consultation process actually involved efforts on the part of the professionals to control various encounters between themselves and groups and to produce accounts of these encounters for each other and their managers. The professionals initially attempted to get groups to accept the exercise as a rationally planned development intervention, which by definition placed the staff at the “head of the table”, possessing knowledge and expertise which enabled them to define and control the process of development. Looking at the programme in this way allows for the observation of the actual power that certain forms of expert knowledge give to those in the development intervention field to impose a particular problematisation (Callon 1985, 1991) which is in line with the official development policy discourse. Depicting the preparation of the plan as a technical exercise enabled the staff involved to exercise a degree of control over their encounters with groups particularly in the initial stages.

However, the case material also illustrates the inherent fragility in the position of the staff. Despite their efforts to depict the consultation as a primarily technical process around established and unproblematic development goals, different groups and individuals' participation in the intervention was influenced by the way that the particular programme was internalised (See Long 1989). Their personal biographies, previous experience of state intervention and personal interests provided the wider context for the LEADER II application. In this sense their understanding of the policy was based on their wider social world. They brought their own experiences of previous initiatives, personal biographies and stocks of knowledge to bear in formulating a response to the initiative and in the process of responding formed their own interpretations of the intervention. It is through this process that their responses to the intervention were framed. In drawing on unique "stocks of knowledge" they constructed alternative perspectives of the initiative and this in turn formed and was recursively informed by the strategies that they employed in relation to the programme. While the staff's strategies can be understood as involving attempts to utilise different discursive repertoires in order to enrol other actors in their projects by establishing a common frame of meaning, the groups were able to challenge this approach pointing to past experience and their own knowledge to negotiate the shape of their relationship with the programme. It should also be born in mind that the "experts" in the development process in this case were often also local actors who shared similar life worlds and lived in the same localities as their client groups¹³. They too possessed personal projects which diverged from those embodied in the development discourse and in part the outcome of these encounters reflected their ability to utilise elements of separate discourses to draw on useful local knowledge about individual groups. In encounters with the groups, staff fell back on informal dialogue and as it were stepped outside the script in order to produce workable outcomes which balanced their personal interest with those of the groups and the organisations they worked for. Throughout this process, an important feature of the consultation and indeed of the wider application was the ability of the staff, W.W.D.P and the groups to recognise that different accounts of their actions were needed for different contexts and to utilise this fact to work out the most advantageous balance possible between their own interests and the formal requirements of the LEADER II application. The actors do not draw on a set of rigid set of texts based on discrete, separate stocks of knowledge. We see that the development professionals are not wedded to their expert systems while in many cases the "locals" with

¹³ Although of course they may not have much interaction with their clients outside of office hours.

whom they dealt were in fact articulate and experienced professionals with, arguably, better contacts with the Partnerships own board members and the local elite than the staff themselves. The events around the LEADER II application could be described as involving the management of ambiguity. In certain circumstances it suited actors to utilise concepts in a way which suggested that the entire process was consistent with the idea of planning outlined in development policy discourse, in others this approach was abandoned. The result was that while in some respects the plan was consistent with the requirements of the planning process, the ability of actors to manage ambiguity in the development process enabled them to manipulate the process in ways that favoured them. The fact that local actors recognised that the key requirement of the consultation was that it *demonstrate* that the LEADER II application had achieved the inclusive mobilisation of the local community, increased their room for manoeuvre.

A feature of local development programmes in Ireland has been the emphasis on consensus, the idea that local development organisations can and indeed must incorporate the “views,” of the wider community. Within this framework the role of the consultation is seen as significant since it provides the means through which locals could be enrolled into the development process. As we have seen, LEADER in Ireland together with similar programmes in the local development gene pool, was depicted as an area based locally driven development programme. It was envisaged and indeed, later reported that the programmes were to be driven by, and reflect, the wishes of the localities in which it operated “*The content of the (LEADER II) plans reflected a considerable degree of consultation at local level, culminating in a collation of views and expressions of interest. These were subsequently analysed and classified, and mobilised into an overall strategy*” (Kearney 1998 p. 2). A particular feature of formal local development discourse underpinning the LEADER II approach was that the actions undertaken by the local groups embodied the wishes of people within the community and that as a consequence communities would be mobilised in support of the project. The desire to create the perception that their applications demonstrated inclusive mobilisation of the local community was a concern for all applicant groups. Though it was arguably the case that these bodies were in fact a relatively new and untested form of local organisation, the catch-all area based development group with a defined geographical catchment, were exactly the type of organisations that prospective LEADER organisations needed to demonstrate they were in contact with.

The consultation exercise undertaken by W.W.D.P involved some, on occasion extremely complex events during which a range of actors worked out the nature of their involvement with W.W.D.P and the application. This inevitably involves struggles in which power is manifested as the “*the outcome of complex struggles and negotiations over authority, status, reputation and resources, and necessitates the enrolment of networks of actors and constituencies* (Latour 1994, Callon 1995)...Such struggles are founded upon the extent to which specific actors perceive themselves capable of manoeuvring within particular situations and developing effective strategies to do so” (Long 2001 p 71). These encounters thus directly relate to questions of local power, and in particular the issue of who controls local development. Seen in this light the consultation process appears to confirm some aspects of the observations of Derkzen and Bock (2007). Professional identity does appear to be multi layered and locals do place a high value on their experiential knowledge. However the data also appears to make some of their observations relating to the potential that the “*involvement of more lay people or local inhabitants*” to bring about a “*cultural change in governance*” (Derkzen and Bock 2007) appear to be hopelessly naïve. We see that in this instance the LEADER application was a process during which the different forms of knowledge employed in the process are indelibly linked to the question of power and how this is worked out at local level. During this process we see a range of actors utilising elements of a variety of discourses. The seemingly obvious distinction between experiential and expert knowledge are in fact ill defined. It also seems to suggest that the capacity of any policy discourse to gift influence to the bearers of experiential as opposed to expert knowledge is severely limited. Let it not be forgotten that the entire idea underpinning LEADER was to involve the harnessing of local ideas and knowledge in aid of development. Its failure to do so is evidence of the limitations of programmes that attempt to induce cultural changes in the way development gets done.

The data presented in the previous chapter confirms that initially at least the conduct of the LEADER II application was dominated by specific interests, in particular those of the local elite and manager of W.W.D.P. However during the LEADER II consultation process it becomes clear that the ability of these actors to maintain this control is constrained by at least two considerations. The first of these was the requirement of the LEADER II application to demonstrate some level of local wider support for their plan and the second was the ability of other local actors to exploit this situation and make use of the opportunities afforded by the application process. It could thus be suggested that the LEADER II approach allowed for at

least a partial democratisation of W.W.D.P. However the terms of reference of the programme constrained the degree to which this happened. Firstly because LEADER defined development in primarily economic terms and this made possible the exclusion of certain local groups as non-participants on the basis of relevance. While the criteria for the inclusion of groups in a consultation were never clearly articulated, it was undoubtedly the case that the bulk of the groups did not represent a broad canvas of all of the organisations operating in the area. Instead they were predominantly the type of area-based enterprise groups that matched the particular model of local organisation that underlined the Partnership and C.E.P models of local development. This model dovetailed with that entailed in LEADER II application. Thus there is no doubt that such area-based local entities suited the administrative requirements and interests of the development professionals employed by W.W.D.P and the C.E.P during the application process. This left the Partnership dealing with a specific set of catch-all local development bodies of a type which had recently begun to emerge as a consequence of the growth of interest in the local development paradigm. These were groups which in many respects had similar interest to W.W.D.P. In its dealings the partnership was not always able to entirely succeed in enrolling the groups despite the strenuous efforts it made to minimise local opposition. The Partnership appears less than monolithic in its dealings with the wider community. In some cases the position of local development professionals was far from strong. The existence of a number of programmes with similar functions helped the local community bodies in this respect enabling them to play different agencies off against each other as these agencies sought to establish their credibility in the development business.

Regardless of the fact that in reality the LEADER consultation was only partially successful in mobilising the community. The ability of the staff and board to account for these events in a way which was consistent with the LEADER II application meant that despite its obvious weaknesses as a consultation process the application was adequate to the needs of the organisation. The consultation provided evidence that W.W.D.P had been successful in mobilising local support for its application and represented a cross section of local opinion. Despite all of the concerns expressed by the manager over the possibility of a counterbid by an opposing organisation such opposition never materialised. W.W.D.P finally received funding under LEADER II in early 1994. The overall impact of the consultation process was to thus confirm the idea that W.W.D.P's application reflected the views of local population at least sufficiently to attract additional funding. There were some minor changes in W.W.D.P

as a result of the negotiations with certain groups that occurred during the consultation. However it should be noted that where this occurred it largely involved encounters between similar individuals with similar interests; these were conflicts between members of the local elite and the staff rather than between the local elite and other local groups.

While it is impossible to make general comments based solely on what occurred in County Waterford, it is possible to identify the factors which contributed to the particular shape that the consultation process took in County Waterford which may have a more general bearing on how local development programmes operate in practice. Amongst these was the application of an area based approach in a diverse area. In the case of Waterford, this meant that relatively affluent and influential locals came to dominate the initiative. This reduced the extent to which this targeting of resources towards those suffering from spatial disadvantage could be achieved. The second factor was the adoption of an approach to local development focussed on the economy. In the case of Waterford this again led to the inclusion of members of the local elite and excluded other groups from discussions of the areas development. The third is the conflation of local development and local democracy. Perversely the greater level of local participation required by the LEADER II application did not lead to wider local participation but led to the staff and board creating consensus through a consultation process which was tightly controlled but which they were able to present as evidence that their plan reflected the “wishes of the community”. In essence this allowed them to depict the plan as the outcome of a form of participative local democracy without embodying any of the traditional safeguards associated with representative democracy. Once established these quasi democratic claims carried considerable weight, indeed the literature around local development is replete with suggestions that such programmes reflect the will of or empowers the local community (C.W.C 1989). A fourth and related feature listed here was the ability of the staff and the board to produce accounts of their activities which were aligned with local development discourse. Again looking at the LEADER II application it was clearly the case that regardless of what actually happened in the follow up with groups these events could be re-cast in a manner which made it appear as if events in Waterford complied with the LEADER II application process. The final factor considered here is the extent of oversight that the national bodies responsible for considering these plans actually exercised in verifying the claims that groups such as W.W.D.P made as to the quality of local consultation process.

In the case of Waterford, it is suggested that these factors had a cumulative effect creating a virtuous circle outlined in the accompanying diagram (Figure 8.1).

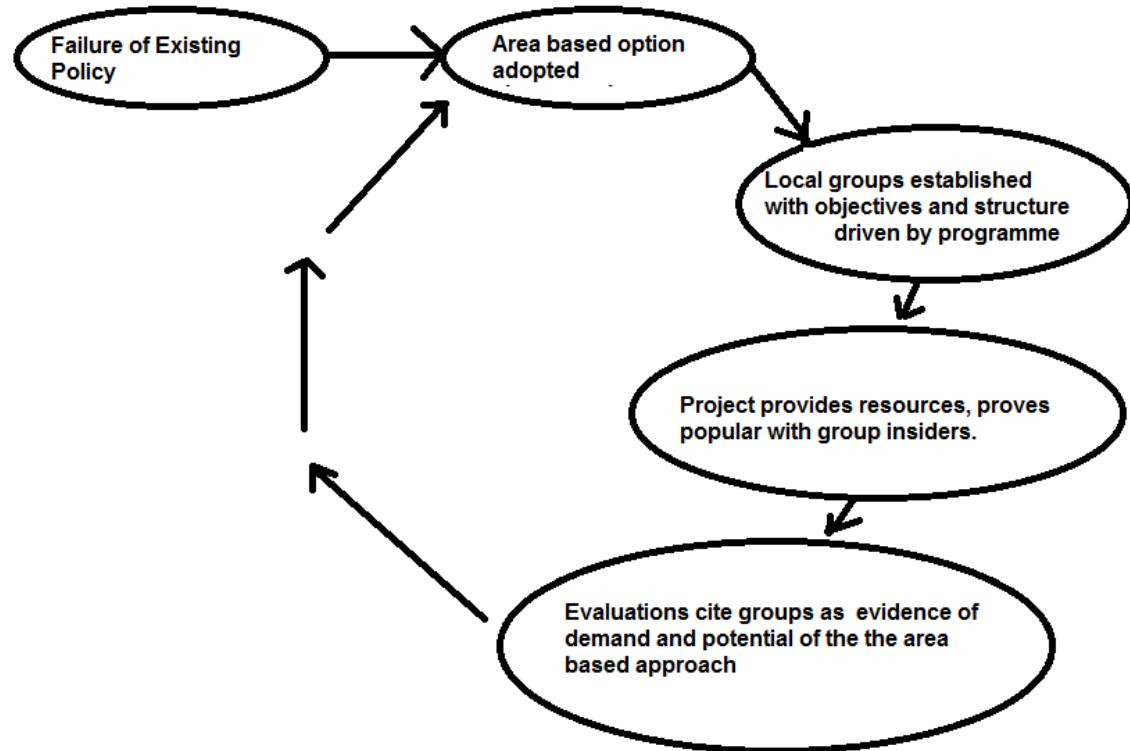


Figure 8.1 the cumulative effect of local policy demand.

Area based policies are initially suggested by policy makers as a response to the failures of existing policies. In this case the focus of this new policy is on the economy. Once established the approach leads to the availability of resources which in turn stimulates the establishment of new local groups which have objectives which are aligned with those of the programme. As these groups secure resources the approach generates more interest in this activity so that by the time the programme is evaluated there is widespread evidence of a demand for this type of project. In short a virtuous (or vicious) circle is created in which the programme generates its own demand. In relation to local development the nature of this circle is further strengthened precisely because this demand is expressed through local groups. The traditional criteria by which programmes are evaluated must vie with a new criteria; local demand. It also needs to be borne in mind that at the time when LEADER II was being introduced the availability of E.U. funding for local development was increasing substantially there was therefore few if any incentives for anyone engaged in this process to

attempt to put a halt on this cycle and there is little evidence that safeguards or checks existed to stop this process occurring.

One additional outcome of the consultation was that it had brought to the fore a number of local development bodies based in different parts of the county. While the programme had been intended to encourage a greater local interest in development it also had the effect of identifying and raising to prominence certain groups within each area. Indeed, to a certain extent, the desire that the entire county be seen to have been “covered” conferred upon these groups a certain status as representative groups reflecting the wishes of their respective areas. Over the next few years, during the implementation of the LEADER II programme, these groups were envisaged as having a significant role in the future development of the programme. Thus whilst in some cases these smaller groups enjoyed strained relations with W.W.D.P they themselves enjoyed a position of relative power and influence in relation to their own localities. The special status conferred on these groups had the potential to influence not only the course of local development but also existing relationships between local actors within specific areas. The next chapter focuses on this issue, examining the impact of the relationship between one such local organisation and W.W.D.P in the East of the county that area most widely known as the Barony of Gaultier.

Chapter 9: Tales from the riverbank

9.1 Introduction - Fishing communities and local development.

The previous two chapters focussed on the implementation of a consultation process by W.W.D.P as it sought to secure additional funding to pursue its own organisational goals. This process involved events during which certain actors attempted to enrol others in an expanded network in support of a specific development project. While development policy discourse played a crucial role during these events it was a strategic one. Actors utilised the development discourse in attempts to establish a degree of control over the process of consultation. However the previous chapter also demonstrated that local actors are not passive participants in this process, on occasions they challenge the validity of formal development policy discourse. In reality therefore the consultation process was not the technical exercise depicted in the development discourse rather it involved encounters during which a number of actors employed different discourses in support of specific projects.

At the conclusion of this consultation W.W.D.P produced a volume of “community submissions” which was included as a separate section in the organisations LEADER II and subsequent Local Development Programme applications. This was presented as evidence of local support for W.W.D.P’s proposed programme of actions. This document also illustrates the subtle but significant shift that was occurring in development policy discourse at this time, away from justifications for local development based on specific issues of spatial disadvantage and toward the question of better local governance. As W.W.D.P sought to respond to the opportunities offered by programmes such as LEADER II the organisation assumed a quasi-representative role. In doing so it built its claim for support on the notion that its plan reflected the views of the wider local community.

The previous two chapters thus provide a valuable insight into the way in which power is worked out in the local development network. In particular it sheds light on the strategies employed by key figures in W.W.D.P. The Partnerships actions, including the choice of groups it worked with, were informed by the need to demonstrate local support for the planning process. The result was that in order to cope with the difficult business of

negotiating the endorsement of local power brokers and finding groups that suited the "administrative fit," staff tended to work with a certain type of community group; which were structured, and contained the right "sort," of people, the managers "good operators". The selection criteria thus favoured local groups which were area-based and focussed on economic issues and had a structure and membership which was supportive of the Partnership's development project. Groups advocating alternative development priorities simply did not appear on the Partnerships horizon. Through a series of seemingly pragmatic decisions senior figures and the staff were instrumental in shaping the outcomes of the local consultation process in ways which supported a specific project.

Regardless of the validity of the claims that the Partnership made about its ability to represent the local community, the consultation process produced the desired result. The application for funding under LEADER II was successful. As a consequence the area included under W.W.D.P's remit was extended to cover the entire County. This was reflected in changes in the Partnership's board and various subcommittees which, in line with the manager's commitments to the eastern groups, were changed to include members from the East of the county. It was also reflected in the altering the organisations title. West Waterford Development Partnership became Waterford Development Partnership (W.D.P)¹. The involvement of community groups during the consultation had other implications. W.D.P's proposals for both LEADER II and subsequently for the Local Development Programme (LDP) suggested that these groups would continue to act as the main means by which the Partnership would maintain contact with the community. In order to facilitate this, a community forum was established which local community groups would be invited to join. Through this forum they would be given information about the Partnerships activities and be invited to offer opinions on them. The forums principal source of influence would be the opportunity to elect two community representatives on to the board of W.W.D.P per year. It thus built on the suggestion that W.W.D.P represented local ideas about development. However, while it had an important symbolic function the manager himself was quite explicit in his view that real decision-making would be retained within the board. Furthermore membership of the forum continued to be in the main the preserve of those groups that had participated in the consultation, groups which largely supported a specific approach to local

¹ From this point W.W.D.P will be referred to by its new name of W.D.P

development and represented a specific segment of the local population. Through the forum these groups, which could scarcely claim to be inclusive, would retain a role as the main conduit for wider local input into the Partnership.

In addition the presence of these groups was significant to the way the Partnership intended to implement its programmes in the future. While the principal engine for local development under the LEADER II programme would be funding for individual private enterprises, it was also envisioned that local community groups would have an important role in “animation”. Thus the groups that had become part of the local development network during the consultation would, it was suggested, continue to be involved in the Partnership in a number of ways, as proof that the Partnership embodied the views and support of the wider local community, as formal “conduits,” for funding and information, as applicants for grants and later as the means of implementing programmes. On paper at least W.D.P’s decision to involve certain groups conferred them with a significant degree of power as the legitimate voices for their respective areas. This was a situation which potentially had important implications for the Partnership, the groups themselves and the wider local community three dimensions of which are examined in detail in this chapter.

The first of these concerns the idea that these groups could actually represent the interests of their areas. As we have seen the decisions of the Partnership as to which groups to include in the consultation were governed by such considerations as their willingness to comply with the partnership model. The majority had views as to the needs of their area which corresponded to that of the Partnership itself. Thus when it came to the business of negotiating a common frame of meaning the group and the Partnership were actually quite similar in their understanding of the area’s situation and what the best development strategy was. However once selected the Partnership made specific claims as to the ability of such groups to act as an organisation representative of its area which in turn conferred a specific role and status both on the group and on its views as to the areas developments. The first issue considered in this chapter thus concerns the extent to which such groups could represent an area. Were they able to encompass the interests of the wider community, and if not who did they in fact represent?

The second question examined in detail in this chapter concerns the extent to which the groups’ own operations were affected by their incorporation into the local development

network. As we have seen their involvement with W.D.P put groups in a potentially advantageous position with first hand access to the range of services operated by the Partnership. It also exposed the group to new pressures and conferred new responsibilities on them, not least in complying with the requirements of W.D.P. How then did this situation impact on the groups existing activities and role?

The third concerns the implication that the selection of a specific group has for the wider community in which it is situated. As was illustrated in chapter seven, the decisions the Partnership made as to what groups to include also meant that certain groups were in effect excluded from the consultation. The identification of certain organisations as "community" groups by W.D.P owed something to the fact that they were in the Partnership's eyes "suitable" local development groups. Their inclusion in this process was based on the fact that they shared a considerable amount in common with the Partnership about the problems facing the area and the best way to tackle them. The final question addressed in this chapter concerns the implications of the Partnerships decisions to involve certain groups in the network both on the relationship between those groups and the wider communities in which they operated as the partnership programme was "rolled out"? and of course for the projects of the non-participant groups and other locals outside of these groups. It does so through a case study focussing in particular on the experience of one such group the Discover East Waterford Tourism Co-Operative (D.E.W.T) during and after the consultation process.

D.E.W.T was established in the period 1991-92 with the express aim of developing the tourism industry in the Eastern part of the county. Despite its relatively recent origin the group was of central importance to W.D.P and to the C.E.P during the consultation. It was considered to be one of the most progressive of the eastern groups. D.E.W.T was one of the few groups that had been involved in any community activity prior to the consultation and the only group that had a full time paid employee. Amongst the professional staff involved in the consultation the organisation was viewed as one of the better local organisations. When the consultation process was initially proposed this group was amongst the first identified as a likely participant organisation. During the fieldwork the researcher was fortunate enough to be placed in this area the group was based in for a considerable period of time. It was possible to observe events there over a period of two years, six months of which was spent living in a village in the area. Besides this consideration the group offered a number of other merits as a case study. First as an eastern group it was possible to study the organisation over

the period of time during which it first came into direct contact with the Partnership, allowing for the observation of developments in an area as its involvement in the W.D.P progressed from planning through to implementation. During this time it was possible to develop a research network including a large number of locals and representatives of the various organisations and bodies involved in development and administration in the area. In addition, as will be demonstrated in the description that follows, the area has some interesting features in relation to its position in the county, population and socio-economic characteristics. Data derived from the researcher's observations, together with some documentary and historical material form the basis of the analysis presented in this chapter. This analysis takes the form of observations which shed light on the operation of such processes. This chapter also marks an important point in the research. In the previous three chapters the focus was primarily on events which occurred as W.D.P sought to establish itself as a development organisation. Here and for the remainder of the thesis the focus is primarily on this organisation's attempts to implement its programme on the wider local world in which it was based.

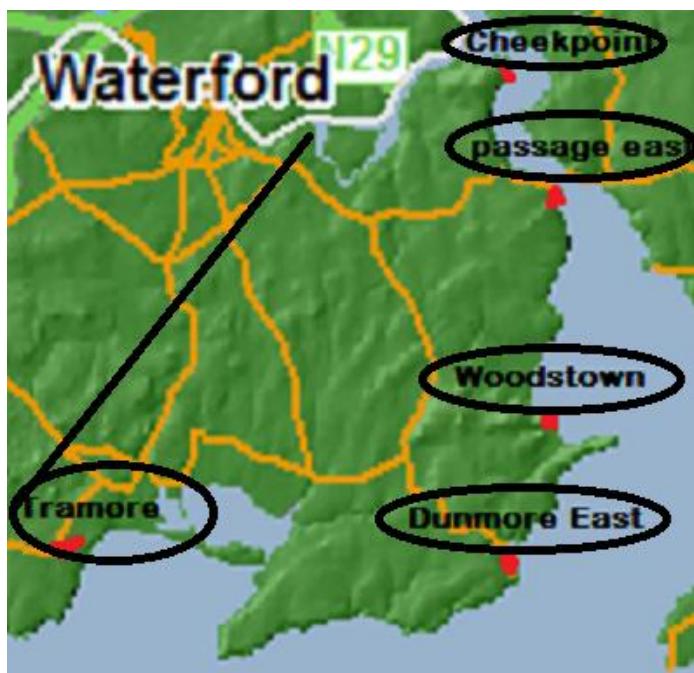
9.2 South East Waterford

The area in which D.E.W.T operated broadly corresponds to the area outlined on the accompanying map (map 9.1). While the division between the East and West of the County have been discussed before, there is an equally perceptible division between the rest of East Waterford and the area in which the co-operative was based. Traditionally known as the Barony of Gaultier² it comprises the easternmost area of the county. Physically the area is divided from the rest of the county by an imaginary line drawn between the city in the North and Tramore, in the South. The barony itself was home to a population of around 7,500 people during the study concentrated along the coast in the villages of Cheekpoint, Passage East and Dunmore East.

The physical and historical divisions that made the Barony distinct from the neighbouring parishes were reflected in wider divisions between the area and its surroundings. The soil structure itself is poorer than is the case elsewhere in the County and this area had the highest proportion of farm holdings of less than thirty acres in the County and higher numbers of less

² The area broadly equates with the old baronial area bearing that name.

lucrative sheep and dry cattle units than was the norm in the county. Besides farm size, productivity and income were also significantly lower than in the parishes to the immediate west which were and indeed continue to be typified by large dairy and tillage farms. These areas also had higher levels of education and income than was the case in the barony and, it was widely perceived locally, had better roads and services than was the case in the Barony.



Map 9.1Discover East Waterford Tourism Area

The Tramore - Waterford Road, which effectively defines the area's western edge and together with the main Waterford-Cork and Waterford Dublin roads help to isolate the area from the rest of the County. It has many more links with the city, its economy and services than other parts of rural Waterford. It is therefore unsurprising that any overview of the area is inevitably cast in the shadow of the city. Alterations in settlement patterns, economic behaviour and services occurring in the city have a significant impact on the area with bloated suburban housing areas such as Ardkeen encroaching significantly into the Barony.

Data used by ADM and the Partnership to assess levels of unemployment consistently found that the area had amongst the worst deprivation scores in the county³. A partnership

³ Data produced by Gamma Consultants for ADM covering the period 1990 – 2000 give these areas particularly high deprivation scores. The actual numbers are low given the small population in these areas. It should be

document drafted to support the creation of a Local Employment Service in 1997 placed the unemployment levels in Dunmore East, Passage East and Cheekpoint at 19.4%, 29% and 25% respectively, with unemployment related to decline in the areas traditional economic activities including the local fishing industry, agricultural and traditional industrial and shipping employment. There were also high proportions of seasonal employment and correspondingly significant levels of off-season social welfare dependency. The area also exhibited stubbornly and disproportionately low educational attainment throughout the study period when compared with the rest of the county.

Despite the decline of its traditional employment and income base the overall population of the area increased during the study primarily because of an influx of people employed in Waterford City. The Barony, was in a very marked way, dealing with the challenge posed by urban growth with increased demand for residential property, holiday and retirement homes coinciding with declines in local employment and agriculture. One direct result of this was changes in the housing market with significant increases in prices during the 1990's continuing until the end of the Celtic Tiger property boom giving rise to some tension between newcomers and local residents⁴.

Waterford City is the central point for much of the area's economic and social activity. Most people in the Barony area do their shopping in the city and many work there. As a consequence small businesses in the area find it difficult to compete. Most state services are also located in the city. The city also serves as a source of industrial employment. No significant industrial employment exists in the Barony itself, with the exception of some fish processing facilities offering seasonal work. This employment varies from year to year and during the study employed up to 200 people at peak season⁵. However the modernisation in

noted that the level of deprivation in both these areas was far greater than in any of the D.E.D's in the original W.W.D.P area outside of Dungarvan urban district no 1

⁴A regular topic of conversation in the area was the impact that new comers were making in meetings and casual conversations this issue was raised on a regular basis. Particular significant was the issue of house prices, and issues arising out of the closing of right of ways passing over the coastline properties of some outsiders houses. One English couple who bought an old school in the area and restored as a house had their car vandalised on three occasions.

⁵ The very irregular nature of this work means that the numbers fluctuate week to week and in cases day to day and is dependent on the length of the season and quality of catches taken, One factory owner, produced figures

the fishing fleet together with changes in the structure of the industry and declines in stock has reduced employment in the fishery and fish processing sector.

Even in relation to social activities such as sport the Barony is more closely linked to the City than county. In the GAA for example, there is a long history of friction between east and west which have squabbled over control of the County Board and there is a perception that neither half of the county co-operates with the other. When the County selectors come from the city, it is claimed that they will not select players from clubs in the west while of course the opposite is said to be the case when the selectors from Dungarvan and the West Waterford clubs are in the ascendancy. The general view of residents is that the area lacks political clout and as a consequence there is a widespread belief that services in the barony area are poorer than elsewhere in the county. Its network of small roads along with the villages of Passage East and Cheekpoint is prone to seasonal flooding. This was the case during heavy rains and high tides in November 1995 when many small roads were flooded creating a spate of complaints in the local press.

Chapter four pointed to the fact that the multi-layered character of local identity in the County. Waterford is comprised of a complex range of different areas with their own specific identities. In the area considered in detail here, the question of local identity is brought into particularly sharp focus. The barony is separated economically and socially as well as physically by roads and landscape. While their direct westerly neighbours look towards the heart of the county, the Barony faces onto the western shore of the Suir estuary. All its villages and the bulk of its housing stock are located on the coast. While the County boasts the among the best farm structures in the country, average farm holdings in the barony are significantly smaller. This combination of factors together with its proximity to the city and existence of a prolonged involvement in the fishing industry means that locals have derived income from particularly varied sources reminiscent of the type of economic strategy that has come to be seen to exemplify pluriactivity (See De Vries, W. M 1993, Bowler et al 1996, Kinsella et al 2000). Some of the components that have contributed to this activity in the area

for his company which showed over 100 employees. Yet these figures represented 3 months pay roll and the length of employment varied enormously from in some cases a matter of days to 2 months. The very nature of the fishing business leads to a significant amount working being done off of the books. Finally the figures are normally based on information produced by the plants themselves or by bodies which may have funded the factories.

have been in existence for a considerable period of time, supporting the view suggested by Kinsella et al that such strategies have a long history in some Irish coastal communities (Kinsella et al 2000). Historically fishing, shipping, agriculture and big houses on demesne lands as well as industrial employment in the city have contributed to the area's economy. Fishing has long been connected to the export trade. The area was a base for the Celtic Sea herring fishery, and the export of smoked herring (Kipper) was a major source of income in the 19th and early 20th century, forming the basis of small scale cottage industry and also larger scale production in commercial smoke houses. Waterford City itself was an important seaport, employing many of the areas people. In later years industrial and service employment in Waterford replaced some of these income sources. In conversations with local people it was clear that the areas physical, economic and social characteristics together with its history provide a large repertoire of symbols which locals and indeed outsiders can draw on in defining the area.

One feature of immediate note is the view, held widely amongst locals, that the area was neglected. As evidenced by the poor condition of the areas local roads and harbours. Many mention the fact that the fishing industry was under pressure and facilities poor. As would be expected this view was most vehemently stated by fishermen who regularly express the view that the Irish Government has failed to protect their interests. As evidence they can point to developments in national fishery policy such as the 1995 decision to open the "Irish Box,"⁶ to more non-national E.U. vessels and the introduction of measures further limiting commercial salmon netting. When the Canadian Government refused access to their waters to Spanish vessels in 1995 fishermen throughout the Barony flew Canadian flags as a gesture of support. They contrasted the Canadians actions with those of an Irish government that was seen to have "sold out," to the E.U. The more stringent controls on the salmon catch also led to direct action on the part of the fishermen who expressed the view that they were being made scapegoats for the failures of fisheries protection authorities. The idea that the area had been neglected was not confined to fishermen. During the consultation process the fact that the area had not benefited from the A.B.R was cited as evidence of the indifference of both

⁶The term refers to an area of Sea extending around the south east coast and formerly reserved for Irish fishermen under E.U. Agreement. As part of its obligations under E.U. fisheries agreements access to the area was granted to non-Irish vessels in 1996. In 2002 the same issues were again at issue with the prospect of greater access by non-Irish E.U. boats to these waters and very sharp reductions in permissible catches reported.

the State and people in the rest of the county to the areas problems. This perception was to remain significant in events after the Partnership was expanded to cover the area⁷.

9.3 Discover East Waterford Tourism Co-operative

As noted, the Partnerships initial contact with the area was via the consultation process. During this process the communities that comprise the Barony of Gaultier were “represented” by Discover East Waterford Tourism Co-Operative (D.E.W.T). D.E.W.T had very specific views about East Waterford, its problems and possible solutions. D.E.W.T described its aim as being to *“promote and develop tourism and other enterprises and where necessary promote funding for such projects”*⁸. Despite the suggestion that the LEADER II consultation involved local bodies which were representative of the community D.E.W.T’s actual membership was small and limited to people active in the tourism industry. Unlike many of the other groups mentioned in the previous chapter the co-operative was principally composed of individuals and businesses with an interest in tourism or related enterprises. It also drew its members from a number of separate villages and indeed, had members who were involved in the tourism industry but were not local residents. The group included the owner of a large hotel in Waterford City, the managing director of the Passage East Ferry Company⁹, the owner of a local bed and breakfast and other representatives of the tourism industry. Its commitment to the support of tourism is reflected in the organisations activities. Prior to 1994 it was involved in organising a mussel festival in Passage East, producing booklets and brochures promoting the area, campaigning for better signage and improved infrastructure. It organised a mussel festival and Power clan reunion, a series of events celebrating aspects of the area’s history and its association with the Power family name as a strategy to boost tourism. Members paid a subscription which represented one of the co-op’s main sources of income in the early days. In return the co-operative advertised their members businesses in its publications. Members also benefited from increases in business resulting from events that D.E.W.T organised.

⁷Indeed the distribution of funds and projects up to the end of 2011 suggests that a considerable skew in favour of the West remains.

⁸This is taken from an unpublished D.E.W.T mission statement

⁹Subsequently his assistant and financial controller assumed this role.

A board of 7 people oversaw the organization's work. According to the facilitator that FAS provided to assist in the group's formation, selection of the board members was initially by invitation. Certain people were identified as being of potential use to the co-op and were subsequently invited to participate. In theory the board was answerable to the membership and the board members were appointed annually. However the mechanism through which this was done was unclear¹⁰. When in 1996 the chairman and another board member resigned due to pressure of work, the board itself appointed new members. Throughout the duration of the study no election of board members or consultation with the wider membership occurred. The extent of D.E.W.T's contact with the wider local community was also unclear. At no time did it attempt to expand its membership to incorporate a wider cross section of local opinion nor did it disseminate information as regards its activities to a wider local audience. Despite these obvious limitations the Partnership continued to regard the co-operative as the areas principal community group throughout the period of the study. It was only at the beginning of 1997 that W.D.P came into contact with any other local groups in the area. Thus for a considerable period of time this part of East Waterford was represented in the Partnerships eyes by a single organisation made up of a small number of people involved in the tourism industry.

The activities of the seven board members represented the most significant voluntary contribution to the co-operative's work. However the extent of even this was limited as in 1992 the Co-op employed an enterprise officer with the help of funding provided by FAS through the CEP. The person employed was a local who was also employed on a part time basis by FAS to work on the C.E.P programme¹¹. He was in fact one of the principal staff involved in the consultation process undertaken by W.W.D.P and the C.E.P. This employee acted as the body's manager, assuming responsibility for its day to day running. From this point on the board's involvement was chiefly restricted to monitoring performance, finance and deciding broad policy. In effect therefore the group's principal achievement prior to the appointment of a paid employee was to secure financial support for the employment of a paid employee. Once this had been secured this employee was then given the bulk of the responsibility for developing and carrying out activities on its behalf. Following this appointment the board neither sought nor indicated a desire to involve itself more deeply in

¹⁰ Shortly after its inception the co-op was incorporated as a company and was in theory required to hold an A.G.M with board members appointed at this meeting.

¹¹ Since the position was first created, up until 1997 three people held the job.

the day to day running of the co-op. Thus while D.E.W.T continued to describe itself as a voluntary community organisation it was in fact the case that a full time employee undertook the bulk of the organisations activities.

While the co-operative continued to operate primarily as a service to local tourism businesses, the degree of freedom over the organisations operations this employee was given by the board began to have a considerable influence on the course of the Co-operatives activities. The manager's actions were in turn influenced by other considerations. Of particular note in this regard was the relatively precarious nature of the position. The C.E.P funding to support staff is short term as the expectation is that as time goes by these funds are reduced and that the position is intended to eventually become self- financing. These terms meant that once employed the manager faced the immediate pressure of finding funds to sustain his own job. This led him to examine additional activities which the co-op could involve itself in. In 1993 the manager began work on a proposal for the co-op to purchase a large property in Passage East that would, it was hoped, serve as a headquarters for the group and also allow the organization to provide a tourist office. Thus as was the case for W.D.P the appointment of staff introduced a new actor into the network of actors involved in D.E.W.T with his own interests to pursue and protect, most significant of which was the imperative that future funds be found to sustain his own job.

While described as a community group D.E.W.T incorporated relatively limited local involvement. Once a manager was appointed the organisation's members demonstrated little interest in having greater involvement in the co-op, or indeed any perception that their involvement in the co-operative should extended further than that of clients who paid a subscription to receive a service. There is almost no indication that the areas members were aware of a wider development agenda. None of those within the local community to whom I spoke expressed an awareness of the group's decision making methods, consultation or election procedures. Even amongst members there was little indication that they viewed themselves as having influence over the organisation. Amongst those I spoke to the only means of control or influence over the co-operative they were aware of was their capacity to withdraw their subscriptions. Indeed some members of D.E.W.T with whom I talked were curious as to what the organisation did. With the exception of one individual, members had little knowledge of D.E.W.T activities or strategies beyond the few public events that the co-

op ran. The exception being the group's chairman who was also a member of the Partnerships services sub-committee.

Some members questioned whether their subscription represented value for money. One of them contrasting the relatively slow turnover of visitors to the tourist office operated by D.E.W.T with the number of tourists who came into the area as a result of his own efforts¹². While he paid a subscription he claimed that the co-operative did little for his business rather from time to time he had helped the co-op. In fact his only reason for subscribing was a sense of obligation, he paid them because they were trying to do "*something positive*" and "*meant well*". However, he believed that his private efforts were more important for tourism than those of the co-op and that this benefit extended beyond his own business. This situation was not helped by the fact that outside of Passage East where the manager was based the organisations activities were limited. Yet even in Passage East many people did not know about the organisations activities.

9.4 From tourism co-operative to community group

When its membership structure, activities and overall aims prior to the 1993 consultation are considered it appears that D.E.W.T operated as a tourism marketing service and made little claim to be anything else. Indeed, prior to the LEADER II consultations D.E.W.T had not been involved or indicated an interest in the area's development outside of the tourism industry. It was only with the Partnerships decision to contact and subsequently involve the group in the consultation that the co-operative's possible role as a local development organisation representative of the area became significant. In June 1993 the organisation was invited to participate in the consultation process, the Partnerships strategy and the later plan submitted for LEADER II and subsequently L.D.P funding made it clear that the group was regarded as the South East Waterford "community group" providing the type of local representation that the Partnership required for the plan. The initial invitation was offered to the group via its then manager. The manager was also one of FAS's team of C.E.P staff for the consultations with groups based in East Waterford. In addition to D.E.W.T he was

¹² He made an arrangement with coach tour operators to bring tourists staying in Waterford city to the area for an evening, stating that he was the "*real tourist office in the area*" bringing in many more visitors than the co-op.

involved in the C.E.P liaison work with other eastern groups. He was active in supporting the idea of a proposal covering the entire County. However he also actively encouraged the formation of an eastern umbrella group. All contacts with D.E.W.T were made via this individual except during the two initial public meetings when members of the Board also attended. Besides agreeing to encourage the group to participate in the consultation he also agreed that the group would contribute a set of local proposals to the overall plan and took responsibility for preparing this submission.

While assuming the role of local group in the consultation D.E.W.T did not hold any local meetings or publicise the application to a wider audience. Thus information as regards the consultation was largely confined to the group and indeed within D.E.W.T itself the board. The group's final submission did not correspond to the type of local submission recommended by the Partnership. Rather it consisted of detailed proposals for grant aid for a craft shop, an enterprise centre and an aquaculture project. These proposals were all to be based in Passage East. Furthermore the proposals concerning craft and enterprise included in the document were the D.E.W.T's own, which were being prepared by the manager.

Despite obvious limitations on the extent of local involvement in D.E.W.T the C.E.P staff too regarded this group, which drew its membership from the areas tourism operators, as representative of an area which was amongst the most disadvantaged in the county during the LEADER II consultation. For FAS and the C.E.P the inclusion of DEWT as a community group was important. It must be remembered that throughout the process FAS and the C.E.P remained ambivalent towards the LEADER II application and sought to maintain their own position as a credible player in the field of community development. D.E.W.T was a beneficiary of the FAS funded C.E.P programme. It thus provided evidence that C.E.P was involved with credible community groups. Moreover members of D.E.W.T included local business people with whom the staff members involved in the C.E.P were familiar and who were also prominent in business circles in the City¹³. These actors were, along with some senior officials and civil servants in City based state organisations enmeshed in local social networks in this area to a much greater extent than they were in networks which included the Partnership's board members and staff. This fact had contributed to the problems that faced

¹³These included the Chief Executive of FAS, the City Enterprise Officer and his assistant.

the Partnership in extending its network of contacts into East Waterford in the first place. It was thus unsurprising that in identifying suitable groups C.E.P staff would identify those which included actors incorporated into the same local networks as they were.

Perhaps more important still was the role of the facilitator employed by FAS to work with the group. This person was originally responsible for the conduct of the delivery of the C.E.P training modules under which the D.E.W.T was formed. When the group was formally established and granted assistant towards the employment of a full time enterprise officer he was given the job. Thus in addition to being a key staff member for the C.E.P programme during the entire consultation process he was also an employee of this particular community group during the consultation throughout which D.E.W.T's manager continued to work with FAS as a C.E.P facilitator and was in constant contact with the head of the FAS C.E.P programme. This only served to strengthen the already close relationship between FAS and the group, a situation which was understandable given the fact that actors in DEWT had close ties with the city and that in the period prior to the extension of the Partnerships boundaries, the only available support for community groups in the area was the C.E.P programme. Given the FAS perception of its role as the principal agency supporting community groups in the eastern part of the county and the close relationship it had with D.E.W.T, it was scarcely surprising that D.E.W.T would be identified by the C.E.P staff as one of most significant local groups in that area during the LEADER II consultations.

The Partnership and in particular it's manager and the chairman were also prepared for different reasons to accept the group and did so with little if any concern as to its actual capacity to represent the area. For W.D.P the inclusion of groups in the east was important in order to demonstrate that it could rally the support of groups across the county. For the Partnership D.E.W.T was in the right place at the right time to provide evidence that they were in contact with organisations throughout the area. While the selection of community groups by the Partnership was not based on a formal set of criteria, it did base its selection of groups on specific ideas about the type of "structured," groups which were suitable for inclusion. While it was primarily FAS C.E.P staff who identified the groups for inclusion in the consultation process, D.E.W.T had features which corresponded with the W.D.P's ideas about what constituted a community group, the body was area based and had an administrative structure in the form of a company limited by guarantee. Furthermore it had formal objectives that related to local economic development. It thus embodied many of the

features of the type of groups that the Partnership staff identified as local development bodies throughout the county. While it suited the group to be included in the consultation it also suited the Partnership to have them there. It is almost certainly the case that W.D.P would have targeted this group for inclusion regardless of the recommendations of any outside agency.

Even a brief consideration of the experience of this one group highlights the inherent weakness of the Partnerships approach to consultation. During this process the Partnership was attempting to involve groups that covered the entire county and favoured those that had a certain structure. Inevitably many of these were groups with which the C.E.P and the Partnership had worked previously. As we have seen, the extent to which these groups had actively sought to represent their areas as a whole, or to which these groups even wished to mobilise a larger degree of local participation was not a major consideration in this process. D.E.W.T had been established with the specific objective of supporting tourism interest, it had never sought to ensure wider local representation. Indeed even amongst its members the levels of participation sought had been minimal. In this case the group identified as this part of East Waterford's "representative" group had a limited membership with a very specific interest in tourism. This situation was made possible because in expanding the network of groups in the county, the partnership selectively identified and enrolled groups which shared its overall aim of local development through support for enterprise. In effect by conflating the terms community and economic development the partnership restricted involvement in the development network to groups with which it shared a great deal of common ground as regards what local development should be about.

Whether or not the consultation could be said to be truly representative, the participating groups were incorporated into a network around local development that was presented by the Partnership as being unequivocally so. Within this network these groups had negotiated a relationship with the Partnership. While some were able to earn concessions from the Partnership in return for their participation, in general the groups agreed with much of the partnerships approach to development. This was to be significant following the granting of LEADER II and L.D.P funds to Waterford. From mid-1994 onwards D.E.W.T along with other community groups came into more extensive contact with the Partnership. A member of its board was appointed to the board of the now renamed W.D.P. The group had further contact with the Partnership when the community forum was established. This forum

provided for accredited groups to be invited to quarterly¹⁴ meetings. There were to be a number of meetings held in different centres thus enabling participation by groups from different areas in the county closer to their own localities. Once a year a general session involving all of the groups in the county would also be held. The idea of accreditation was developed by the manager in order to, as he put it, make sure that only the serious groups were included. In order to be accredited groups had to be “suitably structured” and pay a small membership fee. By suitable structure the manager primarily meant that they should have a legal form and some sort of committee in place. In effect this restricted involvement to groups that had been incorporated as companies limited by guarantee and, though not explicitly stated, were area-based. This requirement ensured that the bulk of the groups in the forum were the same development groups that had been involved in the consultation. In effect groups such as D.E.W.T were confirmed in the role of representative bodies. As one of the organisations in the forum D.E.W.T was given the right to attend its area meeting and to attend the general meeting at which it could vote in the election of community representatives for the Board of W.D.P. The right to attend and vote at the general meeting was to be restricted to groups deemed by the Partnership to be fully accredited groups.

Thus the idea of a consultation as pursued by W.D.P continued to be less than inclusive. It was certainly not the case that D.E.W.T, the group chosen as the chief vehicle for transmitting the views of the Gaultier area ever sought to broaden the base of its own support. Nor did the Partnership expect it to do so. However the Partnership’s decision to identify such organisations as being capable of acting as bodies that represented the interests of their community is of considerable importance in considering the questions posed at the beginning of this chapter. The incorporation of groups such as D.E.W.T into a community forum clearly did not result in wider local participation. Indeed the manager was clear that practical rather than participatory considerations underlay both the consultation process and the selection of groups for inclusion in the forum. D.E.W.T was not invited to become involved simply because it happened to be in the right place at the right time. Groups like D.E.W.T matched the “mode of ordering,” that the Partnership was attempting to impose on development intervention, one that suggested a degree of consensus around local development priorities had been achieved by the Partnership through its consultation and

¹⁴ These were later reduced to bi-annual meetings.

engagement of local groups. These activities took on symbolic significance in relation to the formal development policy discourse surrounding LEADER II, in which the representative value of consultation itself transcended the pragmatic concerns which had influenced the selection of groups for inclusion in the forum. Again the cumulative effect of this process was to provide further evidence of the extent of grass roots support for the Partnership's economic development strategy. This in turn had practical implications establishing certain groups in a pivotal role as "representing" for the Partnership the pro-development forces in the area.

Of as much, if not more, significance to groups like D.E.W.T was the access that its involvement in the consultation gave it to the Partnership. The consultation established an arrangement between the W.D.P and groups such as D.E.W.T which, among other things, opened up the possibility of new funding arrangements for a range of possible actions for community groups. This position was further strengthened by W.D.P's manager who expressed the belief that the groups involved in the consultation had an important role to play in the future as an informal conduit for information and enquiries for the Partnership. Grant applications and the geographical spread of the Partnerships involvement in the east of the county were later to be heavily influenced by its relationship with D.E.W.T and similar groups. However, the extent to which D.E.W.T incorporated local opinion remained very limited. In effect the partnerships choice of the co-op as the areas representative group placed its members in a privileged position vis-à-vis the partnership.

9.5 D.E.W.T's expansion 1993 to 1997

So far, this chapter has attempted to trace the consequences of the Partnerships decision to involve certain groups in the consultation process. In the case of D.E.W.T we can see wide discrepancies between the models of community organisation embodied in the Partnerships own discourse and the actual process through which the Partnership conducts its relations with local communities. Prior to the consultation process D.E.W.T had concentrated its efforts on promoting tourism. However from FAS' point of view it was a group that had been successfully assisted through the CEP. What D.E.W.T offered to the Partnership was an entity with a formal structure that fitted its requirements. This combination of factors ensured that D.E.W.T came to be identified by both as a major local player, enjoying a degree of

influence due to the symbolic and practical significance given to it by the Partnership. This raises an additional question. Having become involved in the network, was it the case that the local groups were able to utilise this relationship to further their own projects, or were they compelled to adhere to the partnerships requirements? In the case of D.E.W.T the latter half of 1993 marked the beginning of a period during which the organisation expanded. In 1994 the group's plan for an enterprise centre submitted as part of its submission for LEADER II was also submitted to the newly established C.E.B which approved the application in early 1995. Initially it was intended to convert a building to act as office space for the group, provide a tourism office and offer a number of units that would be rented to small enterprises. Besides providing the organisation with an administrative base and tourist office, it involved them acquiring a substantial asset and finding the funds to finance the purchase by developing it as an enterprise centre. This new venture involved the body taking on an entirely new role. While D.E.W.T had no experience in property management or running enterprise centres, the development of such centres was at this time both an established strategy for community groups and one that the then recently established County Enterprise Boards could fund. As an increasingly recognised local development organisation D.E.W.T decision to apply for funding for the enterprise centre was in many senses a "natural next move" within the local development narrative, one for which state funding was available, which a number of community groups had attempted and which numerous agencies were sympathetic towards. Here is another example of the cumulative effects of encounters in the development network. In this case D.E.W.T was able to exploit its growing status as the areas "development organisation" to secure additional funding albeit in an area in which it had little expertise.

The purchase of the building occurred at the time when the Partnership was beginning the task of extending its operational area into the East of the county. In 1994 the manager of D.E.W.T left that job and joined W.D.P where he was given responsibility for operating the Partnership programme in East Waterford. His decision to accept the job was not greeted with approval within D.E.W.T. The fact that he left D.E.W.T at a crucial time in its development, while it was also involved in a consultation, and had to join the organisation that had been undertaking that consultation was perceived by some members to be the real reason why he had supported it. Further dissatisfaction with the Partnership followed when it rented an office in Kilmeadow to act as its base in East Waterford. According to some members of D.E.W.T. and the manager who replaced the individual who had gone on to

work with the partnership, that organisation's decision to rent an office in Kilmeadon, an area where no group was based and which was well outside the Barony, represented a slight. to D.E.W.T. Discover East Waterford Tourism had been at the forefront of the consultation process. Some figures in D.E.W.T suggested, and not without some justification, that the move to Kilmeadon was at the behest of their former manager who was reluctant to work in Passage East again. Waterford Development Partnerships decision not to locate in Passage presented an important practical difficulty to D.E.W.T. Its purchase of the enterprise centre and ability to meet subsequent loan repayments depended on the generation of income from the building itself. Again the new manager and some members claimed that there had been an understanding that W.D.P would establish an office in Passage East and this had been expected to provide some of the group's income. The Partnerships failure to do so together with the "poaching" of its manager, was taken to suggest that the Partnership had not lived up to its verbal undertakings or the spirit of the consultation process. Following a series of meetings the Partnership eventually did agree to move its eastern office to Passage East. The Partnerships positive response to the co-ops demands, indicate that D.E.W.T was indeed able to exert some pressure due to its involvement in the consultation. It also illustrates the difficulties facing the co-op in sustaining its proposed enterprise centre. The initial costs of purchasing the building had been financed by a combination of borrowings and grant assistance. After this, from the buildings purchase until the spring of 1995, the co-op had no paying tenants other than W.D.P. and after this only one more.

D.E.W.T's involvement with the Partnership provided it with increased credibility amongst funding organisations and access to new sources of funds. This inevitably influenced the course of the co-ops strategy. It may not be the case that the organisations decision to establish and subsidise the purchase of a property was only due to its involvement with the consultation and the local development network. However there is little doubt that this process helped to establish the group as a local economic development group of the type that both W.D.P and later the C.E.B were seeking to fund. However this proved to be something of a mixed blessing. Its enhanced status encouraged the group to look at undertaking a significant project, for which funding could be potentially sourced from one of a number of agencies then interested in funding community driven projects. Despite its lack of experience in such a venture the group appears to have been led on an almost inexorable path towards an involvement in programmes intended to support area based local enterprise groups. This ultimately resulted in it taking on the enterprise centre as a project. However having done so,

the organisation faced the on-going challenge of finding a means by which to equip and staff its new centre. Following on from its purchase, the problem of managing repayments on the premises became a prime concern of the co-op. This was particularly so for D.E.W.T's new manager, who in addition to being concerned with maintaining the loan, was also faced with the problem of generating sufficient funds to subsidise her own salary. This led D.E.W.T to pursuing even more funding through programmes which had nothing to do with its original agenda. In 1995 the group became involved in yet another form of funded activity when the Partnership opened discussions with a number of community groups to act as "front offices," for the new Local Employment Service (LES).¹⁵

The LES programme was introduced following two experiments with "customised," placement services in Dublin to assist unemployed people to find employment or further training and education. In 1995 all of the original 12 A.B.R partnerships were requested to submit plans for the implementation of LES in their area. Funds were to be made available for staff and capital costs. It was envisaged that under the scheme all would establish an employment service to assist long term unemployed and that this would be provided via accessible walk-in offices. Given the emphasis that W.D.P placed on support to private enterprise it was scarcely surprising that the manager did not relish the prospect of running such a service. In the first instance he disliked the degree of central control implied in the programme. While LEADER II and LDP both afforded considerable scope to the local partnerships LES was largely planned out at national level allowing only, limited scope for local variation. Secondly he felt that as a rural partnership serving an area with a scattered population and relatively low levels of unemployment, W.D.P would have difficulty in effectively implementing LES. This programme was based on pilot initiatives that had been developed in urban areas where populations were much more spatially concentrated making the "walk in" approach more practical. Finally he expressed the view that with such a low volume of new jobs being generated in the W.D.P area it would be unreasonable to expect a large number of suitable vacancies to arise in Waterford. Rather than attempting to identify suitable vacancies as they arose he believed his enterprise focussed drive to create jobs made more sense. To him the LES was being imposed in an arbitrary fashion on W.D.P which had long since adopted its own approach to the development of the area.

¹⁵ LES was an initiative aimed at providing a placement service for people seeking employment by matching clients with available vacancies in the locality or with referrals to training and guidance services.

While the manager's feelings were shared by many of the board members, the Partnership had no choice but to implement the programme. Faced with this situation the manager opted to devise a strategy that would "*turn a problem* (i.e. the implementation of LES) *into an opportunity*". While he regarded the LES as being of little value, additional resources would be provided through the programme to support local "contact points", walk in public offices through which prospective clients could access the service. The manager believed that by designating certain community groups as contact points he would be able to provide them with office equipment, enhanced telephone facilities and additional funding toward staffing costs. While these groups would "officially" receive funds to operate part of the LES the additional resources that would be allocated to them for this reason would subsidise their existing operating costs and provide them with additional equipment. In order to put this strategy into effect, between August 1995 and January 1997, W.D.P selected and undertook negotiations with a number of groups to act as a contact point for the new LES; D.E.W.T was one of the groups chosen.

It was the manager of W.D.P who identified the groups that he felt should be asked to become involved in the LES. In all cases the Partnership and not the groups themselves made the initial approach. The idea was "sold to" them chiefly on the basis that as LES contact points they would have access to additional equipment and funds. Subsequently, the inclusion of these groups in the LES was justified to the national LES programme with the claim that the groups had been selected using a specific set of criteria developed by the partnership for this purpose¹⁶. These criteria, the Partnership claimed, concerned the local groups' suitability to act as contact points. The criteria required that the group be well structured and have a suitable legal form, have suitably trained staff, a suitable premises in which to base an LES office and knowledge and experience of working with the unemployed. Thus for the purposes of implementing the LES the Partnership was claiming that D.E.W.T, an organisation primarily involved in tourism, had the capacity and an interest in working with the unemployed.

¹⁶ The manager had in fact decided on the groups he wanted to support and later wrote up criteria which supported his selection; these criteria were included in the action plan.

Becoming part of this service required D.E.W.T to further expand its operations away from its original core function of promoting tourism. This was not a result of any great desire on the part of the co-op to do so. It was the Partnership that initiated the proposals for D.E.W.T to become part of LES. Neither did it occur as a result of pressure from the unemployed in the community. They were neither consulted nor advised as to the new service prior to its creation. Rather the Partnership, trying to make the best use of an unwanted programme, offered D.E.W.T and other groups the opportunity to get involved as a means of enhancing their income base and facilities. Indeed the discussion between W.D.P and the groups in relation to the programme primarily focussed on the possibilities offered by these resources. Little if any discussion occurred about the proposed LES services itself. By early 1996, an agreement had been reached and the process of establishing an LES office in a number of localities, including Passage East, was underway.

As a result of its involvement with W.D.P and other organisations D.E.W.T grew from a relatively small organisation with an interest in developing tourism to a significant local development organisation within relatively short period of time. By 1996 the organisation represented an area in the W.D.P community forum, owned a substantial property, had significant financial responsibilities, hosted the eastern office of the partnership and had agreed to operate an LES contact point. Once again this illustrates the cumulative impact decisions in the local development process in reinforcing the position of the group. Having been enrolled into the partnership process, it became important for the Partnership and FAS to maintain the status of D.E.W.T as “the” community organisation in the area. The group acquired a certain status which made the decisions of FAS, the Partnership and the County Enterprise Board to collaborate with it an obvious one. In effect it became South East Waterford’s “official” community organisation attracting resources from a range of sources. As a consequence and in a relatively short space of time D.E.W.T rapidly expanded its activities to include a range of programmes. However despite its growing prominence as a community organisation at no time was D.E.W.T’s identification as such related to its capacity to represent the area’s people or to the extent to which it mobilised the wider community. Indeed even its claims to be able to manage projects were dubious. Rather the group’s rise to prominence was linked to the influence it enjoyed as a result of its participation firstly in the C.E.P, then in the partnerships consultation and later still through its success in attracting additional grants. Groups like D.E.W.T were identified for the consultation by reason of their structure, previous contact with state agencies and the

Partnership and the type of activities in which they were involved. The Partnership's selection of specific groups was further justified in economic terms. The groups that participated in the consultation process were expressly regarded as ones that had the potential to support and indeed to become involved in the development of new enterprises. Indeed this was part of a wider aspect of local development discourse, the very positive view that such policies took of the capacity of community based organisations to play a role in the development of enterprises. However a close consideration of DEWT suggests that the group displayed little capacity in this respect. What it did do was exhibit the type of characteristics which senior people in W.D.P associated with organisations which could deliver in an enterprise support role.

The belief that community groups had the ability and desire to engage in enterprise development was a significant feature of the local development policy discourse. It was embodied in the approach adopted by FAS in the C.E.P and it also informed the attitude of W.D.P and the C.E.B (although in a secondary role to that envisioned for private entrepreneurship). For funding agencies it was clearly desirable that such groups be identified and funded. The availability of such funds and the relative absence of suitable recipient groups, created a significant pull factor for organisations such as D.E.W.T, in the form of a range of available funding options. While not directly related to its original objective they provided additional sources of funding. In the case of D.E.W.T the result of its expansion was to generate a need for further and increased funding as it made investments and assumed growing financial responsibilities both for its manager's salary and other costs. Thus as the organisation expanded it took on a programme of work primarily defined by available funding rather than its own project or the interests of the wider community.

Two other features of the outcome of this organisations involvement in the Partnership are also significant. The first of these concerns the sustainability of its activities. The group had originally received support for the development of an enterprise centre on the basis of a business plan. This had envisioned a significant private rental income funding the capital and operating costs of the centre. However throughout this period, the centre had only one private sector tenant and the co-op remained totally dependent on state funding, either directly through grant assistance or indirectly through the rents and equipment provided by W.D.P. Moreover there was little to suggest that this situation was likely to change. Without the initial grant provided by the C.E.B and continued support from the partnership D.E.W.T's

“enterprise centre,” would have been unsustainable. Moreover the payment of the organisations manager also remained heavily dependent on the availability of funds from FAS, while the Department of Social Welfare supported the seasonal tourism office¹⁷. Far from moving towards an economically sustainable position the organisations entire operation was heavily and increasingly reliant on state funding; the subsidies increased as the organisation expanded its activities. This contributed to a second and perhaps even more significant issue concerning the extent to which the co-ops inclusion in the local development network led to the wider diffusion of benefits in the community. Far from attracting investment into the area the organisation itself was absorbing a substantial amount of funding. Like the Partnership itself D.E.W.T appears to have increasingly pursued an organisational survival strategy in which state funding from local development programmes was the core element of its income. This strategy was made possible by its involvement with FAS and W.D.P. Once identified and enrolled into the local development network D.E.W.T became the focus for further development activity by FAS, the Partnership and subsequently, other organisations. However rather than becoming a self-financing entity, as originally envisioned in the C.E.P, the group remained a creature of the agencies highly dependent on their support. While the group benefited from its incorporation into the local development network in terms of funding there was a price to be paid; a loss of autonomy and the dilution of its initial aims.

In this section we have highlighted the implications for D.E.W.T of its involvement in W.D.P. It was demonstrated that while it had some benefits there were many drawbacks, chief amongst which was a loss of the group’s autonomy and focus. It is also clear that the extent to which D.E.W.T embodied a local consensus about the question of the development of the area was not as clear as the model of local development employed by the Partnership suggested. The degree to which D.E.W.T or the policies it and the Partnership adopted diffused benefits to the wider local community is also unclear. In the remainder of this chapter we thus turn to those other local actors to consider their relationship with D.E.W.T and the local development network in order to establish the extent to which either diffused benefits to the wider local community.

¹⁷ Through a student summer job scheme a third level student was employed to work in the tourist office.

9.6 Other Voices - The fisheries and the co-operative

In the process of incorporating D.E.W.T into the network of actors associated with W.D.P. both organisations were involved in a consultation process which contributed to the construction of a specific idea about local development. While in some arena's, the LEADER II application being a prime example, the representative dimension of this process was stressed, in reality the consultation was driven by the view of the manager and senior figures within W.D.P. Its projected outcome, which was widely accepted by the groups invited to participate, was an approach to local development which involved support for enterprise. The consultation was a pragmatic exercise through which the Partnership would engage local players, such as D.E.W.T, who would support the Partnerships strategy and had an ability to get things done. The selective incorporation of people into the development network had a number of implications, some of which have been discussed above. In the remainder of this chapter we consider in more detail what implications the selection of certain local actors had on the other, excluded actors within that area.

One of the most obvious implications and one which has not been discussed in detail so far is the fact that the W.W.D.P consultation process was conducted on an invitation only basis meant that this was, by definition, a process which excluded other local actors. Indeed such exclusions were made explicit during the preparations for the consultation. This had a profound impact in the way that the development problems and solutions facing these areas were defined allowing the views of certain actors to dominate. Within this dominant perspective both D.E.W.T and W.D.P's analysis of the areas problems was that the traditional mainstays of employment in the area were in decline. Both organisations supported the view that there was a need for alternatives to these traditional economic activities. All of D.E.W.T's early activities related to the tourism sphere and these were presented as just such an alternative, while W.D.P concentrated most of its activities and funds on supporting businesses. The idea that the area was suffering from decline which could be best addressed through economic development, was central to both organisations strategy. There is little evidence that either group ever considered other options, indeed why should this be the case. Both were after all primarily representative of, and committed to, developing private enterprise. However the emphasis placed on perceptions of decline and the need for supporting economic alternatives did not constitute the only view held locally.

During this research it was clear that different voices were present in the locality, voices which highlighted different development priorities not considered in the consultation¹⁸.

One significant group which had not featured prominently in the W.D.P consultation was the area's fishing community. Both the Partnership and D.E.W.T identified decline in the fishery as a major concern and indeed such decline was one of the reasons used to support the development of new economic activity. However while both W.D.P and D.E.W.T advocated new economic responses to this and the areas other problems it is notable that none of the economic measures either organisation discussed were in any way directly targeted at those most affected by the decline in the fisheries. Neither did they have or even claim to represent the fishing industry in the area. While pointing to the fishery as an example of the economic problems facing the area neither organisation gave voice to individuals who were experiencing difficulties as a consequence of decline in that industry¹⁹. Indeed while W.D.P regarded D.E.W.T as the area's community organisation none of the areas unemployed or in fact members of other groups which experienced the type of difficulties that the local development discourse sought to address, were directly involved in the organisation. As we have already seen the manager of W.D.P saw some justification in this policy as in his pragmatic view it made more sense to deal with those local actors whom he believed were capable of achieving some success that would then trickle down to the wider community. However a consideration of groups such as the fishermen provides information that may be useful in exploring D.E.W.T's role in the areas development and its relationship with other sectors of the community.

What is immediately obvious about the fishing industry is that while scarcely mentioned by D.E.W.T a substantial element of the population in the area remained either directly or indirectly involved. Boats are based at Cheekpoint and Passage East and at the larger Harbour at Dunmore East. The facilities at Cheekpoint and Passage East are poor, with old quays that suffered from silting and tidal flooding. (See image 9.1) However Dunmore East possessed one of the Irish Republic's few commercially significant fishing ports (Image 9.2).

¹⁸ It should be remembered that the Partnership staff had striven to avoid conflict during the consultation hence the "management," of the two public meetings. The individual meetings had been held with individual groups at no stage did different groups representing different interests in the same area encounter each other.

¹⁹ The one exception to this was the manager of a local shell fish company who had attended the information meetings but had not been involved in the follow up meetings.

Dunmore East is located in a small natural bay ringed by a horseshoe shaped cliff. Large quantities of white fish and herring were landed there and the harbour played host to large numbers of trawlers at different times of the year. This included both local boats, based there year round and large trawlers that stay in the area for only a brief period of time. The harbour itself is also notoriously congested (Image 9.3). It is shared by a combination of smaller half deck boats and large trawlers. While there are some large locally based vessels, many of the larger boats specialise in certain catches and only visit the area at specific times of the year. According to some of the local fishermen the larger boats create particular problems for the smaller ones as the latter are at considerable risk from damage if they come into contact with the larger vessels. For the fishing crews the overcrowding causes problems in operating the boats. Finding moorings can be difficult, as is manoeuvring in and out of the harbour and offloading. Further expansion of this area can only be achieved through extensions into the bay itself and indeed the Quays have been extended periodically (Image 9.2). While in general the national fishery was regarded as being in decline this period actually saw some significant new E.U. supported investments in Dunmore East. Grant aid had been given to individual fishermen for the upgrading of vessels and the purchase of safety gear. In addition the period 1992 to 1995 saw investments in large processing units, the harbour's industrial buildings house processing units, a ships outfitters and marine engineering facilities and give the area the appearance of a small and overcrowded industrial estate.



Image 9.1 Passage East Harbour, the (www.marinas.com)



Image 9.2 Dunmore East Harbour (www.marinas.com)



Image 9.3 Congestion problems at Dunmore East. The edge of a steel pontoon is just visible in the bottom left corner (www.marinas.com)

Despite its problems fishing continues to be an important economic activity and those involved in the industry represent a significant subset of the local population. A number of organisations represent the interests of those involved in the fishing industry. However while

the Partnership had actively engaged in dialogue with D.E.W.T who's membership was relatively affluent, its contacts with the fishing community were limited. Discussions relating to the LEADER II application or other funding arrangements or projects in which the Partnership was engaged did not involve fishermen. In part this was attributed to the problem of engaging the fishermen. While groups like D.E.W.T were easily identifiable from their contacts with the Partnership and previously with FAS, in the case of the fishermen it was much more difficult to identify spokespeople or organisations that had the type of structure that the Partnership favoured. However it was also the case that the Partnership made little effort to contact the fishing community. Whereas W.D.P had actively sought community organisations they made only limited efforts to involve themselves with the fishing community²⁰, there were for example no formal representatives of the fishing industry on the organisations board and during the consultation process described in the previous chapter, the fishing industry was represented by only one person. The issue of identification also proved to be a difficulty for the conduct of this research. The type of community organisations that were actively engaged in the consultation and which had previously been supported by W.D.P and the C.E.P tended to contain in their ranks numerous local development activists. Such activists could be easily identified and approached and were often more than ready to give information. Many of them were in fact closely linked to the Partnership board and FAS C.E.P programme. In the fishing community it was necessary to rely heavily on informal contacts made during the course of fieldwork in order to identify useful collaborators, a much more time consuming process. In addition there was little or no documentary evidence available as regards the fishing community's views on the areas development. Rather it was necessary to rely heavily on the personal insights of individuals and small groups of fishermen.

One such individual was brought to the researcher's attention through his involvements in efforts to establish a project to protect Lobster stocks in the area. When he was asked to explain the issues he considered to be of importance to the future of the areas development,

²⁰ During its initial start up the Partnership conducted a brief, needs assessment survey in the Ardmore area some 7 miles west of Dungarvan following representations from the areas enterprise group on behalf of the areas fishermen. This study had argued that as fish catches in the area were not producing a satisfactory income alternative income was needed. No actions arose from the survey (McNamara 1993 unpublished). While the partnership did invest some funds in oyster cultivation under the A.B.R the largest of these projects was operated by a group of investors with no prior experience in the fishing industry.

he suggested a tour of the harbour at Dunmore as a means of explaining what the area's problems were. Throughout this tour he was anxious to establish the problems faced by the fishermen, demonstrating the inadequacies of the current facilities. He was also anxious to show that his views were widely shared bringing other fishermen into the conversation. The inadequate facilities were on more than one occasion interpreted by him as evidence of a wider problem of the "governments" lack of concern for fishermen. The harbour's two quays consist of an older one to the east the original parts of which date back to the 19th century. The inner quay was developed more recently and consists of a concrete surface, supported by a series of concrete piles. Depending on tides these allow cavernous spaces of three to six metres below the dock, smaller boats are unable to land or even to tie up at these quays. Indeed he said that in bad weather it was not unknown for smaller boats to be washed under the quay suffering damage as a result. In order to facilitate the smaller boats two large steel pontoons or floating docks are secured to the new quay. Getting on and off the smaller boats requires a descent down steel ladders hanging over the side of the dock onto the pontoons. The pontoons were in poor repair, severely rusted and according to him unstable in rough weather. While some of the smaller boats tie up at the older east quay to land fish, most are moored at the pontoons. (image 9.3). This fisherman cited the poor condition of the pontoons as evidence of the authority's lack of respect for the requirements of small fishing boats and their crews. According to him the pontoons had been installed years earlier as a "temporary measure" and twenty years on no plans were in place to replace them with a safer or more permanent structure.

He contrasted the conditions under which the smaller boats were forced to operate with the facilities provided for the larger fishing vessels, which Dunmore accommodates. The quays are more suited to their needs as is the national dry docking facility located there. The presence of new factory premises was also contrasted to the pontoons. He used their presence as further proof that the more recent developments in the Harbour favoured larger deep sea fishing vessels and on shore commercial interests many of which were in his view not locally owned. BIM, the national agency with responsibility for fisheries development was also criticised. It was felt that they offered more support for the larger operators. He further suggested that the larger boats engaged in what he described as wasteful and destructive practices such as bottom trawling and fish dumping (see below) which damaged the marine environment and fish stocks.

He was also critical of the leisure boats that made use of the facility. Indeed some of his colleagues' principal expressions of annoyance were reserved for the leisure craft owners and tourists who, by contrast were in the eyes of D.E.W.T a vital ingredient in the areas future prosperity. Dunmore is a popular harbour for leisure boats of whose owners the fishermen were scathing suggesting that these individuals lacked sailing skills, good manners and safety habits. Pointing out one yacht, which was moored, to the side of one of the large trawlers one of the fishermen cited this as a typical example of the problems that yachts created in the harbour. The yacht hadn't been moored properly rather it was simply tied to the next boat. This, he explained, would delay the other boats, which would if they wished to pull out have to untie the yacht, pull out and then re-moor it. The views of this fishermen and his colleagues points to the existence of at least one alternative perspective on the areas development which suggests the existence of antagonisms between different groups of resource users. Rather than alternative industries or employment he and his colleagues stressed the need for infrastructure development and measures to improve and protect fishing stocks. For him decline in the fishery was not an inevitable and irreversible process but was rather related to policies that had handicapped small fishing operators and favoured larger ones as well as tourism promoters. A second feature of his comments was that he did not perceive the fishing industry as a single entity. Rather he contrasted the conflicting interest of small locally based fishermen with those of the operators of larger and more destructive trawlers. The issues were not simply economic but were also political and moral. This was one of the rare occasions in Waterford when any one speaking for any local group employed concepts of fairness in support of their position. He argued that small local fishermen had a right to fish and did so using more environmentally friendly methods than their larger competitors.

As the study progressed it emerged that a number of resource issues in the area were giving rise to considerable local debate. Far from the local consensus on the areas needs the views of D.E.W.T represented only one view of what the areas principal problems were and what development priorities should be. Not only did different local groups have different priorities, these priorities were in direct conflict with those of other local groups, conflicts that W.D.P largely failed to incorporate into its approach to the areas development. Whether this was justifiable to the Partnership for pragmatic reasons or because of the difficulties of dealing with some of the marginalised groups involved, it does indicate that as a strategy the consultation process did not result in the incorporation of the views or concerns of some

significant elements in the local population. Far from enabling the wider diffusion of benefits in the local community, its failure to recognise the importance of conflicting ideas on the use of the areas local resources compounded the extent to which the views of least one local group, the fishing community, were excluded from decisions as to the future development of the area.

9.7 Resource conflict in the Suir Estuary

The data presented in the previous section of this chapter calls into question the idea that through its consultation efforts W.D.P had successfully achieved a local “*consensus around the agreed goals of development*”. Rather it suggests that its actions resulted in the adoption of a particular approach to local development which reflected the interests of certain local and national actors to the exclusion of others. This observation illustrates the value and indeed the necessity, of conducting an in-depth examination of how such events play out in order to understand how local development programmes work. Such an in-depth examination reveals additional facts that also enable us to address the critical question of how power is worked out in local development projects. In this case we see that far from acting as a mechanism through which local input into the development process could be directed, the consultation process had the effect of advancing the development priorities of certain locals while excluding those of others. This observation raises another possibility. Is it the case that when introduced in an area these ideas provide certain local actors with a resource which they can employ in support of their own projects? In other words what wider effect does the introduction of a local development programme have on the working out of power in a locality?

This issue is considered in more detail in this section of the chapter by examining local controversies which occurred in the Barony during the period of this study. The first concerned a proposal to develop Dunmore East Harbour area as a marina for leisure craft. As already mentioned a considerable number of leisure boats use the existing facilities at Dunmore and it was anticipated that growth in tourism would increase these numbers. Throughout the period studied considerable debate occurred in Dunmore East as to the possibilities of extending the use of the harbour as a marina to capitalise on this prospect. In 1994 the County Council announced a plan for the construction of a new marina complex of floating quays at Dunmore. The Council had not involved the area’s fishermen or the local

harbour development committee, which represented the interests of the harbours commercial fishery users, prior to announcing their decision to proceed with the development. The design and location of the new structures was criticised by local fishermen in particular. The new marina would be located at the northern end of the Harbour extending into the area of water to the north of the harbour proper. Representatives of the harbour users claimed that this would hinder entry to the harbour during high tides and poor weather when boats manoeuvre to the north of the harbour in order to enter it. Furthermore the location of the new structure would limit any possibility of further expansion of the fishing harbour itself. The fishermen saw the failure of the planners to identify such practical problems as an indication of the relatively low priority given to their concerns. The proposed marina was seen by one of them as evidence of the fact that the “government” lacked an understanding of the actual workings of the harbour. The decision to locate the new marina at this particular location was further resented because it deliberately avoided any encroachment on the strand further north. This is a blue flag beach and is generally perceived to be on the “tourist,” side of the town with some bed and breakfasts and holiday homes located facing onto the beach.

The announcement of these councils plans were thus greeted with considerable opposition in. Public meetings were organised in opposition to the proposal. When asked to attend, the County Manager initially declined. This was viewed by those who organised the protest as further evidence of his indifference to their concerns. Their response was to call further meetings objecting to the marina. At these meetings, in the words of one organiser they “*made damn sure the county manager turned up*”. The means by which this was achieved was through increasing the degree of publicity attached to protests over the proposal in particular with the use of the local media. In the face of what had become surprisingly vocal protests the County Manager finally conceded. Subsequently the project was, at least in the short term, placed on hold.

Despite their representative claims and the significance of the debate to the question of the areas future, both D.E.W.T and W.D.P avoided any involvement in the controversy. Instead an ad hoc group representing local concerns coalesced around the issue without the support of professional development staff or indeed of any “official” community groups. The incident illustrates two things. Firstly despite its claim to embody local concerns W.D.P chose to adopt the position that this issues lay outside its remit. In addition the local development groups favoured by W.D.P were shown to be largely irrelevant to significant

segments of local opinion. Given the way that D.E.W.T and W.D.P defined development and the development process this is not unexpected. Both were focussed on supporting new economic activities and in particular tourism and given that each drew its members from a local elite it would have been more surprising had they suddenly acquired an interest in events that appeared to have had little or nothing to do with their own interests or their version of what constituted development. However subsequent disputes arising in Passage East in 1995 and 1996 suggest that the differences between the development agenda operated by D.E.W.T and the interests of the fishermen ran deeper. They also illustrate what happened when such interests came into direct conflict. In 1995 the Passage East Car Ferry Company announced plans to expand its operation. It purchased a new and larger ferry, which offered the potential for an increased capacity on the route. To accommodate the new ferry the company would also have to carry out ancillary works, which included the extension of its existing mooring facility at Passage. This simply involved the construction of a new mooring post described as a mooring duck some 10 metres further into the estuary than the existing timber structure. The company argued that the work was needed if the new ferry was to become operational and the service remain viable. Aside from the two managers and their administrator the new ferry would it was expected secure the jobs of six people in Passage East.

Prior to these proposals opposition to the existing ferry service had already been voiced. Since the service was re-introduced in 1993 it had been claimed that increases in traffic had caused structural problems for houses in the village, local pedestrians had been endangered, local business had been hampered and levels of noise and air pollution had increased. Indeed some time prior to the proposed expansion of the service a petition had been circulated in the village. A small group of objectors had also alleged that the ferry had broken the law by carrying vehicles that were heavier than were permitted under regulations. The announcement of plans to use a larger ferry revived the protests in the summer of 1995. As in the case of the Dunmore objectors, in Passage East the protests were undertaken by a loose association of local people. The strategy this group adopted was similarly based on public meetings and protest in which the media was involved. The case made by the objectors was based primarily on concerns over the environmental impact of increased levels of traffic for the village. It was claimed that the ferry posed a threat to the village's children and to fisheries in the area. The accusation that the ferry was carrying heavy goods vehicles through the village was also raised leading to suggestions that this would cause structural damage.

Following a public meeting attended by the ferry company's management, the objectors placed pickets on the ferry slipway in Passage East. It is worth noting that in Ballyhack, the village on the Wexford bank of the estuary, where the ferry lands there were no protests.

For its part the ferry company disputed all the points made by the protestors. In relation to the potential environmental impacts of the additional traffic they claimed that these were exaggerated. While the number of cars increased as a result of the introduction of the ferry. They argued that given that it took 30-40 minutes per return trip and that outside of early morning and late afternoon the passenger loads were light. The impact of a small number of light vans and private cars on the areas environment and safety was minimal. Indeed the protestors had produced no evidence of actual damage to the local environment or serious road accidents having occurred in the area as a result of the ferry. Furthermore they argued that the concerns raised by the protesters about the potential environmental harm were simply untrue. In relation to the protesters complaints over damage to the marine environment the company pointed out that the design of both the old and new ferries had an extremely shallow draft. They pass through areas of the estuary, which carry large ships on a regular basis, to suggest the ferry caused large-scale disturbance was illogical. In relation to the protestors claim that the ferry company had broken the law as regards the size of vehicles carried they also refuted this claim. The ferry company was under no legal obligation not to carry heavy goods vehicles. As a gesture of good will they had voluntarily imposed weight restrictions on the size of vehicles the ferry could carry. This undertaking had been broken only once when a piece of heavy construction equipment was brought across at the request of a local. They also made the point that in an area of high unemployment the company offered steady employment to a number of local people.

In ways that were similar to the arguments deployed in Dunmore East the protestors attempted to depict the issue as involving a conflict between local people and their interests with more powerful outsiders. As evidence of the company's bad faith they claimed that they had not been consulted as regards the ferry. Furthermore they claimed that the company had broken the law. When considered in detail however the claims of the protestors were less than watertight. Evidence as to the degree of congestion, structural damage, traffic related accidents and environmental pollution was never produced. The ferry owners based their response to the protestors on claims about the service's contribution to the area's economic wellbeing. They could point to the number of people employed on the ferry as evidence of its

value to the local economy. They also questioned the motivations of the leaders of the protests. One of these owned a house on the waterfront and ran a small catering business they also operated an unregistered bed and breakfast in the property²¹. In 1993 she applied for and was refused planning permission to open a fast food shop in the property, supposedly as a result of concerns raised by the Gardai as to safety which in turn was related to a concern over the volume of traffic passing the projected entrance of the shop. It was implied that her objection as to the ferry was related to her concern over the bed and breakfast and desire to open a fast food outlet. The Ferry Company's assistant manager also described the way the protest was conducted to discredit the protestors and throw doubt on their motives. Referring to a public meeting which he had been asked to attend he described it as an "ambush". He claimed that he had been asked to attend a small private meeting with representatives of the protestors. However on arriving in the hall he and a colleague were met by a group of over forty people. Rather than a discussion they were subjected to heated criticisms by this group and demands for the cancellation of the ferry service. Following their attendance of the public meeting the company's management decided not to engage in further contact with the group as in the assistant manager's view it was useless trying to placate them. He also said that during another meeting a petition was circulated to those attending the meeting which objected not only to the Ferry, but also to proposals for a plan to construct a mooring dock for passenger liners to the North of the town and to proposals for a marina in Passage East. While the latter two ideas had been discussed there were at this time no firm proposals for either. He suggested that objections to these ideas showed that the group were simply hostile to any change in the area. During the protests he claimed that the picketers conduct had been threatening. They had spat and shouted abuse at cars getting onto the ferry. He suggested that the protest had been orchestrated by a hostile local element that simply opposed the ferry or any other change in the area for the sake of doing so. As a marginal element he believed that left to itself the opposition to the ferry would simply die out. On the last occasion on which I spoke to him this appeared to have been the case. The picketers had been reduced to two or three people whom he described as "just bitter". The new ferry was eventually brought into service.

²¹ By unregistered Bed and Breakfast he was referring to the fact that the owners had not registered the premises with Bord Failte. This was a voluntary system of registration through which Bed and Breakfasts which attained certain standards were registered as approved by the Board Failte and were thus included in that organisation's lists of approved accommodation. Registration was not compulsory, subject to compliance with taxation, fire and other safety requirements people could operate quite legitimately as unapproved Bed and Breakfasts.

Unlike the dispute in Dunmore East, this dispute had a very direct bearing on the interests of D.E.W.T. The ferry company was a supporter of D.E.W.T and was represented on its Board, yet as with the dispute in Dunmore East D.E.W.T did not involve itself in this dispute. Informally the manager and board were sympathetic to the position of the ferry company. They largely agreed with the economic argument that the ferry operators made as to the value of the service to the area. They also largely agreed with the suggestions that the protestors had questionable motives. Members of D.E.W.T who expressed private opinions about the ferry dispute interpreted the villagers' actions in equally negative terms. They pointed to the confrontational attitude of the protestors and their use of the media to highlight the problem as being un-productive and dishonest, a fact re-enforced by the suggestion that deeper personal motivations were involved. Some also stated that the protest was part of on-going resistance to any change one stating "*the majority of people in the area are fine and get on with things, but there is a crowd in the village you could do nothing with*". They presented a number of examples in support this view such as the experience of one local family who had been active in tidy towns and church affairs for example "*they spent effort planting tubs of flowers only to have them pulled out after the weekend*". It was also claimed that an English couple that had moved into the area suffered intimidation while an American retiree had been "ripped off". These were cited as examples of what was described by representatives of the state agencies, the partnership and indeed by members of the board of D.E.W.T as "The Passage mentality".

It was suggested by some of these commentators that this mentality could be attributed to the extensive levels of welfare take up in the area. This, it was suggested, led to a lack of willingness on the part of local people to support any new developments. Villagers were described as lacking respect for the value of money and property. One worker described her experiences during the summer when a group of locals used to congregate outside her office during the afternoon. "*I have them sat against the window all day chatting and smoking. If you go out on the path you see nothing but cigarette butts. It wouldn't occur to them to do something about the litter; they have no civic pride.*" Employees of state bodies, development organisations as well as members of D.E.W.T the researcher spoke to suggested that the dependency culture was so profound that it was no longer worth spending time on those with negative attitudes. Instead they concentrated on working with those who were, in their view, willing. An extension of this argument was that the groups heading the protests

simply did not want to co-operate. Indeed they didn't even reflect the views of the wider population of the area rather they took on the appearance of a dissatisfied and marginalised group.

For their part while the protestors formal concerns related to practical and environmental concerns privately they would raise other objections these concerned the question of who should decide what is good for the village. One asking "*Why can't people leave the village alone, what benefit does it (The ferry) have for the village. Why can't they just let us go on the way we always have, this village carried on in its own way for years and years and years. Look at the ferry all it does is create disruption for people it disrupts everything. Where else would you get one-way streets in a village this size have you ever seen like. These people are just coming in and making money for themselves*". In his eyes and in the eyes of a number of locals the ferry was of no benefit to the village. It belonged to outsiders who had no interest in the village. The basis of his opposition was less the environmental impacts than the fact that the villagers' compensation for these intrusions by outsiders was minimal and that it represented one of a succession of efforts by outsiders to exploit the area. For the protestors as well as the ferry's supporters the debate may have been ostensibly based on specific concerns over safety, pollution and structural damage. However privately they also spoke of the conflict as one between outside influences interested in exploiting the area and the rights of the local population. On both sides the dispute had a wider significance as a conflict over the areas future.

Both these disputes suggest that the situation in this area was a complex one in which local groups were in some instances in direct conflict over the use of local resources. In this context the extent to which the claims made by W.D.P for its consultation process and its wider ability to encapsulate the broader views of the local community ring particularly hollow. Far from resolving potential areas of local conflict and assisting locals to agree a common framework for development the Partnership at best appears ineffective. At worst it appears to add weight to the validity of a certain perspective on the area's development which suits one group of local actors over others. While D.E.W.T may have produced images of local development that matched the ideas of the Partnership it is clear that all those living in the communities in which that organisation operated did not share its views on development. In this case sections within the community that had limited involvement in the

consultation process raised the objections. Their needs and concerns differed considerably from the interests of D.E.W.T.

9.8 Conclusion

In the discourse surrounding W.D.P's activities words like consultation and development were of central importance in making its case as a local development body, and in achieving the dominance of a certain approach to local development. W.D.P's decision to involve certain groups in the network of actors and objects that developed around a local development programme initiated an on-going relationship between the Partnership and the community groups in question. This had the potential to generate a range of issues three of which are considered in detail here. The first is the degree to which the community group in question, D.E.W.T, actually represented all the interests of the area. This is significant since it formed the rationale behind its selection by the Partnership in the first place. It also has important implications for the Partnership's claims to have established a framework for local development embracing consultation. The second question relates to the implication of this for the Community Group. What impact did its involvement in the Partnership have on D.E.W.T? The third concerns the implication that the selection of a specific group has to the wider community in which it is situated. Taken together these three issues help to address the wider question of the extent to which the Partnership achieved what it claimed to achieve through a participative approach.

The first part of this chapter focused on the experience of D.E.W.T from its formation through the period during which it was incorporated into the Partnership's development network. It is possible to conclude that the Partnerships selection of D.E.W.T was shaped by a number of related factors which collectively had a bearing on that group's ability to "represent" the area. Firstly the group was made up of people who were experienced in engaging with the local state. They had the social contacts, political and business skills necessary to articulate their demands. This helped the group to secure the support of FAS's C.E.P. In this case a programme that in terms of both its methods and resources embody a considerable element of training designed for the needs of groups with weak managerial skills was employed to form a group consisting of local tourism operators who were interested in promoting the development of tourism in the area. Of immediate significance is

the fact that while its employees constantly stressed that the programme was involved in encourage community development the C.E.P was most amenable to a specific type of group made up of local individuals who were the most familiar with the management practices and administrative procedures that the programme was intended to provide. In many ways the programme attracted those least in need of its inputs and in this case did little to encourage the group to become more representative.

Having become established as part of the network of FAS C.E.P groups it was almost inevitable that once FAS became involved in the consultation process this group would also be drawn in. As noted in the previous chapter FAS was anxious to present the C.E.P as a community development activity. It was thus in that organisations interests to put the group forward as one of “its” eastern community organisations. Discover East Waterford Tourism’s subsequent inclusion followed logically from FAS’s desire to maintain its involvement in the area of community development. However it is also worth noting that from the Partnership viewpoint the group’s structure, willingness to comply with the Partnership development model and its analysis of the areas needs met the Partnership’s requirements. When it came to the business of negotiating a common frame of meaning the group and the Partnership were actually quite similar in their understanding of the areas situation and most effective development strategy. It is also worth noting that while D.E.W.T agreed to participate in the consultation process its final submission differed radically from the format suggested by the partnership. Detailing projects of interest to the organisation. Indeed it is not clear that D.E.W.T itself was particularly interested in development other than as it affected tourism. It appears more to be the case that the Partnership and FAS had an interest in portraying the group in this role, enabling the Partnership to use it as an example of local participation and FAS to use it as an example of its community development activities.

However the inclusion of D.E.W.T in the consultation did not simply achieve a short-term objective for the Partnership but established and consolidated the position of certain local actors at the expense of others. The process of incorporating the organisation into its development network involved negotiation during which D.E.W.T and the Partnership sought to devise a common understanding of the issues that they confronted and what the process of development involved. In this respect D.E.W.T offered the Partnership an image of the area and of what represented local development strategy broadly in line with its own. Through its actions it contributed to maintaining this new image of the area. In effect

D.E.W.T developed a new hybrid identity within which the roles of local actors are defined in line with the interests of the tourism industry. Indeed the term Barony of Gaultier was itself revived by the group to promote it as a location for tourism. However D.E.W.T's actual ability to represent the development concerns of the wider community in which it operated is highly questionable. The very factors that made it a useful group to W.D.P were ones which restricted the number of members in the organisation and also the extent to which it represented the wider community. D.E.W.T never had or did make any effort to incorporate a wider degree of local representation nor did the partnership ask it to. Nevertheless throughout the period the Partnership continued to involve D.E.W.T in its consultative forum as a community group.

The Partnership's decisions to involve this particular group and not to involve others is of major significance both to understanding the way that it defined the areas local identity and also to the way it "consulted" local communities. In the Barony there was little participation by any locals who were not involved in tourism in discussion about the area's development. Those with an interest in the allocation of resources towards ends other than the further expansion of the tourism industry or into new entrepreneurial ventures were effectively excluded, not through a deliberate effort by the Partnership but because of the failure of both FAS and the Partnership to recognise and engage groups with alternative perspectives on the area's development. Neither did any groups emerge with the ability or contacts to articulate such perspectives. Nevertheless the disputes that arose later suggest that other locals had very different views on the way that the areas resources should be used.

In incorporating D.E.W.T into its network the Partnership was effectively making a judgement call, adding credibility and a certain level of legitimacy to the tourism interest over other interests in the area. As defined by D.E.W.T the area was one that had little going for it except tourism. It was an image which scarcely made mention of the role of fishing, industry or agriculture. In the events that occurred during the incorporation of D.E.W.T into the partnership's network the specific strategies adopted by individual actors are extremely important. It must be recalled that actors in specific points in the network controlled information flows within the Partnership and the groups with which it was engaged. In this regard those who had control of the information flows tended to be the staff of the respective organisations. Through the extensive involvement they had in the consultation process the staff had a crucial role in determining the significance of other actors in the network. In this

case the first manager of D.E.W.T was highly influential. The provision of funding for his position was controlled by the C.E.P programme run by FAS while W.D.P offered the prospect of additional funds becoming available through the LEADER II programme. It was thus in D.E.W.T's managers interest to co-operate both with FAS and W.D.P as they represented the co-operatives best chance of survival as an entity capable of sustaining a fulltime manager. Furthermore the manager employed by the co-operative was also involved with the C.E.P during the consultation. It was clear this person would find it relatively easy to work with the partnership staff-he "spoke the same language". In addition the board and management of D.E.W.T showed little enthusiasm for becoming involved in the body's day to day operations. The manager enjoyed considerable control over the organisations actions and during the consultation assumed responsibility for the organisations contact with the Partnership and the final submission.

The concerns with this staff member focussed not so much on the actual question of representing the interests of the community in which D.E.W.T was based, so much as on potential benefits of the consultation process for D.E.W.T. This brings into focus the second issue addressed in this chapter that of the impact of its involvement on D.E.W.T. Once the partnership had enrolled the organisation, it experienced the "benefits" of this situation. D.E.W.T enjoyed a new status as a community group which enabled it to access further funds and expand its operations. However the imperative of ensuring the organisation was able to finance its expanded operations and the manager's job had a significant impact on its development. At no point was the organisation sustainable without considerable support from the Partnership and state agencies. Ultimately the choice of projects and actions undertaken by the group was influenced by the criteria under which state funding was available. New activities undertaken by D.E.W.T were chosen because they were eligible for funding. Once initiated these activities required further funding which was again sourced from the state. In effect this meant that the group increased its dependence on the statutory sector for funding, seeking out potential new sources of income from the various state bodies supporting development. Despite the emphasis in the community enterprise model on identifying and pursuing projects which were economically sustainable. Here, the organisations strategy focussed entirely on the state as the means of securing the income necessary to sustain its activities and indeed expand them. In order to do so D.E.W.T displayed a willingness to adjust its activities accordingly. It was not simply following funding in order to survive but was employing this strategy in order to sustain its expansion through a form of public sector

entrepreneurship, despite the fact that the membership of the organisation remained primarily interested in promoting tourism. As a consequence the group was brought increasingly into line with the interests of bodies operating programmes to support local development. The employment of a professional worker, an individual who was de-facto dependent on the state's good will for their job consolidated this situation. It is doubtful that the resultant expansion of the organisations role was ultimately to benefit the group. In the latter part of the period under discussion the organisation continued to experience difficulties funding repayments on the building purchased in Passage East. As the number of programmes in which the organisation was involved increased, the managers' time was increasingly taken up administering programmes that only indirectly related to the organisations original role as a tourism organisation. Indeed some of the promotional activities it had initiated suffered as the managers time was diverted to other activities. In 1997 the Power Clan rally and mussel festival were less successful than previously. Since the research ended the group has been wound up with the facility at Passage East closed.

The final part of the chapter examined the experience of the Fishing community in the area. D.E.W.T had little or no involvement in the area's fishery. Likewise the Partnership itself made little effort to engage the fishermen. Rather both organisations emphasised that alongside other traditional economic activities in the area, decline in the fishery proved that there was a need for new forms of employment. However this was far from an uncontested representation of the area's economy or of local needs and priorities. In effect D.E.W.T was the author of a new local identity that reconstituted aspects of the area's past and geography in line with its own interests. It is an account in which fishing, for example, played a limited role even though fishing remained a significant activity in the area. The fishermen themselves outlined an entirely different development agenda in which the main issues revolved around State neglect and their demands for improved facilities rather than the need to introduce of alternatives to the fishery. To them, the current interest in tourism in the form of the marina and the new ferry were examples of the State's lack of support for their cause. While the Partnership and D.E.W.T gave the impression that what they were involved in was a new development drive which was operating in the face of inevitable forces of change, for the fishermen these issues were ones in which certain parties such as the state and tourism interests were actually working against them. The fact that the fishermen were largely excluded from the consensus approach embraced in the consultation process by both D.E.W.T and the Partnership led to their effective non-existence in the Partnerships

development strategy. When faced with crises the fishermen reverted to more confrontational approaches when dealing with other interest groups. While disputes were based around specific issues, such as the environmental damage done by the ferry at Passage East, a more in depth consideration of the underlying reasons for these differences shows that in part at least they involved struggles over the areas identity, between those within D.E.W.T who saw the area primarily as tourism territory and those with an interest in other forms of economic activity.

In Passage East, the existence of D.E.W.T and of a powerful development agenda increased the degree of marginalisation experienced by the fishermen and others whose interests were not allied with those of D.E.W.T. Moreover the language of development gave added support to the ferry and its backers while increasing the degree to which the locals opposed to the development could be portrayed negatively as being “anti-development”. It is possible to conclude that an examination of the actual processes that occurred in this area reveal that development initiatives prompted a very strategic uses of notions of local identity and of local participation. The Partnership’s own claims to have achieved a degree of local participation conceal conflicts between groups with radically different ideas about the best use of the area’s resources. Conflicting ideas about local identity and forms of local knowledge which had not been a feature of the Partnership’s consultation emerged later during the implementation of development programmes.

This situation involves the kind of struggle for symbolic ownership of the countryside referred to by Bruckmier and Tovey (2009). They involve the working out of the interface with the interveners and those who are the subjects of that intervention. Within these areas groups of locals also compete over the legitimacy of different views as to their area’s future and the best use of its natural and economic resources. The development initiative implemented here effectively stimulated new forms of identity amongst locals at the expense of others. Its impact was to provide the tourism operators with a useful resource. The Partnership’s efforts to suggest a degree of local consensus was effective in suppressing the interests of certain groups as it gave credence to others.

What the final part of the chapter demonstrates is the extent of diversity in even the most confined of localities. Local groups operate in the context of different social networks. They pursue a variety of strategies in order to carry out projects that reflect their own interests.

Rather than helping to resolve local differences the Partnership contributed to the resources available to one particular group of local actors, members of the local business community and tourism operators. Operating under the imperative of achieving some evidence of local support it added further legitimacy to this group as it operated within a framework broadly matching its own developmental model, while if anything exacerbating local divisions and ultimately undermining the efforts of D.E.W.T itself by rendering it increasingly dependent on outside support. In the ensuing disputes those allied to the development discourse were able to draw on the legitimacy that involvement with the Partnership conferred on them to depict their opponents as conservative, negative and even as anti-development. Yet it was precisely the negative effects of welfare dependency and alienation attributed to these people that the Partnership programme was intended to address. For the protestors too the debate came to be depicted in highly charged terms as a conflict between outside influences interested in exploiting the area and the rights of the local population.

While the community development groups were recruited into the Partnership's development framework because of their capacity to provide a mechanism through which local views were solicited and local needs addressed, the final section of this chapter also considers the capacity of one such group, D.E.W.T, to provide such a mechanism. It is clear that during the disputes that occurred over both the marina and the ferry it was entirely ineffective in this role. Indeed as an organisation D.E.W.T avoided direct involvement in controversy. Rather than developing an ability to resolve local debates over the areas future it concentrated on delivering a number of services and maintaining its own survival. In the case of Passage East, rather than balancing the area's needs, D.E.W.T implicitly supported the interests of one side in the dispute.

In some respects it is difficult not to feel sympathetic towards those interested in pursuing new development in the area, particularly when the attitudes of those opposed to such developments appear so negative. The dispute in Passage East was marked by a degree of hostility that appeared to border on the self-destructive. For example in the case of distributing a petition calling for people to object to developments that at that stage only existed as rumours. The views of official from state agencies and D.E.W.T resemble the process by which clients are defined as deserving and undeserving (De Vries 1992). While the disputes concerned different forms of resource use, they rapidly came to take almost moral connotations as conflicts between progressive elements favouring the areas

development and others who were viewed as un-cooperative and anti-development. Yet in many ways this situation highlights one of the chief dilemmas facing local development programmes. That is the difficulty of working with those who are most in need of these supports. It was precisely the attitudes and practices that were attributed to the Passage East protestors and the local issues that they raised that the partnership approach was intended to address.

Up until this point the principal thrust of this study has been to focus on the way in which the Partnership evolved as an entity, showing how different sets of actors in different arenas contributed to shaping policy. In general this has involved focussing on encounters at a range of interfaces at which different groups have become involved in the network, negotiating the meaning of the initiative as it moved from planning and national guidelines through to local implementation. This chapter has explored the implications of the Partnership's involvement with local groups examining the way in which one group was influenced by its involvement in the programme. Despite its best efforts and claims to the contrary the result of the Partnership's intervention was that it became involved in local power relations. Far from resolving local differences, achieving local consensus around development priorities or mobilising the areas people the partnership and the development network became a factor in local struggles over resource use. At the point of intervention with local people the Partnership is not a technical, scientific and non-political entity but rather it becomes a factor in people's lifeworld. Therefore in this chapter the ground changes somewhat in the preceding chapters the issues involved different groups attempting to control the Partnership programme. This has largely concerned the politics of partnership. In the final part of this chapter we see the W.D.P to a certain degree moving off of centre stage. The conflicts discussed no longer centrally concern the Partnership itself, rather the initiative becomes but one factor as people seek to secure the resources necessary to reproduce their daily lives. Understanding the Partnership does not simply involve understanding the internal working of the local development network, but also understanding how this particular network and the actors in it are articulated with the lifeworld's of actors for whom it is simply a new constraint or indeed a new opportunity. Put simply, how is the Partnership incorporated into the lifeworld of other local actors. It is to this issue that the remainder of the study turns.

Chapter 10: Fiddlers Green: Resource Conflict and Fishing Practices.

10.1 Introduction

The way in which actors involved in the social network organised around W.D.P utilised the local development discourse has been an important focus of this study. Some of these actors produced an account of the programme which was in accord with the local development policy discourse. In this account the development project was depicted as a process, groups were assisted to prepare and implement plans for their own areas with the Partnership acting as an honest broker in this process. While the Partnership never claimed to have been successful in consulting all interested parties it went to substantial lengths to give the impression that it had tried its best to be as representative as possible. Consider the manager and chairman's concern that as much of the county as possible be included in the consultation, the staff's meticulous documenting of the process of local planning initiated after the public meetings and the development of proposals for a Community Forum. Following the consultation, the Partnership retained a link with the community via the participant groups through such initiatives as the community forum and its proposal to use organisations like D.E.W.T as contact points for the proposed new LES.

The data presented in previous chapters raised issues about some of the core claims made for the local development approach. It highlighted the divergence that exists between the ways in which formal discourse suggests how such programmes operated and how they were actually worked out, through interactions between actors which occurred in a wider socio-cultural context. Recognising this reality and exploring such programmes in this way raises a number of interesting issues concerning local development projects. These include, for example, the capacity of the selected local groups to represent the wider community. While the involvement of the community group examined in the previous chapter certainly did involve the incorporation of some actors into the development network, it was certainly not the case that this involved the universal enrolment of an entire community. While certain local actors had projects which were reflected in that of the community group, others were seeking to advance projects which conflicted with this in a very direct way, while for others it would

appear that the community group and its project was almost invisible, having little bearing on their interests or projects at all. This raised another question concerning the extent to which this group was capable of acting as a change agent in a process that would diffuse benefits to the wider local community. While an important feature of the locally based approach was the notion that such entities were capable of reflecting local needs and interests, making for a more effective and relevant local programme, the development project identified and supported by this particular group did not reflect the interests of the wider community.

This points to a more general issue about the local development approach as implemented through partnership organisations such as W.D.P. This concerns those ideas relating participation and the redistribution of power within the development process to the claim that this contributes to the delivery of a more effective and relevant local programme. In typical “expert” fashion the Partnership staff were involved in a series of measures through which development programmes embodying the interests of local people living in specific areas could be achieved. Such programmes would, it was envisaged, be more effective precisely because of this local involvement. The data presented in the previous chapter suggests that this version of events varies substantially from the reality of what happened during this process. The initial community consultation was in reality a highly controlled process. The community groups that the Partnership identified were those which were able to match criteria established by the Partnership as to what constituted local community organisations which in turn reflected the deep rooted predispositions of certain actors towards support for certain forms of development activity over others. Those actors and community groups that did become involved in the Partnership were able to do so precisely because they had views and projects which were largely aligned to those of the Partnership, while those actors that had projects which were not aligned with the Partnership did not participate in the process. Exclusion rather than negotiation appears to have been employed in resolving local differences over development priorities. Note the ease with which those actors with opposing projects were rapidly given such negative labels as being anti-development, stuck in the past and welfare dependent. In yet another of those contradictions that seem to proliferate in the implementation of local development some of the very marginalised groups who’s identification was employed as a justification for local development policy became the classically unruly clients who were overlooked in favour of a actors who were willing and able to align their personal projects with those of the partnership (De Vries 1992, Siriwardenna 1989). The formal policy discourse is itself one of the resources available to

some of the actors involved. This makes an examination of whether the local development programme worked or not perhaps less significant than a consideration of how it was employed by certain actors in order to further certain development projects over others.

The last three chapters focussed on one event involving the relationship between community groups and the Partnership. The Partnership initially encountered these groups as it sought to expand the local development network in order to advance the development project formulated by the board and senior staff. While there was significant variation between the knowledge and interests of all of these groups their approach to the programme was in one respect quite similar. The question of how the Partnership functioned as an organisation was significant to them. Thus the events examined in the previous three chapters concerned the relationship between the Partnership and actors and organisations that had a direct interest in the process of development in which the Partnership was engaged. The outcome of these events had a specific bearing on the operation and structure of the partnership itself. This discussion suggested that that the process of “consultation” was an asymmetrical one which advanced the specific development projects of certain figures. In addition it indicated that many local actors did not become incorporated into the project via the system of community groups and that their interests were not reflected in the consultation process. It nevertheless remained the case that at the conclusion of the consultation process the Partnership began to implement a programme of local development measures in County Waterford. In the course of implementing this programme while it was envisaged that local input into the Partnership would continue to be channelled through the community groups. This proposal always had a far greater symbolic than practical significance. Indeed in reality the principal way in which locals would come into contact with the Partnership was through specific partnership programmes aimed at individuals or local businesses.

The fact that it was never envisaged that community groups would be the sole means through which the Partnership would come into contact with local people, is an additional complicating factor in attempts to develop an understanding of how the organisation impacted on the localities in which it worked. The Partnership introduced a range of projects targeted at specific groups of local actors; in many cases offering suitable members of its “client base” access to a variety of resources. During the course of implementing these projects the staff of the Partnership came into direct contact with a wide array of local actors whose responses to the programmes were potentially diverse and contingent. These actors

took a myriad of considerations into account in assessing the Partnership and devising a response to it. These encounters occurred at yet another crucial interface between, on this occasion, local actors and the staff of the Partnership and also between the staff of the Partnership and the frontline staff of other agencies engaged with the same clients. This had the potential to fundamentally influence the reality of the Partnership's programme. In order to fully understand the Partnership we need to examine events during which the relationship between the programme and individual local actors participating in specific schemes was worked out. The final chapters of this study will thus increasingly focus on the way that the responses of specific individual local actors and the staff including the staff of other agencies influenced the implementation of specific schemes and projects initiated by the Partnership. This necessarily means that in the remaining chapters there will be a shift in the analysis to focus on these events and on the views and responses of local actors to the introduction of the Partnership. For this reason this chapter starts with a brief theoretical reflection in order to outline how the theoretical framework employed in the study can be "recalibrated," to facilitate an examination of these events. This discussion embarks with the question of how such actors respond to new social objects. It will be demonstrated that in order to gain a proper understanding of how individuals respond to new initiatives we must pay heed not only to their specific actions and behaviours during encounters with the programme, but also observe how such responses are themselves informed by the socially embedded knowledge of local actors. The latter are in turn shaped by their past and current experience of similar objects. In order to understand such responses it will therefore be necessary to build up a wider picture of the range of factors which influence the actors' responses.

Following from this theoretical discussion the bulk of the chapter involves an in-depth examination of the type of socio cultural factors which influenced the way in which local actors respond to external initiatives. This is done in order to devise an understanding of the factors which are brought to bear by local actors during encounters with problematic new objects as the local development network expands its operation and seeks to enrol them in its work.

Finally, armed with these ideas the chapter goes on to demonstrate how the insights derived from the discussion outlined in the previous section can be employed as the components of an interpretive framework through which the approach of local actors to the new local development programmes can be analysed.

10.2 Local actors and local development a methodological recalibration

The theoretical framework employed in this study conceptualises local development programmes as open ended networks. The actual shape of these programmes is revealed through a process during which networks evolve through the efforts of actors who possess different knowledge and interests. In order to pursue what they define as their interests they seek to enrol others i.e. have others accept specific roles in the network. This involves the employment of what Latour (1989, 1996) terms media including; knowledge, money, people and technical artefacts that convey ideas about meaning in a network. The degree of scope that actors have to challenge each other's understanding of the meanings vested in a network varies depending on the media involved and their ability to utilise these. In some cases the use of these media can appear to be direct, as in the employer-employee relationship between the staff and manager of the Partnership. In others they can appear to be subtle such as when the Partnership attempted to portray the results of its consultation as both the outcome of technical practices and as representing the will of the local communities. Nevertheless the capacity always exists for actors to negotiate in encounters that occur in these networks. It is the capacity of actors to do so, employing the various media in the network which determines the meaning of objects in networks. As we have seen in the local development policy network, formal discourse is a particularly important media, a specific form of knowledge that is used to legitimise certain decisions such as the way the initial phase of the consultation was structured. In other instances we see it employed to reinterpret events in different arenas such as when the outcome of the consultation was presented as the result of a formal planning exercise rather than informal negotiations between actors with conflicting interests. The formal development policy discourse can be seen to be a part of and not just an account of these events. It is articulated with other practices in a very specific way as a strategic resource in efforts to impose a specific meaning on objects in the network which supports a specific mode of ordering. By deconstructing formal policy discourse and in this way demythologising the intervention (Long and Van Der Ploeg 1989), it becomes possible to recognise that the formal local development discourse is just one of the competing forms of knowledge employed in the process of implementing a local development programme, producing one of a number of potential narratives concerning that process. This perspective allows for a more symmetrical approach to studying the development programme as an open

ended social network, during which encounters between actors, drawing on different forms of knowledge, has a profound outcome on shaping the initiative.

While in different local projects the outcomes of these encounters may differ, examining how encounters between actors in specific arenas shapes the outcomes of development offers a good basis for understanding how development actually works. As has already been seen, the shape that the project took was highly dependent on the ability of certain actors to impose specific ideas about development during encounters in which narratives, including that which is informed by formal local development discourse, played a central role in shaping the programme. Separate narratives had the capacity to justify decisions supporting certain actions and development priorities and roles for individuals in the development process. These accounts supported different “modes of ordering”. An examination of encounters during which different actors seek to establish the validity of specific narratives over others offers a way of examining the development process which avoids the pitfall of making any assumptions that privilege the role of the formal policy discourse over other narratives. Besides producing a more symmetrical account of the way in which local development programmes are worked out, this approach allows for a comprehensive examination of how the wider social context in which the programme is entangled helps to shape the programme. The responses of actors to the Partnership’s initiative are contingent on their evaluations of how it affected their own projects, which were in turn informed by both their own knowledge and their assessment of the understandings others apply to these objects. It is for precisely this reason that the responses of various actors in the development process are variable. Different actors in similar situations may make entirely different assessments of their circumstances and choose radically different courses of action.

In the previous chapter the influence of such factors on the course of local development was illustrated. We saw how some actors became directly enrolled in the decision-making practices. For others the engagement took, what could be described as, more oblique or tangential forms. Rather than being centrally involved in the kind of issues of power and decision-making actively influencing the way the Partnership took shape. Through their participation in those organisations that had a direct involvement in the Partnership’s development, they reacted to the consequences that arose out of the shape that the Partnership took. Such actors encountering new social objects have a degree of knowledge and the ability to use it to develop understandings of these objects. They do not simply accept

the meaning that is presented to them by actors within the local development network, but are capable of deconstructing the programme drawing on their own knowledge and experience to do so. There remains some capacity to challenge the way in which concepts such as development and indeed an area's identity are conceptualised by organisations such as the partnership.

It is the actors existing life world that provides a context in which they firstly interpret and subsequently formulate responses to the new economic threats and opportunities that the Partnership presented to them. Their varied responses to the Partnership are based on an assessment of its implications on the reproduction of their own daily lives. Such responses ultimately helped to shape the Partnership as it attempted to implement programmes which involved encounters with a wider range of actors with a more diverse set of ideas about the area, their place in it and the role of organisations such as the Partnership than they encountered in the more selective, and more controlled, consultation process. Conceptualising the responses of local actors in this way highlights the significance of examining the how their interests and concerns bear on the way in which they formulate a response to that object. The Partnership may have been formally presented as a new object which was, according to the formal policy discourse, entirely different to other forms of intervention supported by the state. However the responses of local actors are not necessarily based on the ideas presented as part of this formal discourse. Rather their understandings of these objects are informed by a stock knowledge which is derived in a specific spatial socio-cultural context and built up through historical experience. Any effort to develop an understanding of how local development programmes are worked out which fails to take account of these facts will be ultimately doomed to failure.

Previous chapters paid attention to events that occurred as the programme expanded and in particular the efforts of insiders to incorporate others into the partnership as they sought to build the network. In this chapter we begin to focus on the response of this wider range of local actors as they responded to the introduction of specific Partnership programmes targeted at individuals within the organisations various "target groups", exploring the factors that are likely to shape such responses. This chapter thus attempts to devise a means for conducting a symmetrical study, by developing an understanding of the ways in which actors situated in specific lifeworlds approach problematic social objects such as the Partnership.

The first issue addressed concerns the factors in the lifeworld of local actors which shape their responses to the local development programme. In order to do so the chapter returns to one of the areas that was discussed at length in the previous chapter, Passage East. During the study it was the base for both DEWT and the Partnership in East Waterford. Again the reason for focussing on this area is primarily practical. The researcher had the opportunity to spend considerable time in the area, allowing the opportunity for the generation of a considerable amount of data about the area, the social practices of residents and the dynamics of local interactions with the state. The area is also a particularly interesting one for a number of reasons amongst which is the fact that the area was one of those parts of the County which best fits the description of “disadvantaged” with rates of unemployment and deprivation that significantly exceeded those found elsewhere. This allowed for an examination of how members of the specific target groups of local development living in the area responded to the programme. Thirdly while in the area the researcher rapidly became aware of significant points of conflict between different groups with different ideas about the area and its development. Of particular note were a number of encounters between the Partnership and other local actors including some of those involved in D.E.W.T and members of the local “fishing community”. At an early stage in the research it became clear that not only was this group involved in a number of encounters with the Partnership but that it had a distinct body of local knowledge and its own very distinct narrative relating to the areas problems and future, which varied in significant ways with that of the Partnership. By closely examining these encounters it is hoped that it might be possible to explore how such conflicting world views and the narratives they produce shape local responses to the development programme.

As a starting point the next section briefly considers some of the physical and economic characteristics of the area. Following on from this, the discussion switches to the influence that such factors have on the social and economic practices through which local actors reproduce their daily lives. Finally the chapter explores how such concerns influenced the way in which these actors responded to the introduction of the partnership programme.

10.3 Passage East and the Suir Estuary Fishery.

Passage East is located at the base of hills that form a promontory at the point where the Suir estuary enters a bend and narrows considerably. This location restricts access to the Village,

which is via a narrow and winding coast road. The hills limit further construction in the village. Most of the space that is suitable for construction is already built on and has been for quite some time. Outwardly the physical fabric of the village has changed relatively little over 70 years, consisting of ageing double or three story buildings (image 10.1 & 10.2). The layout of the village is not typical of that found in other coastal villages in the area. It is built as a series of small squares between the harbour and the hill. This particular arrangement of housing is a result of the physical constraints that the village's location places on its expansion. While the village proper is restricted to a small area at the base of the hills a second area known as Crooke is located a kilometre south along the coast, on top of the hill, Crooke includes the Parish church, local national (primary) school and a local authority housing estate. This area is not encumbered by the same space restrictions as the village itself and in fact covers a larger area. In addition there are a small number of privately built new houses, particularly along the coast where sites overlooking the estuary are much sought after. Despite being located only ten kilometres south of Waterford City centre there is a continuing perception that the village is remote and isolated. A sense of this can be grasped even by simply travelling via the narrow road that descends from both sides of the promontory. The village is scarcely visible until the traveller is within about five hundred metres of Barrack Square at its centre. Likewise once in the village the landward view is restricted by the hills (See image 10.2). Historically it has been far more accessible by sea than by land and while this is no longer the case, there is still a perceptible sense in which the sea opens up wider vistas to locals than the land where views are restricted by the hills.

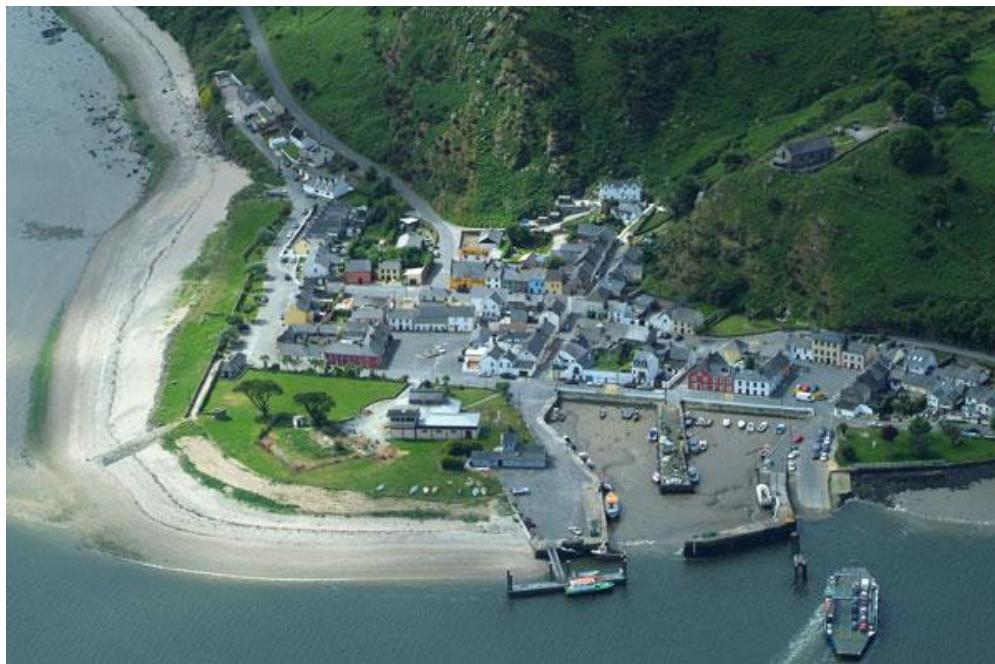


Image 10.1 Passage East village (Munster Express)



Image 10.2 Passage main street backing onto the hill overlooking the village (Janelle May Bryant)

In Passage East the physical landscape places constraints on the village's economy and hence on the symbolic images available to locals in defining the area. Few of the families living there possess or have access to land and while some studies have equated patterns of economic practice in Irish fishing communities with a form of rural "pluriactivity" typified by a mixed economy of fishing and farm based activities (See for example Kinsella et al 2000). This was by no means as evident in Passage East. During this study it became clear

that while there were some households in the village in which agriculture did have a role in income generation, the extent to which this was the case was limited. Passage residents did however have access to economic opportunities which were not available to members of fishing communities elsewhere in the form of alternative employment in the nearby city and port. Traditionally the area's population has generated income from a combination of fishing and a wide range of other activities including but not restricted to farming. The fishing industry and related trade networks have had a major role in shaping the economic interests of those living in the village in the past and despite its decline this retained a prominent role in the formation of local identity during the study. Passage East is first and foremost defined by its residents as a fishing village. Fishing also continued to have an important role in some local actors' income strategies. Again, while other fishing communities studied in Ireland (Eg. Kinsella et al 2000, Steins 1997) primarily produce for local markets, the Waterford fishery has historically been an export oriented, cash based industry which produced smoked and dried fish for export as early as the 18th century. Later Waterford port was an important point-of-departure and return for fishing vessels involved in the New England fisheries (Downey 1914). Amongst the species that have historically been commercially significant are Cod, Hake, Salmon, Codling and Lobster.

Of particular note in relation to Passage East was the exploitation of the herring fishery. Off the Suir estuary, driftnet fishing for herring traditionally took place during the autumn/winter period following the shoals as they migrated around the south east coast of Ireland. Herring were smoked at a number of locations in the east of County Waterford and sold or exported throughout the UK and parts of Europe and Passage East was a major centre for this activity. A large smokehouse dominated the village physically and economically for some 50 years. It was here that herring landed in the area were salted and smoked during the season, chiefly for export to the U.K. Besides those involved directly in the fishery itself, a significant proportion of the village's population were employed in this smokehouse during the season further increasing the areas dependence on the herring.

The herring fishery injected considerable cash into the local economy and contributed to a large number of service businesses in the area with the result that, until relatively recently, Passage was considered to be relatively prosperous, a situation reflected in local residents' stories about when the fishing was better and the village was said to have possessed "eleven

pubs, three shibeens¹ and two hotels". Another fact that was regularly remarked upon was the high income derived from fishing and related activities in the past. The significance of the herring fishery to the area's economy lasted beyond the season itself. For a period in the 1970's and 1980's workers from Passage East travelled to the Hebrides and the Isle of Man to work in processing factories during months when herring were fished in those waters. The overall value of the herring fishery to the village began to decline following the closure of the smoke house, reaching its lowest point with the closure of the Celtic Sea in the late 1980's due to over fishing. During this study herring fishing was permitted under strict quota for roe extraction during a limited season but this was primarily undertaken by large trawlers. Indeed even had stocks not declined fleet modernisation in the fishery would almost certainly have led to the decline of Passage as a commercial fishing harbour given the tendency towards using large vessels which couldn't use the landing facility in the village. It is larger boats that are now almost exclusively employed in the reduced herring fishery supplying the larger quantities now sought by on-shore processors based in larger harbours most notably, in this area, in Dunmore East.

During the study it was also clear that despite its symbolic significance in local life, there was a widespread recognition that the economic significance of the fishery was in sharp decline. Locally there was a tendency to blame most of the fisheries problems on outside factors. Locals were more than willing to point to the arrival of larger trawlers operated by outsiders as the cause of reduced stocks. The use of fish finders in these vessels, it was believed, enabled a few big operators to "scoop out whole shoals of fish in one go". In the process it was claimed that these trawlers also did considerable damage to the sea-bed harming other marine stocks. However local fishermen also make use of new innovations to increase their catches, as the remarks employed by one man in describing the introduction of new nets suggests; "*People used to get on with the old nets then one of the dealers started bringing in Japanese nets. That meant that a couple of men could trap a whole shoal of fish, That was nylon, later they brought in monofilament and they went for that*". While those in the area engaged in fishing were quick to mention the increasing problems caused by competition from outsiders and the state, locals also responded to innovations in fishing technology rapidly and positively. Few expressed any concern as to the potential damage increased efficiency in the methods they themselves used to catch fish caused. Indeed these

¹ Unlicensed bars

innovations were perceived as necessary with, for example, local fishermen making a case for the continued use of monofilament nets for salmon fishing despite the growing opposition to its employment due to the perceived environmental problems they caused². While these locals were aware of and indeed concerned about the potential environmental damage caused by modern fishing this was very much related to the potential damage that others could cause to their fishery.

While it may have been one mainstay of commercial fishing in the area, it is important to note that the herring fishery formed an integral part of a cycle or pattern of fishing activities which were carried out at different times during the years and combined in a household's income strategy. Another significant contributor in this respect was the salmon fishery. The main salmon run occurs during the summer months prior to the herring fishing season. It was long regarded as being highly important and indeed with the decline in herring fishing came to be the mainstay of the areas fishery in the 1970's and 1980's. However the salmon fishery went into sharp decline in the late nineteen eighties and during the study period was believed locally to be almost at the point of collapse

During this study the subject continued to be a significant issue with calls for alterations to the existing regulatory framework in 1995, in what was widely regarded as, one of the worst seasons experienced for 30 years. The problems of the Salmon fishery, never far from controversy, again became a political issue as one Waterford TD stated, "*because the run of salmon is taking place later and later each year, it is imperative that the present season be extended from August 1st to 15th to forestall the ruin which now faces Waterford fishermen in comparison to the huge numbers of fish which are caught annually on the high seas by the big operators, the number involved along the Waterford coast is negligible.*" (The Cork

² While monofilament netting had been banned in Ireland in 1977 for drift netting for salmon, the debate over the use of monofilament netting continued with a considerable body of evidence suggesting that the practice continued illegally (See for example Sattaur 1989) With constant concern being expressed as to the efficacy of this ban leading for calls for its legalisation as one T.D put it in 1993 that "If the Minister has his ear to the ground he must be aware that, over the past ten years, the only type of net used by drift-net fishermen here has been monofilament, that indeed this State allows the importation of such monofilament net." (Dáil Eireann Debate 12 December 1993). In 1997 in a bid to reduce the illegal use of the nets monofilament was legalised for drift netting under certain circumstances by licensed salmon fishermen. Subsequently in 2007 a complete ban on salmon drift netting was introduced.

Examiner, July 27, 1995). Again the emphasis given to the notion that Waterford Fishing is losing out to external operators is worth noting. In 1996 a government task force report on the future of the salmon fishery recommended the legalisation of monofilament use in salmon fishing within certain length and depth limits. As part of an overall control programme intended to reduce the extent of illegal drift netting it also recommended the adoption of a quota and tag system³. The reaction of the fishing community in Waterford to this report was largely negative. In their view it was the fact that larger offshore operators were catching the stock, in many cases illegally that had led to the current decline. They questioned the State's capacity to enforce the recommendations of the report and in support of this argument they cited the controversy in which the South Eastern Fishery Board was then embroiled as evidence of the inability of the enforcement agencies to police the fishery⁴. The fact that the principal bodies involved in the protection of the salmon fishery was under investigation, a body that was in their view biased in favour of anglers anyway, cast doubt on the government's current ability and willingness to protect the stocks. Why the suggestion followed, was there any reason to believe that new policing arrangements would succeed particularly when targeted at the smaller inshore operators rather than what they saw as the real cause of the problem, larger and often foreign owned offshore boats. The report was perceived to be another example of the state's bias in favour of bigger operators⁵. They also suggested that the fisheries boards didn't recognise the role of angling and farming lobbies or indeed their own responsibility for losses that occurred up river. The report was also criticised because it made no local adjustments to the season. Local fishermen argued that the dates of the legal fishing season had been set up with the interests of fishermen on the western seaboard in mind. The main summer run (of mature salmon returning to spawn) happens later in Waterford than in other parts of the country reaching its peak after the

³Based on existing licences fishermen would on renewal be given an annual quota of fish on being caught these legal fish would be tagged on landing and it would be made illegal to trade in untagged fish. Since illegal fishing was prevalent in the area anyway, and since this presented little difficulties to buyers it is difficult to understand the relative likelihood of success under the proposed regime.

⁴These events were widely reported in the media at the time and also became the subject of a television documentary by the end of 1997. The board itself had still to be restored and many issues including possible prosecutions were still in process. Locally amongst fishermen it was felt that the investigations then under way would yield no practical results. Certainly they did not see any direct improvement of their situation arising out of it.

⁵ There was considerable supporting evidence for this assertion with a significant bias in distribution of grant aid to the offshore demersal fishery and in particular to fleet modernisation measures (pp 171-172)

official close of the season after which huge numbers of fish passed through these waters. Eventually in response to considerable local agitation and national lobbying the state allowed a compromise in 1997, extending the salmon sea season in certain areas until the seventh of August. According to some of the fishermen this was done with the accompanying proviso that only nylon nets be used in the Suir Estuary. This again caused consternation. It was standard practice for those involved in fishing to invest in new and renewed gear prior to the start of any season allowing time for the relevant equipment to be made ready. Nets for example must be sewn together, weighted and floated. One dimension of fishing practice involves the selection of methods and equipment. It is a calculated risk requiring a significant capital investment and labour commitment⁶. In some cases those involved avail of a variety of short term credit arrangements to do so. The last minute change in the permitted equipment involved a prohibitive re-equipping cost to change from monofilament to the less efficient nylon nets. As the fishermen saw it reversing the ruling on monofilament meant that many people in the local fishery had been left with nets that were now illegal for the primary purpose for which they were bought and assembled. By the end of the season most fishermen had reported an appalling result with the traditional complaint that "*by the time that I had the nets and the licence paid for, I made a loss,*"⁷ ringing, perhaps, truer than ever. The majority of those involved in the local fishery suggested that the State's inability to respond flexibly to local needs had made it almost impossible to effectively fish the waters around this part of the country. Events in 1997 were simply seen as further evidence that state policy favoured the angling lobby and larger vessels operating offshore.

Such issues are significant because they give us an insight into the socio cultural context which shape ideas in this area about the state and responses to it. This has a critical, if indirect, bearing on the issues of core significance to this study since they form the context in which the knowledge employed by the area's people in responding towards those they regard as "officials," of all types has been built up. An important feature of this experience which

⁶Fishermen if asked would normally cite a figure of around £2,000 per outfit.

⁷ Two interviewees did indicate that the actual volume of the salmon catch was substantially in excess of what was actually reported. There were a number of prosecutions in 1995, and indeed in most years which indicate that considerable illegal fishing continues. One fisherman stated that the catch was double the reported volume. Despite the "hidden" catch it was evident that nationally salmon numbers were down this affected many areas of Ireland, indeed a conference to discuss the plight of the Salmon stocks was held in U.C.G in the autumn of 1997.

was to be of significance to the way in which local actors approached the Partnership, is the existence of an interpretation of the problems facing the area which differed significantly with that of other local groups. In particular this view differed with those of the group most closely associated with the Partnership in this area, D.E.W.T. We also see that members of the fishing community have a view of the role of the state which is far from consensual. The state is often perceived to be unsympathetic to their position; the relationship adversarial.

In addition to salmon, other species are also exploited at various times of the year. These include lobster and crabs. In principle, pot fishing for these species is an activity that can be carried out on a year round basis. However traditionally it is confined to the better weather during the late spring and summer months when it is easier to undertake and less equipment losses are incurred. With the decline in the value of both salmon and herring as commercial species, stocks of these species have in turn come under pressure with more fishermen involved and the use of larger numbers of more efficient plastic and steel pots. Amongst the other species sought in the estuary are codling and black pollack (olie) as well as white pollack and other white and flat fish caught both in the estuary itself and off the coast. A more limited number of fishermen specialise in eel fishing though this generally occurs in waters north of Passage East. Finally some limited exploitation of naturally occurring molluscs also takes place. Traditionally an unofficial closed season operated over the later winter months when weather is at its severest. In the past it was claimed it had been possible for the majority of fishing families to live comfortably on a combination of earnings from these varied fishing practices and other seasonal casual work. Indeed a number of fishermen spoke of the period prior to the declines in herring and salmon stocks in terms of a golden era in which large amounts of money were made in the village. Less gear was required to catch reasonable amounts of fish and fewer working days were needed.

While the commercial value of some of the species traditionally exploited in the estuary has declined new sources of income have also emerged. One such new income source in the estuary is the recent introduction of shellfish aquaculture. Bord Iascaigh Mhara (B.I.M) the national agency responsible for the management and development of the commercial sea fisheries in Ireland heavily promoted the development of an aquaculture programme. By 1996 BIM claimed that aquaculture, in a variety of forms, accounted for twenty five per cent of the total value of the national sea fishery. Nationally, the key products have been shellfish in the form of oysters and salmon (White and Costelloe 1999). However in the Suir Estuary it

is only the former that is relevant. In the area around Passage East itself a major mussel cultivation project was launched in 1992. Natural mussel beds in the estuary were re-seeded by South East Shellfish Co-operative, a locally established co-operative. The project was regarded as a success by 1995-96 when harvesting of the seeded beds proved the feasibility of the venture and provided a substantial additional income to some of the local fishing households over the winter months. Oysters are also cultivated in the area.

10.4 Flexible livelihood strategies and the fishery.

It has already been suggested that when introduced into an area such as Passage East entities such as the Partnership are encountered by actors as they go about the business of reproducing their daily lives. Thus in order to understand how actors responded to the W.D.P programme an examination of the socio-economic activities of specific groups of culturally situated actors is necessary. In this section therefore the implications of the socio-economic behaviour of fishing families on their likely responses to new objects including new programmes such as the Partnership are considered.

The overriding fact that emerges from a consideration of the array of methods that were available to the local fishing community was that there was more than one way to be a fisherman. The local fishery was typified by a diversity of choices about what it was feasible and desirable to catch. These choices were in turn a reflection the differentiated knowledge of individual fishermen. While some of those in the area may have spoken of traditional fishing practices and referred to a previous “golden era,” the history of fishing in the area suggests that over a considerable period of time local fishermen’s approach to the resources available to them was opportunistic, flexible and driven by the concern of these actors to advance specific projects in which the fishery played a significant role. Note that in this instance it is not suggested that such projects were necessarily concerned with the maximisation of profit, leading to the inevitable tragedy of the commons so often depicted as the inevitable nemesis of under regulated fisheries in studies of marine resource management (see for example Meridith and Mc Ginley, 2009, Cochrane and Garcia 2009). A notable feature of the accounts of some fishermen was the fact that in better times when the fishing was easier people worked fewer hours foregoing the potential to maximise catches. However it was equally clear that local fishermen were not and had not in the past been concerned with issues of

environmental sustainability in their use of the estuary. Local inshore fishermen demonstrated little restraint in pursuing clearly reduced salmon stocks and in using modern equipment to maximise catches. The flexibility identified in fishing practices was driven by the practical demands of generating income if not necessarily income maximisation. The fact that over time and for a variety of reasons the opportunities offered to the fishing community by the estuary change is part and parcel of these strategies. Besides their personal socio-economic interests individual fishermen's decisions as regards which resources to exploit and when, were regulated by a range of constraints including the legal restrictions imposed by the state. A situation made more complicated by the fact that a number of bodies shared responsibility for the regulation and development of the fishery and related activities in Ireland including; Local Authorities, The Regional Fisheries Boards, The Harbour Commissioners, The Department of the Marine and the Irish Navy in its fishery protection role⁸. Fishing in the estuary was also subject to informal regulation and rights of usage as for example in the case of weir traps⁹. While official permission is required to place traps fishermen in the area also operated on the basis of informal understandings. It was generally accepted that where families have operated weirs over a significant period of time no other fishermen would place similar structures. Similar understandings relate to other permanent and temporary structures and traps and also to usage of grounds certain times though these are by no means immutable and to a considerable extent the fishery is an open resource.

In this context the estuary was and remained an important object or indeed collection of objects throughout the study. A pool of finite resources competed over by different actors. This resource system is dynamic. Over time the significance of different parts of this system to different actors is influenced by changes in the areas ecology, economy, socio-political and legal constraints and also to changes in wider social networks. Specific objects can take on new meaning for different actors and come to occupy entirely different roles within the same or new networks. Monkfish for example were of limited value until restaurant's started putting them on the menu transforming them from an ugly by-catch it into a much sought after delicacy, while the incorporation of the herring into a wider network including E.U.

⁸The Navy is responsible for patrolling offshore fishing grounds.

⁹ Wier traps involves the insertion of poles into the riverbeds nets on these are arranged as a cone or funnel in such a way that the tidal outflow passes through the nets at low tide Small fish are caught and gathered in the nets on the low tide. These weirs are maintained by specific people in positions that are identified as suitable for the purpose close to the bank.

regulators and Japanese buyers linked the fish irrevocably to large scale roe extraction and as a consequence de-linked it from local economic circuits which included the small vessels and landing facilities of Passage East.

The question of how changes in local and wider food networks transform objects in specific producer areas an interesting one which unfortunately lies beyond the scope of this study. What is important for this study is to recognise that such changes occur and have implications for the way in which income is derived from the fishery. Over time the significance of certain species within the estuary varies for a range of reasons leading to changes in the practices of fishermen. Moreover changes in the value and availability of different species appear to be interlinked as for example in the case of the salmon which became even more significant locally as the herring fishery declined. When in turn the introduction of new technologies and increased activity led to pressure on the salmon its position was also affected as numbers declined and it became the object of an increasingly rigid regulatory regime and wider environmental and stock management debates.

The facts encountered during this study indicate that while the area clearly retained a distinct identity as a fishing village, and while their identity as fishing households remained significant to a number of local households, the very nature of this identity is not static or in any sense definable in terms of a rigid set of traditional practices. Rather the key feature of the local fishery is that it is dynamic and that the responses of fishermen are contingent on the changing eco-social matrix in which it is embedded. This includes the geographical locality itself, the local ecology and the wider socio-economic networks of which it is a part. In looking at the economic behaviour of the fishing community it is important to note that it is contains a very significant non-economic component (See Daly 1991). As Midgely (1986) observes people are at least to some degree knowledgeable and capable in managing their lives and develop strategies to attain goals or as Varenne puts it perform their lives (1993). Such goals incorporate both economic and none economic elements and indeed the question of what constitutes economic value itself is also socially determined (Villareal 2010). Economic behaviour is embedded in this wider social and culture world in which actors live. Production and consumption relations form part of a wider set of social relations embedded in social practices at numerous levels (Marsden and Arce 1995) which potentially link numerous actors in a range of sites. The decline of the smoked herring business for example illustrates how the income strategies of actors are shaped by events in wider international food

networks. Any narrow association of income generation solely with economic behaviour will tend to detract from the capacity of analysis to encompass the wider range of factors which shape the productive activities of the actors involved.

It is for these reasons that the concept of livelihood strategies offers such a useful avenue through which to start examining these issues. Long defines livelihood as the process of actors “*striving to make a living, attempting to meet their various consumption and economic necessities coping with uncertainties responding to new opportunities and choosing between different value positions,*” (1997 p.11) This approach recognises that economic activities are socially embedded, thus making it possible to link actions in the economic sphere to this wider context in which issues such as identity and knowledge contribute to the totality of the decision making process. Rather than constituting a rigid framework or habitus (see Bourdieu 1990) in which local economic behaviour is set, such livelihood strategies are dynamic and change in response to changes in the wider socio-cultural world in which the actor is located.

In Passage East over time and as circumstances change a range of factors have impacted on the relationship between the fishing community and the estuary. Those involved in the fishing industry were capable of switching from the exploitation of one species to another quickly in response not only to local factors in the estuary but to changes in international food circuits. Moreover they did not select from a fixed set of fishing options but from a range of choices that change over time. They thus demonstrated a capacity to switch to new species rapidly and to abandon former mainstays when necessary. The varied and changing nature of available catches meant that collectively the local fishing community displayed a wide knowledge of a variety of fishing methods, which included; drift netting, gill netting, weir traps, dredging, eel trapping, long lining and pot fishing for crabs, lobsters and shrimps (Prawns). The drift and gill net, the most widespread methods employed by the smaller boats for fishing for finfish, typified this flexibility as the same equipment was used to fish for a number of species¹⁰. Local fishermen were also swift to respond to the introduction of new

¹⁰ Drift nets are used to catch pelagic species they are a simple curtain of netting suspended by ropes from the sea. Gill nets are used to catch lower swimming and bottom feeding species such as monkfish they resemble a drift net in that they consist of a single static curtain of net suspended in the water however they differ in that rather than being suspended by floats they are sunk near to or on the sea bed depth by weights while floats tied to the net by ropes ensures that they remain upright in the water. It is thus possible to use the same nets for both and is thus perfect for use in an opportunistic setting.

and more efficient technologies even though many criticised the conduct of outsiders who did something similar.

More crucially it also became obvious during the study that while fishing was a very significant feature of local identity, it was not the sole source of income available to the areas inhabitants. Indeed traditionally Passage has had access to economic opportunities which are not available to fishing communities studied elsewhere in the form of alternative employment in nearby Waterford City and Port. The village, it should be remembered is located only ten kilometres from Waterford city and a significant number of the villages inhabitants work there. The village is also a base for Waterford port pilot boats and the Passage East Car Ferry. These and other local businesses also account for significant local employment. This flexibility in livelihood strategy also extended to other sources of income including, and this is of key significance in relation to this study, income and other resources derived from the State. Welfare payments for example were another significant contributor to the areas income. In fact, despite the significance of the fishery in local identity, the fishing community did not constitute a majority of its inhabitants, and even within that portion of the community which was involved in the fishing industry it was rarely the sole and in some cases not even the main source of household income. Instead, the combination of legal and licensing requirements, co-operative memberships, natural and seasonal variations in the availability of fish stocks, quality of equipment and access to other sources of income meant that a considerable range of options were available to households in devising and pursuing a flexible livelihood strategy. In fact, it is possible to suggest that in the absence of these alternatives the capacity of Passage East households to retain any involvement in the fishery would have been in doubt. Somewhat perversely, in this case it would appear that the local community's proximity to a large urban area contributed to Passage East's ability to retain its identity as a fishing village by providing its families with additional sources of income.

The nature of such flexible livelihood strategies is further illustrated when the economic activities of a number of people in the village over time are considered. One of these was a man who was employed on a local community employment (C.E.) scheme and not then directly involved in the fishery. Previously he had been involved on and off as a crew member chiefly catching Herring, Salmon and Codling. He had also had spells as a merchant seaman. Prior to being employed on the C.E. scheme he had experienced a period of unemployment having left Bell lines (a shipping company), where he had worked as a cargo

hand on the Waterford to Rotterdam route. During the early 1990's when, as he saw it, Bell replaced people such as himself with cheaper crews from the Philippines and Pakistan and he was made redundant. Prior to this in the late 1970's and early 1980's he along with a number of others in the area had travelled to the Isle of Man and the Hebrides following the local herring season and had worked for a local man in factories in both areas. When last I talked to him he had got a job crewing on trawlers fishing herring again.

A second couple the researcher spoke to were mentioned in the previous chapter in relation to the Passage East Ferry Protest. They operated a catering business at that time, which they had started with the support of grant aid from the C.E.B. They also ran an unlicensed bed and breakfast in addition to which the husband fished. He had his own boat and had been successful in gaining some grant assistance towards the upgrading of the vessel. In addition to these activities, the couple were in receipt of a welfare payment. Another couple that lived and worked in the area also combined sources of income, in their case the husband was in receipt of unemployment benefit having been recently made redundant. His wife worked part-time locally "off the books" as she put it meaning that the income was not declared for tax purposes. In addition the husband crewed on his brother's boat on a seasonal basis and when not employed by his brother also worked for an engineering firm in Waterford city.

Over the time that was spent in the area it became clear that examples such as those above were not unusual. The mix of activities varied considerably. Some families had no members involved in the fishery. Others did not receive welfare. Whilst it was fair to say that the mix varied the practice of meeting income needs through a variety of sources was extremely widespread. Although many of the households received some level of welfare support the majority had other sources of household income. These included contributions from both the male and female heads of household. Some of the jobs occupied by both the men and women were not taxed. The research indicated that despite its symbolic significance the economic importance of the fishery varied. Far from being involved in the fishing industry on a continuous basis many of the men worked in the business on a seasonal basis if at all. Indeed some had recently become more involved in fishing as a result of losing employment elsewhere. Many appearing to move seamlessly between the fishery and other types of work in construction, manufacturing and other jobs as circumstances changed.

When the economic practices of people in the area are considered as elements of a livelihood strategy which includes both fishery and non-fishery income sources, as well as in some cases welfare payments, it makes it easier to decipher their behaviours and also sheds light on the way in which they were likely to respond to the introduction of new programmes such as the Partnership. There was as very clear awareness of the fact that fishing in the area was under particular strain and the responses of local actors to this situation was based on established practices developed over a significant period of time. Fishing is an inherently unpredictable activity and a combination of natural and human factors have always had the potential to adversely affect the income produced from any one fishing activity. As a location in which people have been accustomed to the need for a degree of flexibility in responding to such variations in income, it is perhaps unsurprising that in the absence of any single income option that was widely available, regular and regulated by the State, the areas people applied the same type of opportunistic strategy in generating income onshore as they do at sea. These observations echo the comments of Kinsella et al (2000) that suggest the long term existence of what they describe as pluriactivity. What is evident is that in this area, local livelihood strategies incorporated a wide range of different objects and places. These include not only the fishery, but also the local pub, the building site, the welfare office and the factory floor. It included employment in the formal economy, formal and informal self-employment as well as sources of income which were non-regulated and untaxed. In Passage “pluriactivity,” appears to be an essential part of what Salmi (2005) describes as the “coping strategies,” employed by local fishing households, it is the norm rather than the exception. Though in this case the components of the mix are so radically different to those so often associated with the rural pluriactivity label to suggest that is more helpful and certainly less ideationally suggestive, to refer to them simply as flexible livelihood strategies. The Partnership initiative involved introducing programmes in the area which were ultimately intended to bring about forms of development, which would alter existing patterns of local socio-economic behaviour. However given what we know about income strategies employed in Passage East it is possible, and indeed necessary, to pose the question as to whether it was likely, given the existence of these well-established strategies that the introduction of new programmes in this area would result in dramatic changes in the socio-economic behaviour of local actors. Could it be more likely that they would attempt to simply selectively incorporate elements of such programmes into their lifeworld in way which supported their own projects.

Local livelihood strategies reflected a series of understandings about the role of a range of human and non-human objects which collectively constitute the local socio-economic networks through which they reproduced their daily social lives. The attempts of actors within the Partnership to extend the development network necessarily involved attempts to engage and enrol these local actors in line with a different network which embodied within it a discourse in which the nature of the locality, of economic activity and of the range of social objects which existed in this area were interpreted in an entirely different way, a mode of ordering which supported the Partnership development project. To put it another way the introduction of the project involved "*a process through which heterogeneous entities – people, ideas, events and objects (Seeds, engineered structures pumps, vehicles, computers, fax machines or databases) – are tied together by translation of one kind or another into the material and conceptual order of a successful project, (Latour 2000)* (Cited in Lewis 2005 pp. 9). The introduction of the Partnership project into this area involved attempts by certain actors to reconstitute that locality through a new translation, informed by a particular discourse about the nature of the problems facing rural areas and also about the position of marginalised groups in these areas. This translation attributed the problems facing certain localities to such factors as their peripheral location and the decline of established economic activities such as agriculture. The solution to these problems was defined in terms of economic transformations which would involve the exploitation of the areas resources in new ways as well as the introduction of new industries and know how. The problems of the unemployed were defined in terms of both the unavailability of employment and specific personal attributes that prevented them finding work. The solution was presented in the form of a series of progressive steps to assist the unemployed person to make a transition from unemployment to employment readiness and ultimately to an employed status. Clearly such a discourse differed with that of local actors in Passage East both in how it interpreted the areas problems and also on the solutions that it suggested. In responding to attempts to enrol them in the development network in a way which re-defined many of the objects which were then part of these household's livelihood strategies. It is inconceivable that local actors would not draw on their own understandings of the area and its difficulties in formulating responses to new networks. Indeed local actors identified a range of causes for the areas woes some of which were radically different to those embodied in the Partnership development model. Different ideas about the areas problems have a significant bearing on encounters at the interface between the actors involved in the development programme and other local actors. Hence the question of how local actors define the areas problems and how this impacts on the

relationship between local actors and the development network are central to addressing the question posed at the beginning of this chapter as to the way in which local actors incorporated these programmes into their lifeworld. In the next section these questions are considered in more detail examining the way in which two locals defined the areas problems and how these factors influenced their views towards development interventions.

10.5 Variable local accounts of the fishery: The hunter and the eco-friendly fisher.

The previous section demonstrated that working in the inshore fishery involved the adoption of a range of practices. In the carrying out of such practices fishermen navigated not only the waters but a social world in which their actions were shaped by economic, technical, legal and social constraints. It thus makes sense to speak of the fishery as an eco-social network within which biological technical and formal and informal regulatory dimensions inform the fishing practices that individual actors pursue. It is however also a contingent process in which specific actors can adopt different strategic responses to the same set of circumstances. It is the fishermen's understanding of these constraints that locate them in relation to the estuary and also informs their understanding of other objects that they encounter, including the human and non-human elements of the local development network. For this reason the way in which different members of the "the fishing community" conceptualise the area and define its problems are important in understanding how they formulated responses to the introduction of the Partnership. This is illustrated through a consideration of two such actors as they sought to define the area's problems and formulate a response to both these and the various state and local development responses to them.

The first of these actors had been identified by some local fishermen as one of their key unofficial representatives. During the 1980's he had been a major figure in the activities of the Irish Salmon Fisherman's Association. He was also well known to B.I.M and had benefited from this organisation's programmes on a number of occasions. This assistance often took the form of grants. He had also received what he called "donations" of certain pieces of gear at the conclusion of B.I.M pilot projects. In addition to his income derived from the fishery he also received an unemployment assistance payment. Without it, he claimed, it would not be possible for him to continue to fish. The payment thus constituted an essential element of his overall income. He was known to be an aggressive fisherman

prepared to engage in activities that bordered on the illegal. Indeed at the time when he was interviewed he was facing charges relating to illegal salmon netting and of attempting to ram a fisheries protection launch. He made no secret of his legal difficulties. Indeed he seemed to revel in these confrontations. On one occasion while in his house a fisheries patrol plane flew over, as it was out of season he remarked that "*they're all the time flying over my house checking if I have a few fish in the store*". He contrasted this with what he perceived as the relatively ineffective policing of French and Spanish trawlers in the Celtic Sea; "*You think they'd have better things to do than be worrying about me and my few fish*". He made similar remarks on a number of occasions whilst in the company of other fishermen. He was generally acknowledged as a leading spokesman for fishermen in the area and made regular references to his links to fishing organisations and problems with the authorities, in a way that appeared to help to maintain his reputation locally.

Leaving aside his very public tilts at the authorities he was a skilled fisherman familiar with a range of methods and acted as a source of advice to other local fishermen. He had a wide compass of new and old fishing technologies at his disposal and his year involved a number of periods during which fishing for different species took place. His house was perpetually surrounded by substantial amounts of gear suited to a range of fish species and methods. While fishing in the area is generally regarded as being under pressure he demonstrated considerable ingenuity and a capacity to flexibly respond to the challenges thrown up by such a difficult environment. He was perceived by many to be a major operator within the fishery, one of the few that made decent money out of all of the methods available to him, something he never conceded himself. In conversation the question of generating income was never far from the surface. This actors use of a combination of fishing practices and choice as to what to do at any given time were primarily driven by a desire to make money as he put it; "*If I can catch it I can sell it*". He had a good understanding of the local market and, despite his ambivalent attitude towards the authorities, the legal constraints and grant assistance opportunities that existed.

While he possessed the capacity to fish for numerous species he made it clear that, for him, the most desirable catch was salmon. He repeatedly cited this as his principle source of income, so much so, that he had invested in a cold store in order to hold and send on the fish. He also made written and verbal submissions to the Minister of the Marine during the drafting of a task force report on salmon fishing arguing for the legalisation of monofilament

netting. His brushes with the law were all related to salmon fishing and in 1995 he no longer held a salmon fishing licence having lost it in the course of his legal problems. He was able to circumvent this at the time by having his wife hold a licence. In part his interest in other types of fishing was prompted by the decline in salmon stocks and to the difficulties that had been caused to him by the law as it related to this fishery.

When the researcher first met him in October 1995 he was preparing old sections of monofilament for use in gill netting for monkfish. For this method, monofilament nets were legal at this time. While not then as lucrative as the salmon fishery, monkfish was becoming an increasingly valuable catch. As he pointed out this was a recent development in the local market "*a few years ago we had no regard for monkfish, you couldn't sell them,*" The rise to prominence of the species in the inshore fishing repertoire was relatively recent and related to its increased popularity on restaurant menus. His decision to become involved in gill netting was not simply related to the increasing value of the fish. It came about after he had again been caught fishing illegally for salmon. As a result he was as he put it "*temporarily out of action*". This left him with a considerable quantity of damaged monofilament which he had set adrift prior to being boarded and recovered later. He was not in a position to use this for catching salmon. He could however use this netting legally to catch monkfish.

While prepared to try new ideas he remained circumspect in his approach towards the suggestions made by BIM. In 1994, for example he was offered a number of pots suitable for catching shrimp. Though known in the area shrimp were not a favoured species on the Waterford coast. Shrimp fishing was deemed by him to be quite troublesome; the equipment needed to catch them is expensive, the modern plastic pots while necessary to achieve viable catches are fragile and expensive with between one and two hundred pots regarded as the necessary minimum for the venture to pay. In addition the best conditions for catching shrimp are in rougher weather which makes for difficult working conditions on the smaller boats and leads to a higher attrition rate on the equipment. Nevertheless he used the pots with some success in the first year but in the second and subsequent years the shrimp option failed. According to him this was as a result of increased numbers of fishermen availing of BIM grants for shrimp pots. As a result the volume of shrimp caught increased. Prices fell and the buyers became "*more choosey*". This led him to stop as he put it, "*when we first went at them, there was a good market for them, however with so many at them now the price is gone down and they are only taken a certain grade* (of shrimp)," This illustrates the

difference between BIM's priorities which focussed on increasing the exploitable catch and those of individual fishermen which focussed on the potential contribution of this catch to their own income. Whilst retaining the capacity to fish for shrimp he didn't bother in 1997 as prices were down. Shrimp were but one of a number of species which over the period of the research came to prominence as part of BIM's efforts to identify new marketable catches. It was clear that the circumspection he adopted in relation to the shrimp was an established practice he adopted in relation to new fishing opportunities. Whilst he kept in touch with BIM, frequently using them to acquire pieces of equipment and information, he also expressed reservations about BIM's attempted innovations.

Besides the BIM efforts he was also willing to carry out his own experiments. For example while velvet crabs had been identified by a number of officials from BIM and other support agencies as offering the possibilities of another alternative species, their exploitation had proven difficult due to the unique problems of storing them. Prior to sale it is customary for fishermen to collect a substantial amount of crabs and lobsters in boxes or pots in protected waters in the docks as this makes it worthwhile for buyers to collect them. However velvet crab must be stored in small numbers, as they attack each other and are prone to being damaged in storage. He had experimented with partitioned storage boxes in order to test out the possibility of marketing this catch. His results however proved to be less than convincing as the crabs still died and the market had not proved to be as good as anticipated. On another occasion he described an experiment which involved cutting a number of holes of between 2 and 5 centimetres diameter into plastic ten gallon drums. He had noticed numbers of whelks caught in the pots, this led him to consider the possibilities that they could provide an additional marketable catch. With this in mind he had come up with the drum design. This experiment was discontinued when he concluded that the market wasn't there.

This fisherman's approach to new methods and catches took into account ideas floated by BIM, but primarily relied on his own awareness of local conditions, the demands made of the gear itself and recognition of the limitations of existing markets. While he was willing to incorporate new practices into his fishing repertoire his approach toward such ventures and his response to the proposals of BIM was far from uncritical. Rather his response reflected a capacity to be highly flexible and to conduct his own evaluation of new methods. This was the case both as regards ventures promoted by BIM and also his own experiments with new species and methods. On occasions his experiments produced results which called into

question the prevailing local and expert wisdom. He illustrated this in the case of seal predation, long characterised as a major problem for fishermen. In this area they were blamed for taking salmon and monkfish out of nets. However he suggested that this may not have been the case "*I conducted an experiment of my own, in the places where we go after monkfish I put down some pots (Lobster pots) by the nets and when I pulled them up I had no end of Congers, (Conger Eels) two or three in some, BIM should realise that there as much to blame as seals*". In a similar fashion he also continually questioned the basis and motivations underlying the approach of the Fisheries Board to the areas salmon fishermen. Both the Fisheries Board and BIM were at this time arguing for greater controls on salmon drift netting. Both organisations had suggested that drift netting particularly with monofilament, was a key factor in the reduction of numbers of wild salmon. A view he countered with a number of points. These included the suggestion that the Fisheries Board were using him and others like him as scapegoats for their own failure to protect spawning grounds and stocks up river, the fact that the majority of the salmon were being taken off shore by larger boats and the claim that the current season was unfair in failing to take account of the fact that the main season during which fish are actually present in the waters off of county Waterford was later than in other parts of the country.

This fishermen perspective on the problems facing the areas fishery and his strategy in relation to fishing represented but one view on the local fishery and one strategy in response to the threats and opportunities encountered. Other fishermen in the area considered this individual to be a particularly aggressive fisherman and a confrontational individual. He was believed by some of other local fishermen to have used nets which exceeded the drift net limits and to regularly use illegal monofilament nets. He was also described by some as a loner who looked after himself first. He was very sceptical about the benefits of some of the co-operative ventures proposed by BIM, the Partnership and other fishermen. Such efforts were well meant but he claimed that their authors were "not serious fishermen". In so far as he retained an interest in any form of co-operation his primary concern was with the use of collective action politically, to lobby for a better deal for the salmon fishermen. For him fishing meant maximising catches of the best species using the best equipment with the principal function of collective action being to secure the greatest scope for individual local fishermen to pursue such an objective. In this particular case it would indeed seem that his was the approach of the dedicated hunter with profit maximisation as the key factor in shaping his strategy.

Other locals did not share his views and adopted very different strategies while working in the same fishery and under the same constraints. These included some who were involved at attempts to effect change to new species and other co-operative ventures. An example of such an alternative strategy was pursued by a fisherman who had been involved in attempts to establish a co-operative to conserve and develop lobster stocks in the area. In 1995 he established the South Eastern Lobster Fisherman's Co-operative, based on successful experience of a co-operative in Wexford with the aim of introducing a V notching programme¹¹. The co-operative represented a first step toward what he considered to be the securing of tighter regulation of the Lobster fishery. Indeed he didn't believe it could succeed without the creation of a licensing system for lobster fishing. The group received a small BIM grant and also secured a small amount of finance through membership fees. However the scheme was less intensively supported than the Wexford project where the funding had been on a sufficient scale to allow the employment of a development officer to work directly with the co-op. By contrast the Waterford co-op was a relatively small project, which turned over only IR£9,000 in its first full year of operation¹². In addition to this the co-op decided that the more complex element of the Wexford programme would not be attempted. This was the re-introduction of juveniles reared in captivity. They concluded that it was expensive and expressed a view that BIM had not proven that survival rates amongst the juveniles justified the expense. He claimed that it was likely that the juveniles, unfamiliar with a hostile environment were predated soon after they were released.

According to this fisherman it was indeed the introduction of modern methods which had directly caused the decline in stocks. It had also resulted in negative changes in the fishing community. However unlike the previous individual he recognised that the local inshore fishing community had played a role in the current problems in the fishery. As he put it people with five miles of drift net out had helped cause the problem. Not only had the methods changed but also the attitudes of fishermen. While previously people had been

¹¹ The programme involves cutting a notch in the tail of egg bearing female lobsters and a percentage of male lobsters caught in the area lobsters. Once marked such lobsters are returned if caught on subsequent occasions. Fishermen are compensated for lobsters returned through a central fund. This money is provided through grant assistance.

¹²The main expenses were the payment of the going rate to fishermen for re-introduced lobsters and administration costs.

"happy to go out and net enough using the green nets,"¹³ the introduction of fish finders and monofilament had led to an increase in the extent of fisherman's demands on the area's stocks. Alongside the introduction of new and more intensive fishing methods therefor this actor identified what he described as a decline in respect for the sea and sea life. He outlined a number of practices that he described as immoral or "barbaric". For example he mentioned the practice of taking one or both claws off of a crab which then returned to the sea. In theory when only one claw is removed the crab will survive and the claw is grown back. He claimed that in reality the crab is killed by "skimmers," a small marine crustacean which attacked crabs eating the soft part of the body under the shell. He also mentioned fish dumping¹⁴ referring to the pollution caused when "*acres of the sea bed are covered by dead fish*".

This fisherman's views reflect a similar pattern of practice to that found among members of small fishing communities described by Steins (1997) in attempts to mobilise a range of strategies to support and protect the retention of small scale production in the fishery. As with the former individual this actor again primarily attributed the deterioration in the local fishery to the combined effects of modern methods using bigger nets and larger trawlers and an influx of fishermen from outside the area. But as opposed to the former individual who stressed the rights of the local fishermen he also made extensive use of environmental arguments and evoked the idea of a local "community" of inshore fishermen who, with certain exceptions, had the potential to fish using better environmental practices than the large offshore operators. The co-operative with which he was involved was presented as evidence of the willingness of the local inshore fishermen to co-operate in developing sustainable fishing practices. They could do so through an organisation run on a small scale by volunteers who took responsibility for the management and policing of the programme. To some other fishermen including the individual discussed above this was a naive view of the world and while this individual persuaded a number to join the lobster co-op, they were sceptical as to the extent to which the scheme as constituted would be enforceable. A strong argument made by some was that given the current state of policing of other fishery regulations it was not likely that this programme could be effectively enforced. He did acknowledge that the scheme needed to be protected though in his case this principally

¹³Nylon nets which had come into fashion in the mid 70's prior to the introduction of monofilament.

¹⁴ A practice that it was suggested was adopted by some trawlers of dumping large quantities of herring if they do not contain roe. This enables a vessel to catch more of herring without exceeding their quota. Such dumping at sea means that these quantities are not recorded under the quota system a practice that is illegal.

concerned his fear that "Super Crabbers", larger vessels arriving in the area as a result of the decline in lobster and crab stocks in their home waters (primarily Cornwall) and using upwards of 2,000 pots, would not be prevented from fishing out the Waterford grounds. According to him the only solution would be for the State to safeguard the interests of the local fishermen through a licensing system. In other words the State should support the local and more environmentally friendly strategy of his co-op.

The two fishermen described above formulated different assessments of the problems which they faced and on this basis implemented widely varying strategies to pursue very different projects. These responses incorporated radically different perspectives concerning the State and the introduction of new development programmes. Taking the first of the two fishermen described above, it is clear that his views towards BIM reflected a degree of scepticism concerning the capacity of state agencies to help people in his position. The new BIM initiatives were aimed at imparting new methods to catch a number of species using various pieces of equipment and methods. These efforts by BIM to have locals adopt the new methods proposed by its experts had the potential to redefine the relationship between B.I.M, the inshore fishermen and the sea. However the response of the first fisherman discussed above shows that he was in no way a passive recipient of such knowledge. Rather he was able to demonstrate a high degree of autonomy as to how such new objects were incorporated into his own knowledge of the business of fishing. Moreover this competence allowed him to in many ways challenge the claims made by the supposed experts and thus question the validity of the new options that they made available to the areas fishermen. While BIM suggested new species, he assessed them independently in some cases performing his own experiments in order to do so. His own knowledge of fishing remained the framework through which he was able to transform the new objects introduced by the "experts," into additional components in his own repertoire of fishing practices. These objects did not in his case serve to encourage a departure from traditional fishing practices but were, if anything, a means to ensure their continuation in some form. On no occasion were the ideas proposed by B.I.M dismissed out of hand or simply accepted. Rather they were appraised independently, information as to how the practices recommended actually worked out was generated through practical experimentation. The results as regards the conditions and circumstances in which these options made sense were added to this actor's repertoire. These methods were then considered for use within the context of the fisherman's existing yearly fishing pattern and

the performance or anticipated performance of other species, the market and the regulatory framework in place at the time.

In addition he was also able to draw on his own knowledge to look beyond the formal narrative on fishery development put forward by BIM and later the similar narrative of the Partnership. Drawing attention to the fact that despite the numerous small scale initiatives in which these organisations were involved, the main aim of government policy had been to support fleet rationalisation allocating funding to fewer and bigger boats (See Meredith and McGinley 2009 p171-172). In support of this accusation he could point to the states assistance for the factory trawler Veronica¹⁵ and the granting of greater access to Irish Waters to other E.U. vessels as evidence. While formal development discourse highlighted the need for new innovative approaches to fishing. This individual's comments continually came back to the importance of salmon. At one point saying that "*if you really want us to survive in fishing then let us fish for salmon with monofilament*". For him the question of continuing salmon fishing was not linked to an inability to be innovative but resulted from an evaluation of the potential that new species and fishing options proposed by B.I.M offered. While this fisherman was capable and indeed willing to adopt and investigate new practices his views as to the viability of new methods were based on his own trials and knowledge of the market. Empirical testing, as well as some shrewd observations of the wider fisheries policy environment and the place of the inshore fishery in it, led him to the conclusions he reached. In this context the interest of organisations such as BIM and later the Partnership in encouraging alternative forms of development was at best viewed as good intentioned. On occasions however it was seen by him as part of a wider policy agenda, to force out local fishermen in favour of anglers and the larger trawlers.

As with the first fisherman the views of the second concerning the fishery also differed in important respects to those of the State and development organisations. He described the situation in terms of a struggle between a local fishing community who employed traditional inshore methods that supported a traditional inshore way of life and a commercial fishery based outside the area which employed modern, environmentally damaging and non-

¹⁵ The Veronica was an extremely large vessel originally based in Donegal it had been grant supported by BIM to the tune of the equivalent of half BIM's budget for fleet development in 1995. In 2008 it was the world's second largest trawler and was described as having "the dubious reputation of having killed more fish than any other boat in the world,"(theage.com 2008)

sustainable methods. He also reserved some criticism for fishermen within the locality who had abused the resource system. His solution was to return to older methods and to foster co-operation amongst fishermen to exploit a resource pool from which others could be excluded. In his case it was also far from the case that he accepted the development “reality,” that the inshore fishery was dying. Rather he saw scope for development along a different environmentally friendly line which would protect fishermen who were based locally and fished responsibly. It is thus possible to identify considerable differences between the two. The latter fisherman’s views could be described as romantic-traditionalist in that they evoked an older period in which fishermen maintained a way of life which was environmentally sustainable. His emphasis was on the maintenance of this “tradition” rather than on an increase in material wealth. Yet it is clear from talking to other fishermen in the co-op that their membership was informed more by a concern with the danger of losing out should v notching and co-operative membership become legally enforceable in the future, than on a deep seated desire to co-operate. For the former, the issue is more contentiously expressed. For him the question is a political one. The State has chosen to give its backing to other groups.

Despite their differences a consideration of the perspectives of these individuals highlights a number of similarities which are of relevance to understanding local responses to the Partnership in this area. Firstly it is clear that in determining how to fish they adopt strategies that vary considerably to that which is implicit in the development perspective. They are not locked into a “traditional,” fishing mode. Both are responsive to new ideas that can potentially be of value to them as fishermen. Secondly both express reservations as to the degree of expertise shown by state agencies in dealing with the fishing industry. Thirdly in both cases when they focus on the future of the fishery their concern is with the most effective way of husbanding and fishing it, rather than whether it should in fact be fished at all. Fourthly both apportion responsibility for the poor condition of the fishery to outside factors including large operators from outside the area and also the failure of the state to protect the inshore fishery.

Unlike the Partnership, which stressed the need for the development of new projects outside of the traditional fishery in response to the inevitable consequences of changes in this industry, neither fisherman saw these changes as inevitable or unavoidable. Rather they pointed to the need for the state to support them in what was an on-going conflict with other

users. Their positions when approaching the State was to selectively use its services, incorporating aspects of the State's programmes into their existing flexible livelihood strategies rather than to make a transition away from these strategies. In doing so they both exhibited the kind of innovative thinking and entrepreneurial flair reminiscent of the market oriented behaviour that the Partnership in particular suggested was lacking in these areas and needed to be fostered.

10.6 Conclusion Getting lost in translation flexible livelihood strategies and local development programmes

This chapter has briefly examined economic and social life in one of the geographical areas in which the Partnership operated and within that area one particular group, the local fishing community. When considered in detail it becomes clear that such aggregates rapidly disappear to be replaced in reality with a number of actors whose divergent interests are reflected in the meanings they give to the estuary as a whole and to specific objects within it. An in depth evaluation of the views of two fishermen suggests that over a considerable period of time actors in this group have displayed an ability to adapt flexibly to changes in the existing network of objects they encounter in the estuary and its surroundings. As a consequence they have developed an approach to the question of income generation which differs radically from that of the Partnership. The fishing households devise flexible livelihood strategies, and households in similar situations can formulate widely different understandings of their economic circumstances and the threats and opportunities that confront them. This in turn results in widely different responses to these circumstances. Actors respond differently to similar circumstance and furthermore such variation is likely to result in these actors adopting different responses to the introduction of new objects. The data presented in this chapter points to the central role that such livelihood strategies play in this process this in turn makes it possible to address the question of how these actors respond to the introduction of new development programmes. In this final section of the chapter an attempt is made to do so.

The chapter began by examining some of the factors likely to shape local responses to the introduction of the Partnership. The data suggests that the forms of local knowledge that shape these responses supported an entirely different way of understanding or “translating”

the area to that outlined in various forms of policy discourse including those associated with local development. Exchanges between actors enrolled in policy networks and those local actors they are seeking to enrol thus involve conflicts over the meaning of objects. So for example to the fishermen, the estuary represents a fishery resource. As we saw in the previous chapter, the area was defined as an underutilised tourism opportunity by W.D.P and members of D.E.W.T, the group it had identified as representing the community in this area. Attempts to establish the dominance of certain views of these objects occur during encounters at interfaces. This chapter has thus sought to describe features of the knowledge processes employed by locals in responding to such situations in order to develop an understanding of the processes that are likely to occur when such actors encounter new objects such as those that are part of the partnership programme. The first data presented in this chapter focussed on existing local practices relating to fishing in one village. The data describes a situation that is reminiscent of the combination of natural and human factors that contribute to a “co-production,” as described by Van der Ploeg in relation to agriculture (1997). Such systems involve an accumulation of “*knowledge and skills that develop a relationship of co-production relative to the availability of natural resources and to their diversity which is the result of different methods of use that have evolved over time.*” (Milone 2009 p 2). The data demonstrated that the estuary is an area of complex social interaction in which actors draw on differentiated stocks of local knowledge in order to formulate specific individual strategies. Over time, specific identifiable patterns of usage have arisen informed by local knowledge of the areas ecology, available technologies, and economic opportunities both formal and informal. Flexibility is an important element of these practices, as is a preparedness to avail of a variety of income sources. This suggests, at the very least, one alternative to the Partnership’s model for intervention that the responses of actors to state initiatives such as the partnership are likely to be informed by a strategic assessment of their significance in respect of these flexible livelihood strategies.

This raises an important issue in relation to the way in which local actors approached the questions of employment, unemployment, work and income. Employment issues were something that lay at the heart of the Partnership approach. Throughout the period researched the need to create employment in an area which was perceived to be suffering adverse economic conditions continued to be an important part of the Partnership’s work. As we have seen the Partnership model defined the issue of employment and unemployment as dichotomous states and envisaged the role of local Partnerships as one of assisting the

unemployed to gain employment by creating jobs in the local economy and assisting them to become “employment ready”. In this translation employment and unemployment were discrete categories and the role of welfare payments was clearly defined as a form of income support to people who had no other adequate source of income. However within the fishing community it was far from the case that the categories of employment and unemployment were clearly defined. Many fishermen were self-employed and worked on a seasonal basis supplementing their income with other jobs on occasions. Others availed of welfare payments to supplement inadequate fishery income. For them, such payments were not a replacement for a lack of income so much as a basic minimum which made it possible for them to continue fishing. Work in the fishery was organised in ways that differed from the ways in which work was conceptualised by organisations such as the Partnership. Local actors had devised flexible livelihood strategies in which a form of “pluriactivity,” has traditionally been the norm, rather than the exception.

Having established this, the latter part of the chapter examined how these strategies impact on the way in which such actors define the problems that face them as members of the fishing community and shape their views as to the best solutions to these problems. Clearly, the data illustrates that the views expressed by fishermen differ significantly from those expressed by actors enrolled in the development network. Indeed there is evidence to suggest that in the past such actors have demonstrated an ability to deconstruct initiatives and to selectively adopt pieces of various programmes to suit their needs. When involved in discussions with the Partnership both the individuals described in the latter half of this chapter continued to advance their own explanations as to the causes of the problems facing the fishery and to its possible solutions. In effect they attempted to enrol the Partnership in line with their projects. Their response to such initiatives in the past was not to embrace new translations of the area and its difficulties, but rather to assess them as new factors added to the existing mix that made up the complex web of objects that surrounded the estuary. While they acknowledged a decline in the fish stocks they tended to attribute this directly to the activities of outsiders or other factors beyond their control. For the local fishermen the issue of reduced stocks emerged from the failure of the State to protect the inshore fishery where they had traditional rights to fish and which had negligible impact on the overall state of fish stocks. By contrast, as we have seen, the local development discourse tended to present the issue of declining fish stocks in the context of a process of fundamental and irreversible techno-economic transition in the fisheries. This perspective saw the forces of economics

leading to increased efficiency in the sector with a smaller number of larger and more economically efficient units able to catch more fish. Within this perspective the squeezing out of the smaller operators was regarded as inevitable leaving a smaller number of bigger operators to share the catch between them. By contrast the fishermen discussed in this chapter tended to emphasise the significance of measures to support the fishery itself and to directly assist those negatively affected by changes in the fishery. The local development approach, in so far as it addressed the fishery at all, envisaged a break with the past, involving the replacement of fishing with alternative activities which would regenerate the locality through a transition to a new rural economy. Rather than focussing directly on the needs of those affected by the decline of existing sources of income and employment it was assumed that a regenerated rural economy could help all, through a kind of local trickle-down. Indeed within this perspective the decline of the local fishery could be regarded as a good thing, freeing up resources for other more economically productive activities. Take for example the disputes over the Passage East car ferry and proposals to develop Dunmore East discussed in the previous chapter. Fishing harbours, could become marinas while throughout the nineteen nineties tourism interests constantly made reference to the high value of salmon landed by tourists to the national economy¹⁶. By contrast the fishermen did not depict decline in the fishery as inevitable. While some recognised and accepted that change in the existing pattern of fishing was necessary, they blamed the current difficulties facing the fishery on outsiders and argued for more support for local fishers as opposed to larger operators from outside the area. Both fishermen considered here continue to perceive their relationship with the area in terms of their identity as fishermen, and this was the context to their response to the introduction of the Partnership in the area. Their scepticism concerning to the accuracy of the claims of experts in both BIM and later the Partnership can thus be understood as resistance to the efforts to impose a translation of the area in which the traditional fishery was

¹⁶ The tourism industry referred regularly to the significant contribution of salmon angling to GDP, this was also a major conclusion of a consultancy commissioned by the Central Fisheries Board in 2003 (Indecon 2003). Another consultancy published contradictory findings some months later arguing that “*There is no economic basis for Indecon’s recommendation that, by diverting a greater % of the Total Catch to angling, a greater contribution to GNP would result. In fact the evidence points in the opposite direction,*” (Neylon Economic Consultants 2003 p. 3). Curtis (2002) conducted a detailed academic discussion of the value of the tourism salmon catch illustrating the complexity of such measures and the limits in the actual data available. He suggested that the case being made for salmon angling had not been proven and perhaps that the findings of any consultants on this issue need to be taken with a very large pinch of salt.

in terminal decline and new economic activities, in particular tourism, held the answer. In resisting this they were able to utilise their own local knowledge as a powerful counter argument which raised doubts as to the merits of the claims made by others.

Far from the type of consensus the Partnership suggested concerning the question of local development, such questions remained the subject of significant differences. This and the previous chapter show that a range of heterogeneous individuals, groups and organisations are involved in considering how value can be extracted from the estuary. Conflicts between different resource users can be interpreted as arising out of the efforts of actors to establish the dominance of one set of meanings of the object over others. From the data presented here, it should be clear that there are substantial contradictions between the perspective brought to bear by the fishermen and those of the development agencies. Table 10.1 outlines some of the key areas of conflict between the translation outlined in formal policy discourse and the views of the fishermen in relation to the question of how the area should be developed. If the previous experience of State programmes in such areas offers any indication of the way in which local actors understand their social world and respond to the introduction of new opportunities then at encounters at the interface between the partnership and these actors these translations are likely to be contested as each seeks to enrol objects in a certain way in specific networks which advances the respective projects of the actors concerned. The estuary is not simply a stretch of water it is a meaningful set of objects bound up in struggles between actors in various different networks. The fishermen construct and maintain an identity for themselves. Their responses to new objects such as development initiatives are evaluated in the context of how the intermediaries, the actors, artefacts and money that they bring in to the area will affect the objects which are part of the network. In short they consider how it will impact on their livelihood strategies.

Characteristic	Formal Development Discourse	Fishing Community
Basis of assessment	Expert knowledge	Past history and personal experience
Objective	Areas development	Household income
Estuary	None maximised resource	Established resource system
Process involves	Transition-break with the past	Continuity with the past
Causes of problems	Inevitable socio-economic forces	Caused by agency
Relationship with disadvantaged	Indirect - Local Trickle down	Direct-support to those in need
Relationship with state	Works with the state	Can be in conflict with the state
Economic implications	Measures change local economic behaviour	Measures support local economic behaviour
Priorities decided by	Consensus - Planning	Power – Politics
Current benefit	Everyone	Others

Table 10.1 Local development and Fishing Community perspective on development

Certain stretches or parts of the river are their traditional grounds and the fishermen are protective of these and critical of any efforts at development that interfere with established fishing patterns. However in their eagerness to support the advent of new development initiatives in the area, the development groups and Partnership all too easily adopted a translation which ignored the possibility of a sustainable fishery. The notion that tourism was the future became a basic tenet of Partnership ideas about the estuary. However the fishermen, who were never engaged in the Partnership's consultation process, had a different take on events. When confronted with the declining catches of recent years they invariably pointed to a variety of villains including the government, the fisheries board, the tourist lobby and the offshore fishermen. While they are prepared to concede that recent years have seen a decline in catches, they insist that salmon remains a viable option. Thus debates in the area as to its future development can be understood as involving differences between people holding

different interests and forms of identity. In order to pursue these interests they become part of different networks. The partnership made no effort to gain the support of the fishermen in the network surrounding development because within the translation of the estuary they employed, fishing and the fishermen were already cast as objects with little capacity to speak. Within development and fisheries policy discourse much use is made of formal methods of research and planning. By enrolling such skills into their network they are able to present their decisions as backed by formal “expert” analysis. There is for them no debate over the adverse impact of for example monofilament fishing because it is backed by expert knowledge. This renders it unnecessary for them to engage the fishermen in debate or strive to enrol them as actors in their network.

By contrast the understandings of fishermen are drawn from informal local knowledge. These informal systems or understandings seldom figured in the formal development policy discourse. Yet an understanding of such systems is central to understanding how development initiatives operate in such areas. Conflicts relating to the area’s development arise as new actors with different interests became involved. Taking the case of the salmon as an example some of these new interests sought to establish a translation in which the salmon played an entirely different role to that it played within the flexible income strategies of fishermen. Formal development policy discourse increasingly comes to be seen as ascribing to a view put forward by such interests. Throughout the 1990's both the estuary and salmon fishery came to be regarded as underutilised tourism resources. This was in total contrast to the fishing communities who continue to depict salmon as an integral part of their livelihood.

When understanding how fishermen respond to new initiatives it is necessary to recognise firstly, that fishermen do regard themselves as such and secondly that in addition to the estuary fishermen rely on a range of options to generate income. While development discourse tended to portray the fishery in decline and fishing households as victims of this process requiring assistance in order to make a transition. In reality such households demonstrated a capacity for considerable flexibility and were, regardless of these expressed preferences, prepared to engage in a wide range of activities. The fishermen’s response to the efforts of BIM and the later Partnership must be understood in these terms. When the partnership introduces new measures into the area, the fishermen approach them as objects in terms of their potential to contribution to their livelihood strategies which include their fishing practices and not as alternatives to them.

Chapter 11: Fishing Practices, Income and Development.

11.1 Introduction.

The previous chapter sought to develop a perspective through which to understand how actors respond to development initiatives. The starting point was the idea that actors existing life worlds provide the context in which they firstly interpret and subsequently formulate responses to economic threats and opportunities. In order to understand how these processes are worked out, it is necessary to develop some understanding of the all-enveloping social reality in which actors “muddle through,” the process of reproducing their daily lives (Long 2001). The previous chapter investigated this experience in one area with a view to identifying how this understanding can be employed to a study of the responses of locals to such programmes. What is immediately obvious is that such an approach recognises that local actors’ responses to such programmes are variable. As Arce demonstrates they are not “*normatively determined entities of the differentiation process affecting there environments*” (Arce 2001 p. 104), rather they retain the capacity to operate strategically adopting features of the local development programmes into their repertoires selectively. Local actors were capable of making highly differentiated assessments of the area and its economic difficulties which varied significantly from the assessments made by other actors such as the state agencies and the Partnership. These assessments were in turn a reflection of the varied flexible livelihood strategies of these actors through which they co-produced resources in interaction with the natural environment and other factors in the socio-economic context in which they lived (van der Ploeg, 1997, Milone 2009). While a key feature of local development discourse was that areas such as Passage were in crisis or decline, an important feature to note here is that flexible livelihood strategies were not attributable to the specific set of economic and social facts confronting the fishermen and other local residents at this time. Rather they appear to be an embedded feature of social life. Complexity emerges as an inherent feature of life in the estuary, in the relationships between local actors’ the space in which they live and wider social networks which they encounter (Law and Mol 2002). The exploitation of the estuary as part of these livelihood strategies is a dynamic process in which actors enrol a varying range of objects, human, technical and physical into inherently contingent networks in line with a particular “mode of ordering,” (Law 1994). The varied

responses of local actors to the introduction of new objects they encounter are based on discursively rational assessments which “*draw(n) from the stock of available discourses that form part of the cultural milieu of social practice,*” (Lockie 1996 p.45) in order to examine the significance of these objects within their existing mode of ordering.

The previous chapter pointed to the value of looking at what Long (2001) calls “lived in worlds” in seeking to understand how local actors respond to the introduction of new objects. This suggestion has significant methodological implications. It points to the importance of looking at how local actors assess their own socio-economic circumstances, respond to the introduction of new forms of intervention and of course how they interact with other actors connected to such new initiatives in the course of maintaining dynamically evolving livelihood strategies. This prompts a number of questions firstly, concerning the extent to which local livelihood strategies influence the perceptions of local actors towards the state and the introduction of new interventions, and secondly concerning the impact this has on the shape of these interventions. The material presented in this chapter examines interactions between local actors and the staff of state agencies in order to address these questions in more detail and thereby add to our understanding of how local actors responded to and thereby participated in, the shaping of interventions at local level. Such information is crucial to an understanding of how the partnership’s programmes were worked out during encounters between staff and clients during the implementation of partnership projects.

The next section of the chapter begins by investigating in more depth the methodological implications discussed above outlining how the observations in the last chapter can assist in the development of an approach to examining the way in which locals examine and respond to state interventions. For reasons which are outlined at length in the next section the chapter will focus on the implementation in one area of a series of programmes which were significant to the income of local actors. Thus the bulk of the remainder of the chapter goes on to examine a series of interactions involving the staff of a number of organisations including the partnership and local actors with a view to developing an understanding of how these interactions influenced the shape that the programmes took. Finally the chapter will conclude by outlining what this analysis indicates about how interactions involving local actors shape local development.

11.2 Looking at locals looking at the state

In the previous chapter it was shown that local actors respond to objects through an assessment of their likely consequences on their own flexible livelihood strategies. These strategies are themselves embedded in local networks in which a specific mode of ordering defines the role of the human and non-human actors; which translates them, in a certain way. Having established the significance of flexible income strategies the chapter examined how these influenced the understandings that some local actors developed about their socio-economic circumstances. This included their ideas about the local economy, fishing technologies and objects in the natural world. It also included their ideas about their relationship with the various elements of the State including regulatory organisations, the welfare system and later, local development projects. The chapter concluded by suggesting that the response of local actors to the introduction of new social objects into their lifeworlds is guided by strategic considerations. The way in which such objects were introduced into the area was not framed in terms that were defined by the various authors of these interventions. Rather it was guided by the assessment of local actors of the implications that these new interventions would have on their existing income strategies.

This suggests that much as agencies such as BIM, the Department of Social Welfare/Social Community and Family Affairs (D.S.W/S.C.F.A)¹ and W.D.P may attempt to incorporate local actors into their programmes, by having them accept a certain view of the world and of the situation in which they were located. Local actors assessed these ideas and objects on the basis of a different set of criteria. Thus the result of the interactions in which wider policy networks come into contact with local actors can be understood as the result of interactions between actors contingently enrolled within different networks. Within these networks objects have the potential to be translated in different ways within different frames of

¹ Between 1947 and 1997 the Department of Social Welfare was the lead national agency responsible for implementing social policies in Ireland including a system of income supports to a range of target groups including the unemployed and lone parents. Having retained the same name for fifty years the department was renamed on three occasions between 1997 and 2010 becoming the Department of Social Community and Family Affairs in 1997, the Department of Social and Family Affairs in 2002 and the Department of social Protection in 2010. This study spans the period during the first of these name changes and for this reason the organisation is referred to as the Department of Social Welfare/Social Community and Family Affairs (DSW/SCFA)

meaning. In the examples examined in previous chapters the way that actors embedded in various policy related networks employ particular types of policy discourse was examined. This discourse provides these actors with access to particular forms of knowledge that convey a special sense of validity on the way in which they translate local objects and events. Such networks can thus mobilise the political legitimacy of the State and considerable financial and material resources in order to facilitate a process by which objects are enrolled and ordered in the development network. However, despite the overarching nature of these claims research suggests that local actors always have some capacity to resist external forces such as the state and development programmes (Scott 1985, Masaki 2007). The previous chapter confirms that in Passage East and the area around the Suir Estuary actors displayed a considerable capacity to do so. This illustrates the significance of incorporating a consideration of the impact of local knowledge on development outcomes as Long puts it "*it is important to be alert to the dangers of assuming the potency and driving force of external institutions, interests and narratives – whether global or national – since they represent only one set among a large array of actors who shape outcomes,*" (2010 p. 9).

The previous chapter demonstrates that while the forms of discourse employed by the State assume a level of compliance with a particular mode of ordering, a particular feature of these modes of ordering is that they conceptualise the local world in ways that are radically different to those of local actors. Official local development discourse for example involves a specific analysis of the problems facing areas upon which it makes assertions about how to address these problems. Not least of these is the notion that local development involves a package of measures, which include as a central element the notion of local organisation, managed through consensus building based on expert knowledge. The expert knowledge and skills employed in producing this development narrative render the fishermen's current participation in the areas economy marginal. Objects such as the salmon are portrayed as under threat and in need of protection, the fishery as in terminal decline, fishing households as passive recipients. Their status is that of victims whose way of life is no longer viable. Perversely, while part of the rationale employed by the Partnership is the need to empower local people, the analysis of the economy it uses to justify this, disempowers the fishing community, suggesting they lack the skills base and know-how necessary to come to terms with the new realities. Instead the area's people need to be "assisted," to make adjustments to the new economic realities by measures aimed to maximise the areas "wealth creating potential". However while actors in the local development network may seek to have locals

accept this translation an examination of the socio-economic behaviour of members of the fishing community suggest that the fishermen respond to a range of state policy measures in a way that reflects their own involvement in fishing practices. For them the question of how the area should be developed is not closed. What are, for organisations such as the Partnership and BIM a volume of irrefutable facts based on the data assembled by experts remains for the fishermen a contested domain. They evaluate new ideas introduced by these organisations for themselves, employing their own knowledge to do so and their responses to them are based on discursively rational assessments of how these objects affect them (Long 2001). Thus their responses to the introduction of the Partnership is not one of passive participants in the process of enrolment into the development network but rather as active members of other networks within which objects in the estuary are defined in different ways. As much as the Partnership endeavours to incorporate objects in the estuary in its development network, the fishermen attempt to incorporate elements of the initiatives into theirs. Based on these observations it may be thus possible to advance a number of propositions which collectively constitute elements of a working hypothesis, concerning the way in which initiatives introduced by external actors are incorporated into specific localities.

The first of these propositions is that the process by which new policy objects are incorporated into the life world of local actors is not solely shaped by the ideas and constructs incorporated in formal discourse.

Secondly this suggests that the actual shape that formal development programmes take in specific areas are the contingent outcome of encounters during which actors drawing on differentiated stocks of knowledge, work out the meaning of specific objects. The meaning of such programmes is thus the result of the combined efforts of actors drawing on differentiated stocks of knowledge through which they attempt to define objects in ways that reflect their own interests and projects.

Third, no matter how powerful external actors may appear to be, all actors engaged in these encounters retain the ability to challenge the claims of various officials and experts as regards the meaning of the objects included in new interventions.

Fourth the responses of local actors to formal development programmes are based on forms of local knowledge which support flexible livelihood strategies which, it must be added, include their previous experiences of the State and which support the alternative projects of local actors.

The final proposition is that the responses of any given actors to the outcome of these encounters are likely to reflect their differentiated stocks of knowledge and thus vary significantly.

The ideas outlined above synthesize elements of the research approach outlined at the beginning of this study with some of the observations made in the previous two chapters concerning the question of how local actors respond to the introduction of new initiatives. These ideas may be of use in examining the way in which local development programmes are worked out in specific localities and the related issue of how power is worked during such events, by drawing attention to the role that actors embedded in specific socio-cultural contexts play in this process.

This chapter now turns more specifically to the issue of how these considerations influenced the actual implementation of state interventions in Passage East itself. In the process of doing so, some consideration will be given to the extent to which the propositions outlined above are reflected in the actual events that occur during the on-going implementation of interventions in an area. This broader evaluation is necessary since the introduction of the Partnership in this area occurred within a broader context. As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, the responses of local actors to any particular intervention are informed by their on-going experience with the range of policies and interventions they encounter in the course of pursuing their own livelihood strategies. In this chapter three key and related sets of events are examined in detail. The first of these is the on-going issue of the relationship between Passage East residents and the social welfare system. The second issue considered in detail is the support of BIM and the Partnership for an aquaculture project in the village. Finally the efforts of the Partnership to establish the Area Allowance Enterprise Scheme

(A.A.E.S)² are examined in detail. There are three reasons why the focus is placed on these particular interventions. Firstly it was the case that of all the various policy interventions in the area, these were amongst those identified by local actors as being the most significant particularly in relation to the issues raised in the previous chapter concerning livelihood strategies. At an early stage in the fieldwork it became clear that the social welfare system filled an important role in the village's economic life, representing a significant element of local income for some of the households in the area, while the aquaculture project and the A.A.E.S also constituted significant interventions, which directly impacted on local earnings in the village.

Secondly, it has already been suggested that the responses of local actors to the state are developed over a period of time and are informed by their previous experiences of the state and understandings of how such contacts impact on the local actors' livelihood. Examining this particular set of programmes provides a particularly good opportunity to examine the response of local actors to a range of state bodies over a period of time. This is particularly useful given the Partnership's claim to represent an alternative to traditional forms of State intervention and in particular its declared role in relation to the issue of unemployment. While these distinctions might be quite easy to discern in the nuanced world of development policy, examining these programmes in-situ provides an opportunity to examine the extent to which they impacted on local responses to different forms of state intervention. In addition these programmes are closely related. Indeed it could be argued that they form part of a sequence. As we have seen the issue of welfare dependency was a key justification for further state intervention in the form of the Partnership and the reduction of these levels a key objective. The objective of the Partnership was to move locals out of a situation in which they were unemployed and hence relied on welfare payments to one in which they were able to generate their own income through either employment or self-employment. An examination of these programmes makes it possible to examine the extent to which events on the ground reflected this logic. Examining these three programmes thus allows us to examine the relationship between actual patterns of state intervention during which implementing bodies meet local actors and the model of intervention envisaged by the partnership. Thirdly

² The area allowance enterprise scheme was one of the flagship measures of the A.B.R. under this programme residents of the designated areas who had been unemployed for more than a year were given support in establishing their own business.

the researcher was based in the area and was able to work directly with the Partnership and the D.S.W/S.C.F.A on the implementation of aspects of all three programmes offering a unique opportunity to gain an insight into the operation of these programmes.

11.3 Fishing and income in Passage East.

In the previous chapter the significance of actors' assessments of the potential implications of new objects for their livelihood strategies was examined. Such livelihood strategies are, it was shown, always changing in response to changes in the natural and socio economic context in which the actor is located. The way that people muddle through the task of reproducing their daily lives varies between individuals and individuals alter their strategies in response to changes in the socio economic context in which they are embedded. Despite the dominance of the role of fishing as a source of local identity, the research showed that it was but one of a number of income sources available to local households. Faced with the task of attempting to maintain an adequate level of income it becomes apparent that members of local households are involved in a wide range of economic activities. Income is not solely dependent on the estuary but is linked to the potential offered by this range of alternatives. These sources are combined towards generating an overall income as part of a livelihood strategy. It is these considerations which shape their responses to various interventions.

In Passage East the system of welfare payments administered by the Department of Social Welfare/Social Community and Family Affairs (D.S.W/S.F.C A) was among the other significant sources of income available to some of the area's households. Indeed some of those who the researcher met and spoke to stated that while income derived from fishing or from other employment is regarded as an important contribution to the overall household income, the welfare payment was regarded as the basic household income providing the necessary minimum to provide for household essentials. As one of man explained "*there is no harmony in a house unless the woman has her housekeeping*". For him, at the very least the welfare payment provided the assurance that the weekly food bill and other basic household expenses were paid. The welfare system provided a regular weekly income which was stable and predictable. By contrast the returns from fishing were unpredictable and dependent on seasonal factors. Equally some of the other forms of employment available to people in the area are also unpredictable, they were often dependant on seasonal factors or

were of a part time or occasional nature. In the case of the individual mentioned above, the spouse also collected the payment and regarded it as her money. This actor's comments suggest that the welfare system occupied a role that was radically different to that outlined by the D.S.W/S.C.F.A. Rather than acting as a source of income support for those with no livelihood for this actor, along with a number of others, such sources of income were fully incorporated into their income strategy. In some cases this was done in a way which complied with the regulations covering the administration of the welfare system through such expedients as declaring additional income to the Department or "signing off," i.e. ceasing to claim benefit during periods of employment. However it was also the case that some actors failed to comply with these regulations. Chiefly this occurred when people continued to claim benefits while also receiving income from other sources. Such practices carry specific sanctions and it was part of the responsibility of local social welfare officials to attempt to detect and prevent them. However there are some features of the fishery itself that made it possible for local actors to incorporate such practices into livelihood strategies over significant periods of time.

The first of these features is the lack of visibility of activities in the inshore fishery. This is particularly so for smaller boats which can operate out of limited docks and facilities such as those at Passage East where there is little monitoring of activities in the harbour. Furthermore at the point of production there is almost no monitoring at all of the actual size of the catch and its value. Fish are sold quickly and this can be done for cash and involve little in the way of a formal record. Indeed a number of locals in the area suggested that in some cases catches are not declared³ and fish are sold locally. These factors make it extremely difficult to verify what is made locally and by whom from fishing. A second feature concerns the nature of the relationship between the fishing community and the regulatory agents of the state. As has been shown local actors expressed a considerable level of dissatisfaction with the role of the state in relation to the interests of the inshore fishermen. In addition and as the previous chapter suggests the fishery now involves a range of complex regulations and rules. Staying on the right side of these is complicated at the best of times. Indeed as the examples discussed in the previous chapter suggest this appeared to be becoming more difficult as time went by. There was a strong sense of grievance amongst inshore fishermen who felt they had

³As is the case with salmon, monkfish or lobsters where small amounts of product can be sold locally to restaurants at a high prices.

been overlooked by the state in favour of bigger operators. Fishermen regularly expressed concerns that the government was not supporting their interests and in conversation would often air suspicions about the role of the state in relation to the fishery. In the context of what they saw as a lack of support and in some cases bias by the state against them, some local fishermen suggested that they had “no option” but to break the fishing regulations and avail of welfare payments in order to survive. Indeed there was a widespread perception amongst local fishermen and others that significant level of informal or unregulated and illegal activity continued in the fishery such as, fishing outside of the appropriate seasons and non-reported sales of catches, as well as the illegal use of monofilament nets⁴. Thus for some local actors their use of the welfare system seemed to fit into a perspective which some held, that viewed the inshore fishermen’s relationship with the state as a primarily adversarial one.

Besides the fishery there were also features of the payment system itself that contributed to ability of local actors to incorporate these payments into their income strategies. These included the relative ease with which they could avail of these payments. Once the individual was long-term unemployed they were required to “sign on” by presenting a form to the local Garda to be signed once a month. Other than this they were not required to have any contact with the Department on a regular basis. The payments were at this time issued in the form of a weekly cheque posted to their place of residence⁵. The ease with which cheques could be cashed together with the lack of surveillance made it simpler for people to make and maintain claims. In addition and despite the claims of local actors to the contrary there was in fact very little surveillance of the payments system in the village and little evidence that social welfare officers carried out regular checks to make sure local people were not working.

While it would be wrong to assume that all of the areas fishermen were in receipt of such payments, or that all those on such payments in the village were also involved in fishing, local views on the welfare system differed considerably from the formal understandings attached to it by official bodies such as the D.S.W/S.F.C.A. In some case, far from being an alternative to earnings it was seen as integral to household income. Within the area the practice of combining fishing and welfare income was well established. Despite the fact that

⁴ Indeed the reason for the legalisation of monofilament netting in 1997 was as an effort to reduce the level of illegal use of these nets.

⁵ Many social welfare payments are now made directly to the recipients bank.

such practices were not acceptable in the formal regulatory framework under which welfare payments were administered and indeed may have been regarded as an abuse of the system, it was certainly not the case that they were viewed in these terms by some of those living and working in the fishery. Indeed it could be argued that the availability of these welfare payments had brought about a situation of interdependence. Without the welfare payment fishing would not be viable for many of those concerned. Equally it is the fact that many local families continue to be involved in the fishery that contributes to consistently high levels of welfare dependency. A crucial point here therefore, is the relationship between these practices and the notion that these actors had of themselves as fishermen.

11.4 Welfare officials and the “passage mentality”.

It would be incorrect to suggest that the situation described above was one which the authorities were not aware of. Indeed almost as significant in this process was the role of D.S.W/S.F.C.A. employees. During the course of the study the researcher was able to speak to one official in particular who stated that he was very much aware of the fact that numbers of people did indeed sign on and also derive benefit from other income sources in the area. He ascribed such behaviour on the part of some of those concerned as being the result of the the “Passage Mentality,” Discussing proposals to set up a local employment service in Passage East, he referred to his own experience in the area when attempting to contact local unemployed with a view to advising them about the departments own programmes “*People down there don't want to work, what point is there in bothering those people,*” He went on to suggest that in reality people living in the village “*do all-right,*” their welfare payments when combined with other income gave them a reasonable standard of living. In evidence he pointed to the quality of decoration in the houses, rates of car ownership and “*the amount of money that gets spent on drink*”. By not wanting to work this officer very clearly meant that the people in the area did not wish to seek employment in the formal economy.

This Welfare officer described the area as something of a lost cause. The availability of income through fishing and other unrecorded employment in the area made the process of ascertaining if and what level of abuse, if any, was occurring very difficult if not impossible. It also has a reputation for being a troublesome location. This officer adopted the view that given the fact that the locals were “*happy enough with the way things were,*” and that they

weren't "*bothering anyone*," it made more sense to simply let sleeping dogs lie. In relation to efforts to contact and help unemployed people find work there were he suggested "*genuine cases who want to find work we can help*". He argued it was better to concentrate his efforts on these individuals rather than attempting to work in Passage East with people who he felt had no interest in finding work. This reflected a wider view that this official retained in relation to the question of dealing with unemployment in the wider Waterford area. He regularly suggested that of the 4,000 or so people who were unemployed in this area about 30 per cent "*did not want to work*," or "*were not able to work*." As an official of the Department he felt his time was best spent with those who had a genuine interest in finding "*proper jobs*," or had "*real problems*," To have imposed the payment rules on Passage would have created major difficulties dealing with a group of people who would in all likelihood still receive much the same level of payment while reducing the resources available to help genuine cases. It was better for him to let them carry on and concentrate on genuine people.

These opinions did not reflect the formal discourse through which the department operated which emphasised the strict application of rules for assessing the eligibility of payees. He justified his views on a number of considerations. In the first place he pointed to personal considerations about the difficulties that would have been entailed in trying to police the system. He put it in these terms "*I have enough to do as it is why would I want to waste a day coming down here listening to people telling me lies*." In addition he also emphasised the complexities of trying to administer the system in an area where people were involved in an unpredictable seasonal occupation. Technically people must sign off the live register when they take up employment and sign on when they become unemployed again. They are then required to undertake a means test in order to calculate their entitlement. For fishermen who may work sporadically throughout the year this situation would have been chaotic. In this regard he remarked, "*Ideally these people should be on part-time dole*". By this he was referring to a payment made available to people working on short time, their annual earnings from work are taken into account when a reduced level of payment is worked out. He suggested that this would be ideal if the fishermen could come up with a figure for the amount of earnings they derived from fishing. However he also reasoned that were this to be applied "*you wouldn't find a fish in Passage*". Under the rules under which such reduced levels of payment are worked out the applicant would be required to declare an income. It would be incumbent on him or one of his colleagues to compel the individuals involved to do

so and later to assess these earnings statements. The same monitoring and policing problem as existed with full rate payments would apply. While he recognised that a small number of the areas fishermen did comply with the system and received reduced rates of payment his views suggested that this was unlikely to be feasible in the case of most of those involved.

The officer's position was based on a recognition that in many ways the current payments system was unsuited to the realities of dealing with an area like Passage East. It was designed around a conceptualisation of employment and unemployment as clearly definable and discrete states in which stable full and part time employment in the regulated labour market is the norm. The system of payments is based around the idea that at certain times certain individuals and households move from economically active to economically inactive states. Even in the case of "part time dole," the idea is retained as officers attempt to come up with payment figures based on the notion that the applicant participate in discreet periods of activity and inactivity. Within this narrative the processing of claims occurs infrequently and monitoring changes in employment status is easier because of the types of record keeping that occur in the formal economy. The way in which work and employment are conceptualised within the livelihood strategies of fishermen does not reflect such clear cut boundaries between employment and economic inactivity. Moreover the nature of the fishery itself makes its incorporation into the formal economy difficult. Applying standardised rules is difficult as it would require coming up with accurate figures as to the value of catches and calculating the actual expenses incurred. While this is done in relation to other areas of activity most notably the farming sector and other forms of part time work it works better when actors are involved in activities which are relatively well regulated. In the case of farming, a particular area of activity in which significant use has been made of reduced levels of unemployment assistance income levels are extensively monitored, particularly as the E.U. has played a significant part in developing the regulatory and income support frameworks under which the industry operates. The relatively less regulated nature of the fishery would make this task more difficult even if the local catch did not as this officer predicted "evaporate," the moment an attempt was made to calculate its value.

The above discussion suggests that some fishermen adapted the welfare system to their own needs and interests. Two points are of particular note, the first of these is the question of social context and the wider significance that the idea of "being fishermen," played in their use of the welfare system. The failure of fishing to generate an acceptable level of income on

occasions is an established feature of life in the fishery. Indeed while it was clearly the case that over time the inshore fishery has been through better periods, the “golden era,” that many spoke of still featured periods when the earning potential of the estuary was reduced prompting local fishing households to source income elsewhere. The nature of the fishery itself generates the need for fishing households to avail of multiple sources of income. It could thus be argued that the need to sustain this livelihood has influenced the way in which the welfare payments system is viewed by some local actors and is incorporated into the livelihood strategies of some fishing households.

A second feature of this process is the role of department official. The position he adopted contributed to the way in which the payment system was implemented in this area. In conversation he also revealed a capacity to distance himself from and deconstruct the official rules and regulations governing the payments system, assessing them in terms of workability in field situations and developing a strategy based on these assessments. He did so for reasons which primarily concerned the feasibility of applying the official rules and the relative benefits of doing so. His decision to adopt a practice of what could perhaps be called benign neglect was in large part based on his belief that it was impractical to attempt to apply rules to a situation to which they simply were not suited. Ultimately the way in which this particular programme was worked out was the outcome of encounters between the fishermen and this official. Through a process of mutual enrolment the programme is constructed in a way which varies significantly with the formal discourse around welfare payments, and in line with the assessment of the actors involved in encounters in Passage East and the Welfare Office.

11.5 Fishing and State sponsored development

The approach that locals adopted towards the social welfare system is of critical significance to this study, since this was one of the principal services to one group of actors subsequently expected to make up a significant portion of the Partnerships target group. These were individuals occupying a “marginal” position in relation to the formal economy. The previous section suggests that these actor’s ideas about the “marginal” nature of the position they occupied, and indeed the way they behaved in relation to income support services differed radically to that which was suggested in formal policy discourse. Some actors employed such

payments as an integral element of their livelihood strategy. Indeed if such payments were not available, at the very least as a safety net, it is difficult to see how many of those concerned would have been able to maintain a livelihood strategy as fishing households. It was notable that at this time their ability to use these payments in this way was made easier by two factors. The first of these was the nature of the area and the fishery itself which made it easier for them to slip in and out of “employment,” and more difficult for others to monitor their earnings and activities. The second was the response of the local official who decided not to apply the strictest interpretation of the rules.

The data considered in the previous section thus supports the propositions outlined earlier in the chapter. It highlights the central role played by agency in the way in which the social welfare system was incorporated into the lifeworld and income strategies of local actors. It also suggests that in this instance their ability to do so was enhanced by the nature of the programme. The specific purpose and function of the welfare system was income support. It was a centralised national service with staff whose main responsibility is the administration of payments. In the language of partnership it is a typical “top down” bureaucracy in which there is little scope for formal local participation. Furthermore certain features of the locality appear to have favoured the incorporation of these payments into local income strategies. The nature of the fishery is such as to make it easy to make claims and difficult to establish if claimants are generating additional income. Moreover there was little incentive to officials to ensure the rules were strictly applied as this would have led to a vastly increased workload and little in the way of positive results.

While the facts presented in the previous section thus indicates that certain ideas and practices may have significance in shaping the way in which locals respond to the introduction of new objects, the question remains as to the bearing this has on the responses of local actors to the interventions which this study focusses on, that is, forms of intervention with specific developmental objectives. As opposed to the welfare system, the introduction of development projects was to bring about specific forms of positive change in local economic behaviour. In order to do so, such projects specifically claimed to be doing a job that differed significantly from that of other state agencies such as the D.S.W/S.C.F.A. Local development in general and the Partnership in particular claimed to have the ability to incorporate local ideas about development and to implement projects based on these ideas through participatory mechanisms which encouraged the involvement of local actors. Development

programmes therefore incorporated very specific ideas as to how it is envisaged that they would become enrolled in the lifeworld of local actors and vice-versa in a way that supports the new agreed goals of local development. However, the previous section suggests that the way locals make use of one feature of state intervention was not determined by such formal discourses. Having established this about one form of state intervention a question is whether local actors' subsequent encounters with other interventions including those of the Partnership reflect similar concerns on the part of local actors informed by similar considerations. Or did these actors recognise the type of distinctions between traditional forms of state intervention and local development programmes that were incorporated into formal discourse concerning development programmes. This is a significant question since it concerns the extent to which such local actions accorded with the ideas about these actions on which the local development approach is based.

As already noted certain BIM programmes and those of the Partnership were intended to support local development. Both organisations proposed programmes which promoted alternative ways of utilising the existing resource base in the area. One such activity that received considerable support at this time was aquaculture. While the general view of most state organisations towards the inshore fishery often appears to be at best lukewarm, most were supportive of the potential role of aquaculture as an alternative. As a consequence the aquaculture sector has received substantial state aid through B.I.M and local development bodies such as W.D.P since the late 1980's. It has been promoted as a viable alternative to the exploitation of many of the wild species, such as salmon, that are being fished by the smaller boat owners. For many senior figures in W.D.P, aquaculture had features that made the idea of supporting it as an alternative enterprise very attractive. It is a labour intensive activity which can be based in inshore and estuarine waters. It can often make use of boats and landing facilities which are of little value to the modern deep sea fishery. Financially the potential rewards were believed to be immense, to seed the equivalent of IR£1300 worth of oysters at 1993-94 prices it was estimated that costs were around IR£400-500⁶.

⁶While BIM continued to argue the case for aquaculture by the mid 1990's the market for both mussels and oysters were static and profitability was in decline across Europe according to a report by MacAllister, Eliot and Partners commissioned by the European Commission (1999). Since the period following this study and despite significant investment by the state and the introduction of a range of new species volumes of shellfish harvested in Ireland have declined.

While nationally much of the attention on aquaculture has focussed on the cultivation of fin fish and salmon in particular, in Waterford aquaculture has been restricted to the cultivation of bivalves namely; mussels, clams and oysters. In Waterford these ventures have been particularly significant in Dungarvan Bay where Udaras Na Gaeltacht, The Gaeltacht LEADER Company, the Partnership and BIM have all supported aquaculture projects⁷. Indeed during the study it had become such a popular option with the funding bodies that it was often the case that a number of these organisations would fund different aspects of the same project subject to each body's rules and regulations. Yet again we see an example of the cumulative cycle in local development programmes, as supported projects attract increased additional funding. The fact that part of the area overlooking Dungarvan Bay had Gaeltacht status meant that the location was eligible for funding under both the first Gaeltacht LEADER programme and Udaras grant aid schemes in addition to assistance from the Partnership and B.I.M. Assistance for the shellfish industry was available in a number of forms including small and large capital grants, employment grants and in the case of the Partnership low interest loans. The Area Allowance Enterprise Scheme (A.A.E.S) was also offered to people working on aquaculture projects. The availability of different types of grants resulted in both small operators such as self-employed inshore fishermen and bigger organisations becoming involved in the industry. The former capitalised on the availability of small grants and measures such as the A.A.E.S, while larger businesses were tempted by the substantial returns offered by the venture and the availability of more substantial grant aid which involved a scale of matching investment that was beyond the scope of smaller businesses and the self-employed.

While all of the relevant grant support agencies promoted aquaculture as an alternative to traditional fishing for local producers, the industry offers no specific advantage to smaller producers. Indeed as in many areas of the fishery larger operations enjoy a distinct advantage in aquaculture. Not only are they capable of achieving greater economies of scale, in Waterford they were able to develop access to overseas markets and they also claimed to be capable of better levels of quality control. Indeed large scale producers in the Dungarvan area claimed that the entire business had been compromised when a tour of French buyers had seen a co-operative of smaller producers sorting oysters in what they described as a "cowshed". Others claimed that the small producers were undercutting the market, something

⁷ The western shore of Dungarvan bay includes the tiny area of An Rinn a small Gaeltacht area.

they were able to do because they were also receiving benefits and were in any case grant aided.

During the study, the aquaculture industry in the Suir estuary was still relatively small in scale. A range of factors had restricted growth. Undoubtedly the lack of easily accessible grant assistance was a major factor as the area was neither part of a Gaeltacht or designated area under either the Partnership or Leader programmes until 1995. The lack of suitable and sheltered sights is also an issue, with viable locations reckoned locally to have been restricted to a small number of locations in the upper estuary where there are naturally occurring mussel beds and further south along the western shore. Other factors which hampered the substantial development of aquaculture in the area include a degree of opposition both nationally and locally towards such developments on environmental grounds. In the Suir estuary it was also claimed by a number of locals that the proposed locations for the trestles necessary for oyster cultivation were in areas that have traditionally been used for drift, drag, and gill nets, while others claim that giving access to certain areas of the estuary to aquaculture interferes with fishing weirs. Even the relatively unobtrusive practice of re-seeding natural mussel beds in the area has been met with opposition on the grounds that it interfered with "traditional fishing grounds". Despite these difficulties some significant aquaculture ventures were established in the estuary, including a large oyster project promoted by one private investor. Another significant venture was the establishment of the South East Shellfish Co-operative based in Passage in 1992 with the help of a FAS CEP programme. Following a series of meetings a group of fishermen agreed to contribute £500.00 each to the establishment of the co-operative and a manager was appointed to oversee the project with the assistance of funding provided by the C.E.P programme. It was agreed that the co-operative would develop the naturally occurring mussel beds located in the estuary. The plan involved re-seeding these beds and harvesting the fully grown mussels some two years later. The harvesting would occur in sheltered areas in the period from November to April thus potentially extending the inshore fishing season over the winter months. B.I.M and subsequently the Partnership as well as FAS supported the project with grant aid and in the case of B.I.M in particular, technical assistance. By the end of the third year, after considerable initial difficulties, the project had an extremely successful season. Over the period between late November 1995 and mid April 1996, up to 20 boats employing around 60 people harvested mussels.

The C.E.P programme which established the co-op employed the format which was also used by D.E.W.T and many of the other community organisations discussed in previous chapters. However on this occasion the group had a specific enterprise project in mind. This was thus one of only two encountered during the study when the C.E.P was employed to support an actual community enterprise⁸. It was also one of the rare occasions when the membership of the group largely consisted of individuals experiencing economic difficulties as almost the entire membership consisted of inshore fishermen. This project involved a very specific attempt to introduce new fishing practices in the area generated out of a model of development which was widely supported by the Partnership and other actors committed to supporting local development in the area. Indeed the organisation was one of the few non area based groups that was invited to attend the consultation process described in chapters seven and eight. However the co-op's involvement in this process was very peripheral, and beyond its immediate interest in the fishery the Co-op was not involved in wider discussions about the areas development.

Crucial to the Co-op's development was the role of the manager. On appointment she rapidly assumed a role more reminiscent of an employer than of an employed manager. While at least in theory it was the co-op's management committee that was in charge of policy, the manager assumed the vast majority of decision making responsibility. She quickly came to be seen by the various agencies as the organisation's spokesperson. This meant that in dealing with the State, buyers and suppliers as well as with the members themselves she was pivotal to the co-ops operation. Her role regularly brought her into conflict with members, particularly in relation to the decisions she made concerning the quantities of mussels fished and the control she exercised over the organisations finances and payment to the fishermen. For example, she adopted a practice of withholding money so that the fishermen would, in her words, have something to fall back on in slack periods when demand for mussels was poor⁹. She also withheld a considerable amount of profit from the fishermen for re-investment. Both measures were unpopular with the members yet it was, she claimed, tough decisions such as these which accounted for her success over the 1995 season when significant earnings were generated for the members. However while the project came to be perceived as being successful considerable conflict occurred. Much of this focussed on the

⁸ The other was the Ardmore Growers, a group of vegetable producers in the west of the county. As already mentioned the vast majority of CEP client groups were area based development bodies.

⁹ She determined the quantities harvested based on the amounts ordered by buyers. As the mussels can be harvested over a lengthy period this meant that she could balance supply with demand over the season.

manager herself. In conversation she often referred to the considerable difficulties she had and continued to experience both with the co-operative members and in particular other locals who had chosen not to become involved. Her story and in particular the difficulties she had faced in setting up and running the co-op were well known. The general consensus amongst the staff of other organisations which were involved in the project was that the group was difficult to work with and she came to enjoy a considerable degree of respect amongst them for having “stood up” to the fishermen.

Her justification for adopting this particular management style was, she suggested on a number of occasions, a reflection of the difficulties she had experienced with the fishermen. As noted she made reference to a number of disputes to illustrate this point. One arose at the beginning of the project, when a prominent local figure fell out with the manager. This individual had a long and somewhat controversial involvement in the fishing business¹⁰. In the past he had worked as a fish buyer and also organised crews of local workers to work in factories in the Isle of Man and Scotland. His involvement in the project followed an invitation issued during the C.E.P programme. As a prominent figure with a long background in fishing he initially considered himself to be an obvious choice for the role of manager when the new co-op was set up and he had been disappointed not to get the job. According to him, the disagreements with the manager began as a result of his criticism of what he saw as her mishandling of the project. This in turn was attributed by him to the fact that she was proceeding without taking account of the local knowledge and views of prominent figures such as himself. Matters came to a head when she applied for B.I.M grant aid on the co-op’s behalf. He had not been informed and felt that the manager had not adhered to the procedures laid down by the co-op’s board. As his dispute with the manager progressed he began to claim that she had infringed on his and others “rights” by seeding areas that were traditionally used for drift netting or fishing naturally occurring mussels; she was in his view staking the co-ops claim to utilise these areas exclusively¹¹. In late 1994 he left the co-op when he submitted a claim for expenses that she refused to honour. The manager stated that he had not been authorised to incur expenses on the co-op’s behalf while he claimed she was keeping all the grant money for herself.

¹⁰He had been active as a buyer in the herring trade. Some years earlier he had been involved in a bitter court case which resulted in him being barred from trading.

¹¹She cited the requirement of co-op members to log catches as presenting a major bar as it posed a threat to the local fishermen’s welfare entitlements.

As the dispute developed the local made use of written correspondence with the manager and availed of a number of strategies as he attempted to get other peoples support. He would go into a pub some of whose customers had also declined to become involved in the co-operative, producing letters, which he claimed proved that he was telling the truth and that she had in his words “done him”. He would call on his own previous experience of the fishing business to justify his position, pointing to the threat the co-op posed to the areas traditional fishing practices. In addition he also approached many people in the village privately with a view to undermining her role as the co-ops manager, expressing concern about the implications of the project for tax and welfare payments as well as the possible implications of the co-op for traditional fishing rights. In doing so he was able to find some support amongst some of the locals, in particular those who had initially refused to participate and subsequently claimed that the co-op had quickly become too expensive to join. In conversations with the researcher he referred to his prominent position in the village and attempted to convey the impression that he was acting on its behalf in the matter against outsiders, who he argued, had no understanding of the fishing business. The fact that he had dealt in fish, run factories and provided employment to people living in the area was significant in his discussions, frequently claiming to have been the first person to pay someone from the village £5.00 per week; a reflection of the acumen he claimed to possess as regard the fishing business. He regularly remarked that he “*knew how to run a business and had done all his life*,” and that he had been offered work by a Danish company as a manager in the past. He used such facts as evidence both of the respect he enjoyed locally and of his ability to speak with authority on business matters. The response of other locals poured doubt on this man’s claims and illustrate that there was considerable diversity in local opinion. Despite his expressions of concern over the impact the co-op was likely to have on his right to “a bit of fishing,” some claimed that neither he nor any of his family had ever been active fishermen. His decision to make claims as to the implications of the co-op for his families fishing rights was a new argument albeit based on traditional practices in the area. His claim to have benefited the area through his role as an employer was also challenged as many people in the area claimed he had paid people poorly in the past.

For her part the manager was able to mobilise a different set of arguments in order to support her position. In her account the difficulties she had experienced with the man in question arose out of his being stubborn and unwilling to co-operate. She suggested that in part this related to the fact that she was both a woman and an outsider. She used the incident

concerning the expenses as evidence that far from his claim to be concerned with the success of the project the man's primary concern had been with his own interests. The manager's views about this individual echoed those of the social welfare officer and indeed the staff of other agencies who worked in the area. She attributed his behaviour and also the support he enjoyed amongst some locals to the "Passage Mentality". Indeed she was able to use this incident as an example of the problems she faced in the area when speaking to other development professionals. She made a distinction between those she was working with that were willing to work and others who expected things to be done for them suggesting that the opposition she encountered could be accounted for by a culture of welfare dependency and hostility to innovation. While in early exchanges she had attempted to bargain with the locals in disputes as time passed she said she had adopted a tougher stance in dealing with problems which she regarded as being the consequence of the "dependency culture". This included having co-op members accept her control over decisions as to what quantities of mussels to fish and the retention of some of the income generated from sales.

Dependency culture she claimed to the staff of development organisations was such a profound feature of village life that it was no longer worth spending time on those who were part of that culture. Instead she concentrated on working with fishermen who were willing to accept the disciplines she required of co-op members. Thus a willingness to conform to these rules became for her an indicator of the extent to which individual fishermen could be classed as willing collaborators or unwilling victims of the dependency culture. Rather than attempting to engage the full range of local opinion, membership in the co-op thus came to be regarded by her as a contingent on the willingness of individuals to comply with the rules and conditions she laid down, as a consequence she was, in 1995, able to declare a success. However in doing so she had also found it necessary to exclude a significant number of local actors establishing a strict management style in the process. As the project became established she began to extend this control further insisting that the fishermen fully comply with tax and social welfare regulations. She justified this on the basis that the State was funding the project and thus required that members be in compliance with these regulations.

The incidents examined in this section suggest that the processes that occur during the implementation of a local development programme are very different from those suggested in formal development discourse. Development is seen to be a contested domain, in which various actors seek to promote their own projects employing different forms of knowledge to

do so. The local actor's original participation in the co-op could perhaps be interpreted as the consequence of a mutual misapprehension. This was the belief of the actors involved that they agreed to a considerable degree more about the nature of the objects involved in the new project than was actually the case. The local individual was originally involved in the project because he was regarded as a significant actor. His membership offered the possibility of generating wider support for the co-op. For his part the co-op offered him the chance to achieve certain things in line with his own project. Indeed given the fact that the co-operative was involved in the business that he had been involved in for the best part of his life and one in which he believed that he had considerable expertise, it is highly unlikely that he would not have seen a future in it for himself and not tried to become involved. His subsequent opposition occurred when it became increasingly clear that there was significant divergence between what the co-op was attempting to do and his own interests. This in turn related to the way in which the co-op defined the challenge of developing the fishery. This varied in significant ways from his. While he claimed to have significant expertise in the fishing business, this expertise was dated and related to a period when the fishery was run in a very different way. It was highly unlikely that his know how was particularly relevant to the creation of a fishing co-operative along the lines suggested by the manager. In the new world of the Irish aquaculture industry an ability to work effectively with state development organisations, fill out grant applications and comply with tax and industry regulations was crucial. While the manager was a development worker with considerable expertise in this field, he had none. Her actions and decisions were based on entirely different criteria which effectively meant that she had little need to draw on his "expertise". While of no great importance in the fishery her skill set made her an excellent example of the type of development worker envisioned in formal discourse and her project, offering as it did an alternative to the declining wild inshore fishery, a good example of the type of economic development project that could assist fishermen modify their existing pattern of economic behaviour.

Having been unable to find a suitable role within the co-op the local attempted to undermine the manager. In order to do so he fell back on elements of his local knowledge of the area to challenge her. This included the existence of established local livelihood strategies based on a pre-existing relationship between local actors and the estuary. In this he was able to utilise the scepticism that many locals retained towards the state and officials involvement and in particular suspicions of its implications for unemployment payments and taxation. Those

supporting his position tended to express concern as to the potential effects of the co-op on their existing income strategies. The close relationship the manager enjoyed with state agency representatives as well as with the Partnership served to fuel this suspicion. He was also able to point to the fact that the co-op drew members from outside the village and that she herself was not local. By doing so he was able to mobilise a number of other locals in support of his position. They attempted throughout the period from 1993 until 1995 to force the manager to either quit or make concessions to them in relation to fishing in the estuary, at one point some of those opposing her threatening to dredge the mussel beds anyway, something they would have been entitled to do since the co-op did not have any legal means to stop them.

By contrast the manager's analysis of the economic life of the area was based on a perspective more in keeping with that of other development organisations and the state. She attributed much of the problems she faced as arising out of the fishermen's reluctance to accept the disciplines necessary in the formal economy. She spoke of the fishermen need to learn about their responsibilities to declare earnings and to cease relying on welfare. In doing so she laid down the justification for the strong line she adopted when dealing with them. The co-op had to function like a business. If this was to happen then the fishermen must be kept in line. She was the person who needed to ensure that this was done. She also used this perspective to explain why she ignored criticisms from locals who had not joined the co-op suggesting that such claims came from those who were part of the dependency culture. This was a view that was accepted by the agencies she worked with together with other development workers in the area. In making use of the notion of a "Passage Mentality," she was able to gain a degree of support for her role with this group. In this sense the dispute can be understood as involving attempts by different actors, strategically deploying different forms of knowledge in order to mobilise networks in support of a specific view. While for his part the local claimed local knowledge and an appreciation for tradition, for her part she was able to call on development expertise and ideas about the area that were part of the formal development discourse to support her position.

The conflicts that occurred during the formation and subsequent operation of the co-operative thus illustrate some of the difficulties that occur as locals respond to the introduction of externally devised programmes. The model of development depicted in the C.E.P modules envisioned a process through which a cohesive local group would be formed

and work towards the implementation of an enterprise plan. However in this instance the question of group cohesion arose, most significantly well after the group had been established and a manager had been appointed. In the final analysis it could be argued that the questions that the C.E.P programme claimed to address really only arose during the implementation of the plans drawn up through the C.E.P. At this point and in response to local opposition the manager opted to adopt a more conventional commercial management style abandoning any participative features associated with the community enterprise model. As part of this process she adopted measures that effectively isolated a number of the potential beneficiaries of the co-op. Ironically in attempting to implement a new project in this area, one which was to a certain extent underpinned by the local development discourse the manager adopted a stance which reduced local involvement in decision making to a bare minimum and excluded a substantial element among whom must be included many of the target group most likely to benefit from the project. However and as she pointed out on regular occasions, it is doubtful that the co-op could have survived had she done otherwise.

Her approach also reflected the forms of official discourse described in the previous chapter, these treated the area as an underutilised resource. Such an approach overlooked the significance of local conventions governing the estuaries use or the role that it played within existing livelihood strategies. The co-operatives manager and her supporters in the state agencies thus largely operated within a framework of meaning which failed to recognise the importance of these issues. Existing income and practices were portrayed as having no future, as redundant or non-existent. This made it possible for local opposition to be portrayed in largely negative terms as a feature of a dependency culture. Again, it appears that the development discourse conveys a significant degree of power on certain actors in the locality to the detriment of others. The creation of local consensus or indeed of local participation was not critical to the success of the project.

11.6 Becoming traditional: the conflict over access to Woodstown strand.

In the previous section the ability of the co-op's manager to draw on ideas found in development discourse was seen as highly significant in the way the programme was worked out. The estuary was in this framework regarded as a poorly utilised resource. Ideas about development were contrasted with an existing situation in which some local practices were portrayed in negative terms. Such discussions about the nature of the area took on an almost

moral dimension as the area was depicted by her as one which was at best in economic decline and at worst as one in which a dependency culture dominated. For local actors the responses varied from degrees of compliance in the co-operative through to total opposition in which the manager was accused of unfairly imposing on existing patterns of resource use in the estuary. Thus actors' responses to the introduction of new programmes involved encounters in which conflicting interpretations of the estuary's role in the local economy featured strongly. Of particular significance in this respect were encounters between the manager and members of the local fishing community. This situation is reminiscent of that of field workers described by Rossi (2006) in his study of aid workers and recipient strategies in Niger. We see that the manager's views largely correspond to those identified with the local development policy discourse. Besides defining the area and its problems in a specific way this presents the locals "*locked into a different mentality*" (Rossi 2006 p. 41) that she saw it as her duty to reform. While it would be dangerous to draw too close a comparison her position does resemble that described by Bierschenk et al of brokers who "*represent the project's local social carriers, at the interface between the people (the «target group») aimed at by the project and the development institutions*" (2002 p.4). As with such development brokers, her position enabled her to operate with a foot in both worlds utilising ideas about development strategically in a way which advances her own project. In a sense therefore the actual nature of this project in Passage East was best understood as a collaborative achievement involving the manager and those local actors who she was able to enrol in the programme on her terms. In the course of doing so she was able to utilise certain elements of development discourse strategically to depict the responses of some local actors in a negative way. In a sense therefore the decision of others to participate in the programme helped to establish the validity of this position providing examples of "good" fishermen who could be contrasted with the non-participants. The manager thus emerges as an important actor within this process. Like the social welfare officer her ability to interpret formal policy discourse flexibly is an important feature of the process through which policy is worked out. These observations point to the importance role played by field staff in the working out of local interventions. It would appear that the access that such staff have to formal policy discourse places them in a particularly important position from which they can have a pivotal role in shaping the outcomes of development through the ability they possess to access and employ forms of development discourse in local encounters. This makes them particularly powerful in encounters with certain local actors who come into contact with development projects.

Another event involving the South East Shellfish Co-Op further illustrates this. After the initial success of the mussel programme the manager indicated that she might seek to expand the co-operatives operation into the production of oysters. The principal site identified for oyster cultivation in the area was south of Passage East off an area on the western shore called Woodstown strand. Efforts to cultivate oysters had however proven controversial as the strand was also regarded as a prime local tourism site. Nevertheless by 1996 a significant private oyster venture had been established there. This project had experienced some difficulties following a degree of confusion as to the licensing requirements. While licenses are required to cultivate oysters, the promoter of this private venture claimed that he had been advised by BIM to proceed without a licence as it was his understanding that the project would be grant aided by BIM later and that he would have no problem obtaining a license. However the requirements for licensing the site remained unclear. In addition BIM backed away from the project when it became clear that other local actors would object to the granting of a license. Grant assistance to the project was not forthcoming and the individual concerned had to continue to fund the venture out of his own resources.

The local fisherman who had initially funded the project believed that his problems had been exacerbated by the manager of the co-op. While the manager had no initial interest in oysters she saw them as a potential second source of income for the co-op in future years and as early as 1994 she claimed she had sought to apply for a license to farm oysters in the Woodstown area, this despite the fact that she had no immediate intention of cultivating oysters. The promoter of the private venture saw her actions at this time as being intended to block his project but she argued that it was necessary for her to make a claim for the area in order to protect her member's interests against what she called "illegal" commercial operations. She justified this by pointing to the potential that the cultivation of oysters by her co-op had to helping local fishermen to make a living. Moreover she pointed to the fact that they had traditionally used the area. Thus while in other circumstances the manager chose to emphasise the difficulties she encountered dealing with local fishermen and in particular the problems of dealing with those who contested her right to run the co-operative, in this case she emphasised the status of the fishermen as a disadvantaged group whose interests needed to be protected. In this she utilised one of the central ideas employed by those involved in local development during the study period that of the legitimacy imparted to organisations on foot of their status as community groups. In addition she fell back on ideas of the rights of the traditional community in the face of threats from commercial producers outside the area.

In this respect she adopted an argument that was in many ways similar to that which had previously levelled at her. In doing so she took on the role of advocate. The promoter of the oyster project continued to claim that he had been advised to commence operations by BIM on the understanding that all assistance necessary would be forthcoming. They had made no mention of the potential problems related to the issue of licensing. He believed the manager of the co-op had used her influence with BIM to obstruct his project while she herself had no immediate plans to cultivate oysters in the area. He also argued that as an individual investor he had taken the exercise seriously undertaking a substantial long term investment which created employment. While the evidence from other areas was that smaller operators, such as those who were organised under the umbrella of the co-op, had made a much smaller commitment. Pointing to the experience of other areas he suggested that many fishermen who entered the sector on a small scale saw it as a short term exercise. As he put it "*These small guy's get a grant and buy seed, they grow it and sell it. They are all on the dole. They take the selling price as profit because it's cost them nothing and then they can wind up. Or get more grants. They don't realise that the seed has to be replaced*". Referring to Passage East in particular he made the point that he himself had started off small but had built up his business while other local fishermen "*blew every penny they ever had in the good times*" spending their earnings and neither reinvesting nor building up savings. In many ways his views towards the co-op and its membership resembled elements of the views expressed by the manager towards those locals she had had disagreements with. In suggesting that the smaller oyster growers treated the business as a hand out whereas he had put his "neck on the line" he introduced a moral element into his argument.

On this occasion it is possible to again see how the emergence of local development programmes can empower certain actors at the cost of locals who do not fit in with the specific narrative of local development. Experience up to that date in Waterford suggests that both large and small scale ventures in shellfish cultivation are viable as methods for developing the industry. However it was also widely perceived that larger units that are able to achieve economies of scale have a long term advantage. Indeed the manager of the shellfish co-op's own approach to running it recognised the difficulties entailed in working with small producers. She adopted a highly disciplined approach to the co-op's members and ran it strictly as a commercial venture, abandoning many of the ideas embodied in participative development approach. In relation to developments at Woodstown Strand the manager was in a situation where she was confronting another commercial operator who

posed a different type of challenge to her and the co-op. The co-op was not initially in a position to compete directly with this private operator; it did not have the resources or indeed the agreement of its members to begin oyster cultivation at Woodstown Strand. However while the co-op had no firm plans to start growing oysters, having the option of exploiting Woodstown Strand would consolidate the position of the co-op, putting it in complete dominance over the development of aquaculture in the estuary. The manager's concern with the development of a private oyster operation in the area was thus primarily speculative, based on what she perceived to be the potential threat it might pose to the future expansion of the co-op. For this reason the manager's approach towards Woodstown Strand was based on preventing other ventures being established in the area so that it would be available to the co-op at a later date. In this case she could not base her argument on an appeal to the pragmatic commercial considerations which she had employed to justify the way she ran the co-op. Instead she argued that the co-op's members were a group which experienced special difficulties and whose interests needed to be protected in the face of exploitative and, in her words, illegal commercial ventures. In this instance the manager's argument was built on some of the ideas about local development and participation she had abandoned in relation to the internal operation of the co-op. She developed an argument based on the community's interests as she attempted to incorporate the beach and the earning potential associated with it into her project. In doing so she utilised forms of discourse strategically to portray her actions as those of a community advocate.

The situation became even more complex when additional claims to the area emerged. Following her intervention and subsequent application to use the area the private promoter was approached by two local fishermen. He claimed that they had informed him that while they had no quarrel with him they were objecting to the licensing application being made by the co-op's manager on the grounds that it included an area in which they had a weir trap. The promoter of the oyster project viewed this as further proof that local opposition existed to the co-op's manager. Although poles for the weir trap still existed, the sight had fallen into disuse. The decision of these two to lodge an objection was thus based on a concern over the removal of a right that neither had exercised for some time. Both came from Passage and neither were members of the co-operative. The fact that the manager was looking to gain access to the area renewed their interest in the weir site. Though claiming to act on the local fishermen's behalf, the manager's actions actually generated further local opposition from people who perceived her actions as an encroachment on their personal interests. The areas

growing significance as a potential aquaculture site lead to the emergence of new claims and the revival of older ones. Far from steering local people into new practices the new intervention generated opposition that resulted in conflict.

The confrontations that the co-operative engaged in with other local actors suggest that once introduced it was not capable of transcending existing local fishing practices and introducing fundamentally changed patterns of local resource use. Rather the co-op and its manager become players in their own right vying with other resource users. The incidents presented above suggest that they are however players equipped with forms of discourse that make them potentially powerful new forces in the estuary. As a project supported by the State, the manager was able to draw on an interpretation of the area's development needs which was generally supported by the state organisations. This model provided the resources which placed the manger in a particularly powerful position, enabling her to draw on elements of development expertise to justify the control she secured over the organisations members but also to draw on the organisations status as a community based venture to argue for its preferential treatment when dealing with commercial competition. For their part locals interpreted the co-op's arrival in accordance with their own understanding of what they perceived to be their interests. In opposing it, some reverted to aspects of local fishing practices to support their arguments. By failing to take adequate note of the complexities of local fishing practices it could be argued that the manager's actions actually led to the revival of some local conventions. While the Co-operative was supported by the Partnership, FAS and BIM as an example of local community based initiative what is clear is that once introduced into the area the outcomes of the intervention are the unpredictable consequences of encounters between a number of actors embedded in a specific local context, an observation that raises questions about the capacity of local development programmes to address the needs of specific target groups collectively. Not everyone co-operates, in this instance while many fishermen chose to become involved in the co-op others contested its presence, some claiming that the co-op threatened there existing livelihood strategies. The manager labelled those who objected to what she was doing as being victims of a "Passage Mentality" which invoked certain negative connotations relating to those actors in the minds of those with whom she worked in the area and in the development network. However it is worth considering if the same considerations which prompted some locals to oppose the co-op encouraged others to join it. Certainly the fact that few of those who were at that time in receipt of social welfare payments voluntarily sought to declare their new income as well as

the managers own difficulties in controlling the co-op's members do not suggest that the co-op represented anything other than an addition to the members existing repertoire of income sources.

The promoter of the oyster project also found himself in conflict with the co-op manager. However on this occasion far from attributing this individual's behaviour to a "Passage Mentality", his actions were opposed because they threatened the interests and rights of small fishermen. In moving to protect their interest the co-operative manger further narrowed the range of acceptable behaviour in the fishery. It was not simply that fishermen needed to accept the commercial disciplines she imposed on the co-operatives members, but also that they could not be too business-like. Thus the right to access the resources in the estuary was in her version of events further restricted to those fishermen who were prepared to accept the co-operative disciplines but would remain in need of the co-operatives support. To the deviant behaviour of those contaminated with the "Passage Mentality," was added the equally deviant behaviour of "illegal," commercial operators.

11.7 The co-operative the fisherman and the A.A.E.S

While considerable attention has been given to examples of conflict concerning the establishment and operation of the co-operative, this should not detract from the fact that large numbers of the fishermen in Passage East did participate. In doing so they contributed to the growth of the co-operative as a commercial venture and benefitted from its success financially. This could be taken as a justification of the approach adopted by the manager and as an important example of the type of success that such local projects could achieve. As important as the questions of why conflicts arose and how these impacted on the way that interventions are worked out, is the fact that other actors did participate. Their decisions to do so had implications for the way that the co-operative operated, enabling the manager to demonstrate a degree of success and providing her with examples of "good fishermen," against which to contrast those who were not involved. Their decisions also had implications for the fishermen themselves most notably in relation to the livelihood strategies and the role played by the co-operative in income generation. An important reason behind the support of organisations such as BIM and the Partnership for the co-op was that it was in line with particular ideas about the area and its development, which were aligned with elements of

policy discourse. The co-op would provide fishermen with a reliable source of regulated income assisting them to move further away from the “black economy” and/or welfare dependency. Furthermore it would employ an existing and underutilised resource in order to do so. If this was not attractive enough the programme involved a form of aquaculture which would exploit a renewable resource in the form of farmed shellfish stocks, taking the pressure off of income sources which were believed to be at the point of decline. To use the words of one local development professional the programme “*ticked an awful lot of the right boxes*” in local development discourse. One of the key ways in which it did so was through the idea that this project would result in changes in local economic behaviour. The fishermen were to be weaned off of welfare and allowed to become full participants in economic life. In this analysis existing networks and roles that these fishermen occupied were to be subject to radical change. The conditions under which grant aid and support was offered to the co-op required a high degree of conformity with taxation and regulatory requirements. Members of the co-operative were compelled to adhere to a centralised decision making and accounting system. In addition the manager continually advised the fishermen of the implications of such requirements, repeatedly indicating that the co-op would have to report what it paid to the fishermen in order to conform with fishery and tax regulations. For similar reasons and despite being asked to, she refused to make payments to the fishermen in cash.

Despite this, prior to and during 1995 and early 1996 it was clear from that a number of the co-operatives members continued to fish other species during the year and that only limited numbers of those who were receiving benefit had attempted to regularise their tax affairs. One of the most appropriate ways by which this could have been achieved was through the Back to Work Scheme (B.T.W). The D.SW/S.C.FA operated this scheme in the area prior to the Partnerships expansion into the east off the county. Under its terms people returning to employment or self-employment after being in receipt of unemployment payments for at least a year, were entitled to retain a reducing proportion of their welfare payments on returning to employment over a three year period¹². For those not entitled to apply for the more generous A.A.E.S operated by the Partnership the B.T.W scheme was an opportunity to retain a portion of their welfare payment while returning to work effectively regularising their social welfare situation. However take up in the Passage East area had been low. Only three of the co-op’s members were on the Back to Work scheme prior to 1996.

¹²The rates were 75%, 50% and 25% in the first second and third years respectively.

Prior to November 1994, while a significant number of local fishermen were active in the co-op, it had little impact on established income strategies in the area, generating only limited income in this initial phase. However this situation changed in late 1995 and early 1996 as the level of income generated from the co-operative increased significantly. Despite the managers repeated advice that the fishermen needed to address their tax and social welfare status by late 1995 very few had done so. For the most part the fishermen avoided this issue, treating the money derived from the mussels as yet another source of income within existing livelihood strategies. Indeed the fact that mussels were harvested during a traditionally slack period of the year led to increased fishing during the remainder. As the income generated from the mussel co-op gave the fishermen the confidence and finance to reinvest in boats and equipment. Far from resolving the dilemmas posed by declines in the traditional stocks and the welfare problem, the new co-op added a further means by which existing practices could be maintained.

It was only towards the end of 1995 and the beginning of 1996 that the need to address the problems related to their tax and social welfare status became pressing for the fishermen. The manager instigated this situation by making it known that as the co-op was doing well and generating significant income she was now more than ever compelled to ensure the co-op was in compliance with BIM and Revenue requirements. Enforcing adherence to tax and social welfare rules on the fishermen's part was not part of her job. Indeed a specific feature of the co-op business model was that the fishermen continued to be self-employed, thus retaining responsibility for their own tax affairs. Nevertheless she made it known that she was compelled to "go through the books". Catches, as well as payments made, would be recorded officially in accounts that would be open to inspection by the Revenue Commissioners. While the fishermen were paid a gross amount for mussels these would be recorded in the co-operatives records. Consequently she advised the fishermen to 'regularise,' their tax and welfare situation. As the co-op's manager the extent to which she was required, or entitled, to involve herself in the personal tax affairs of co-operative members is open to question. However there is no doubt that she used the fact that she was making payments to them and managing the co-op to impress the importance of sorting out their tax affairs on the fishermen, investing a considerable degree of effort in encouraging them to comply with the rules and regulations in this respect. This was not something that was required of her as manager. It was however consistent with the model of "good behaviour" which she employed

in relation to the co-ops members, having tax compliant members was something which also reflected well on the co-op in official circles.

This period also coincided with the extension of the partnership area to include Passage East. This meant that the more generous A.A.E.S was now available to people living in this area. As with the Back to Work Scheme the A.A.E.S would have allowed the fishermen to regularise their position vis-à-vis welfare payments and tax requirements while retaining a welfare payment. In this case this would be their full existing entitlement for one year and then a reduced payment via the B.T.W scheme over the second third and fourth years. In December 1995 rumours began to circulate around the village that a “raid” by social welfare officials was planned. Following some conversations with various members of the co-op the manager approached the Partnership indicating that the fishermen faced a problem in relation to their welfare benefits and offered to call a meeting at which the Partnership and welfare officials would discuss the situation with the co-op members. In December 1995 a meeting took place attended by about 20 fishermen, an official of the D.S.W/S.C.F.A and a partnership staff member to discuss the A.A.E.S. At this meeting the workings of the scheme as well as its potential benefits were outlined. The fishermen raised a number of issues amongst those of the greatest importance was taxation. The fishermen expressed concerns over the scale of earnings that would be lost to tax. In reply the staff of both organisations pointed out that as self-employed people the fishermen would be able to calculate their own tax. In addition they would be able to count a considerable amount of their costs as expenses. This would considerably reduce the level of tax they were likely to pay. A second concern was the possibilities of returning to unemployment payments at a later stage. The Social Welfare Officer pointed out that though they would have to cease fishing they would be entitled to re-apply for unemployment payments should they wish. A third issue was the implications of the reduction in payments after the first year. Again the Social Welfare Officer, with the support of the Partnership staff member explained that while welfare payments would be reduced, the expectation was that if “all went well,” they would be compensated for this loss by their increased earnings from the co-op. Another issue they raised was the possibilities that they could get grants. They were told that as participants on the scheme they would be able to apply for grants.

The idea behind the A.A.E.S (as explained to the fishermen) was that it was to assist people starting their own businesses. Initially the scheme was established with this in mind and was

envisioned as the centrepiece of a range of supports that would help people to develop business plans and then set up businesses. During this meeting the staff members from both the D.S.W/S.C.F.A and the Partnership made it clear that as some of the fishermen worked on other peoples boats and received a share of the earnings as payment. They were technically ineligible for the scheme as they clearly weren't starting their own businesses but that an exception was being made for the fishermen. The fishermen themselves were primarily interested in the scheme because of the prospect of a welfare or tax swoop in the area. Their key concerns related to the implications of the scheme in relation to tax and future welfare benefits. Little if any time during the meeting was taken up by discussions concerning enterprise support or starting a business, features which were supposedly integral to the thinking that underlay the A.A.E.S. Following the meeting the fishermen sought further assurances that once they were on the scheme their activities and payments prior to being placed on A.A.E.S would not be investigated.

For their part the staff of both agencies were pragmatic in their approach to the way in which the scheme would operate in the area viewing it as an opportunity to get the fishermen on the scheme and into the tax system. As already stated the area was regarded as troublesome. Going into the detail of which fishermen had been doing what prior to December 1995 was never regarded as a serious option. Indeed throughout this process the staff of both organisations as well as the manager of the co-op tended to imply that the state had a considerably greater capacity to monitor the economic activities of people in the village than appeared to be the real case. There was never for example any evidence that anyone in the any state organisation was ever actually planning a "raid" on the village. Offering the carrot of the A.A.E.S would enable staff to neatly tie up the administrative ends with the minimum of fuss. Fishermen would be identifying themselves to the Department. As one welfare officer put it "*once they are in the net it will be much more difficult for them to get out*".

In January 1996 eleven fishermen joined the scheme, considerably less than the number who had attended the meeting. Of those who had joined three transferred from the Back to Work scheme. As a result the rate of payment they received was increased to one hundred per cent of their original welfare entitlement. By the end of the study, a total of fifteen people in Passage East were involved in the A.A.E.S of which thirteen were involved in the co-op. The fishermen who participated on the scheme, were as a condition of their involvement, required to register for tax. The majority did so by October of 1996. During the first year the

scheme went well, in effect it facilitated the continuation of the pattern of income generation in operation previously, combining welfare payments and fishing income. The relative success enjoyed by the co-op meant that the amount earned was substantial and no significant reductions in welfare payments occurred. Things continued in much the same way as they had before. Indeed the perception was that the scheme had effectively taken the "heat" off of those who had felt under risk as a result of the manager's warnings in the latter half of 1995 and the rumours about welfare raids. The allowance made a positive contribution. While on unemployment payments fishermen were subject to the risk of being caught being on the A.A.E.S meant that they could fish whenever they wanted. However the drawbacks of participation on the scheme soon became apparent. On registering for tax they were identified to the Revenue Commissioners, who assessed most of the fishermen for about IR£500 in the first year. While this in itself was a small tax bill its future implications gave some of the fishermen cause for concern. They were now known to the Revenue Commissioners. Once identified it would become difficult for them to avoid the revenue in the future. Furthermore toward the end of the first year the fishermen became conscious of the fact that they were about to have their payments reduced. This coincided with another poor salmon season. It was feared that the level of income they received through the scheme would coincide with a reduction of earnings from the fishery.

Despite the suggestions of both the Partnership and the DSW/SCFA that the combination of A.A.E.S and Back to Work Programmes offered a neat solution to the problem of dealing with Passage East, the issues which had previously affected the work of a range of organisations rapidly re-asserted themselves. The fishery continued to represent an unpredictable income source whose earnings were inherently variable. Fishermen again began to question the appropriateness of the programme. The A.A.E.S and B.T.W schemes offered fixed and reducing benefits to supplement an income that is expected to rise consistently. Yet as has been shown earnings in the fishery are subject to significant on-going negative as well as positive fluctuations. These concerns were confirmed when in the 1996-97 season a combination of market factors together with a late spawning season reduced the quality and quantity of the mussel harvest, and subsequent sales were reduced. This resulted in the value of the mussel harvest in that year decreasing substantially and a large drop in income for many of the members of the co-op at a time when their welfare payments were being reduced. By March of 1997 a number of those originally placed on the scheme had made efforts to return to unemployment benefits. While they had been told this was possible

they found it more difficult than anticipated. They were now known to the D.S.W/S.C.F.A to have been involved in fishing. As a result they were required to provide proof that they were no longer active.

It had also been suggested that the fishermen would be entitled to claim grants if they joined the scheme. The fishermen's attitude to the possibility of applying for grants had been positive. While in theory it was their involvement in the co-op that was the reason for them being placed on the A.A.E.S many saw the availability of grants as an opportunity to expand their involvement in fishing. The types of equipment they were interested in applying for was applicable to a wide variety of fishing activities. Here again it is possible to see the fishermen's involvement with the Partnership was informed by wider assessments of its potential role in generating income from a range of activities. However while the fishermen were entitled to apply for grants the process of securing them proved more difficult than had been anticipated. In the event most of the equipment for which they wished to obtain funding was not eligible for support under the Partnerships rules.

While in official discourse both the Partnership and the D.S.W/S.C.F.A viewed the A.A.E.S programme as a measure to support people commencing self-employment the fishermen's response to the scheme was based on a much more pragmatic concern with short term difficulties that they faced in relation to their existing income strategies. They decided to participate on the scheme in order to resolve immediate concerns over their welfare and tax status. They did so reluctantly as a result of pressure from the manager during what turned out to be a brief period during which substantial income was generated by the co-op and after strong hints that a raid was likely to occur. Despite the claims of the Partnership that A.A.E.S was a scheme intended to facilitate people in returning to full time employment, the fishermen approached it in much the same way as they utilised the welfare system more generally, as an additional resource within the area which could potentially play a role in continuing their existing activities and not as the basis for a new business or a movement away from the welfare system entirely, or from existing fishing practice. Equally the approach they adopted towards the co-op itself suggests that their primary interest in this programme was with its immediate implications for their income rather than the wider notions of the long term development of sustainable fishing that featured in local development discourse. This is reflected in the considerable difficulty that the manager had in persuading them of the need to regularise their welfare and tax situation, together with

difficulties she faced enforcing quotas and retaining income to reinvest, adding weight to her suggestion that strong management was necessary for the co-op.

However the response of development staff also indicates that, for their part, there was also a considerable divergence from the role in which they employed the A.A.E.S and the way in which it was envisaged that the scheme should operate in practice. Far from acting as a mechanism for generating new economic development in the form of small business start – ups, the A.A.E.S was used in conjunction with the development of the co-operative as a means by which a greater degree of monitoring and control could be exerted over the fishermen. In agreeing to participate on the scheme fishermen incurred considerable penalties, becoming part of the programme, exposed them to the full rigours of the Welfare and Taxation system.

11.8 Conclusion

This chapter has set out an analysis of how local responses influence the shape of state interventions. It began by suggesting that these responses are best understood in the context of lived experience. The nature of the estuary itself and the long established local patterns of usage, contribute to local forms of practice which differ significantly from the ways in which development interventions conceptualise practices such as employment, unemployment and development. A key feature of local livelihood strategies is flexibility. This extends itself into the way in which actors respond to the state. So for example the question of how fishermen respond to the payments available through the welfare system is shaped by locally devised criteria. In incorporating them into their lifeworld a range of factors influence the way in which elements of state programmes are employed. Whilst development discourse makes distinctions between the unemployed and the employed which are formal and rigid, for many in Passage East availing of welfare payments was not incompatible with their identity as members of a fishing community. Indeed the extent of their ability to respond flexibly to the State is such as to make it possible for them to deconstruct policy interventions and incorporate elements of them into their livelihood strategies. It is possible to argue that if they were unable to do so, fishing in the area would have been fundamentally changed if not ended.

The chapter also highlights another issue. As significant as the role of those local actors who are the potential beneficiaries of these programmes is the role of state agency staff. For example, the decision of one of these staff members to “soft pedal,” on the question of the eligibility for welfare payments was justified on the basis of the existence of a series of negative attributes that he associated with the residents of Passage East which he collectively labelled as the “Passage Mentality.” These observations illustrate two significant issues. The first is the capacity of field staff to act autonomously. The response of the field staff examined in this chapter was as strategically informed of that of the local fishermen. For staff the “Passage Mentality” became an important mechanism in defining the conditions encountered in that village explaining the basis of their actions as a rational response to these problems. In this case the actual outcome of interventions was the product of the interaction between specific locally situated actors who were co-enrolled in the programmes. It suits the various officials to explain difficulties encountered in this area in terms of the “Passage Mentality”. Equally it suits locals that they adopt a hands-off approach that facilitates the continuation of certain practices in local livelihood strategies. The idea that policy outcomes are a joint effort involving the active participation of both the staff of the implementing organisation and local actors raises another point, while it is quite clear that locals’ livelihood strategies inform their responses to such initiatives it also appears that the staff of certain agencies also behave strategically applying the rules of the schemes in a way that makes their workloads manageable, that they too devise and implement livelihood strategies.

The empirical data throws an important light on the question of power in local development programmes. In the implementation of the various programmes examined in this chapter it is possible to identify mismatches between official ideas about development and the local reality. Whilst development projects involve attempts to enrol the locals, the locals respond to such endeavours critically. Deconstructing the project they evaluate its potential contribution to and the risks posed to their own livelihood strategy. Their approach to the range of state agencies involved is informed by their cumulative experience in dealing with interventions of all types. The data considered above and in the previous chapter suggests that actors reveal little tendency to spend time trying to understand the nuanced distinctions between the aims and objectives of different agencies and organisations, much less to understand the finer points of policy “governance” rather schemes are assessed with respect to a radically different set of criteria. Thus in the case of BIM and the Partnership the response of locals is in many ways similar to that observed in relation to the welfare system,

despite the strenuous efforts of these agencies and the Partnership in particular, to distinguish themselves from other agencies. The primary factor informing local responses to such entities is their significance to existing livelihood strategies. Ultimately such considerations have an influence on the way in which these programmes are implemented. The outcomes of these programmes are also, critically, shaped by the responses of local development staff. In this chapter it has been shown that in encounters with other local actor's, staff members demonstrate a capacity to recognise the reality of this situation, and re-interpret elements of the development programmes in order to balance the demands of formal discourse with the realities of working with specific actors in specific settings. In the cases examined in this chapter we thus see significant differences between the ways in which the schemes were worked out and the way that formal development policy discourse defined them. Local responses to development are thus both unpredictable and unlikely to conform to formal ideas about how such schemes are supposed to function. Instead the actual outcome of the programme would appear to be much more decisively influenced by the actions of local actors, including members of the staff who as local brokers with specific interests of their own to advance, utilise elements of the local development policy discourse selectively to support their own projects. As such it is possible to recognise that far from simply acting as functionaries of the development network, the staff become another group of actors with their own interests to pursue during implementing of programmes with an interest in securing certain patterns of local economic behaviour as well as access to, and control over, certain parts of the estuary. The co-op's manager, for example, becomes another potentially powerful actor competing over local resources while the Partnership gives tacit but unambiguous support to her role in enforcing "good" economic behaviour on the cooperatives membership. The development ideology serves to add strength to the position of development workers at the expense of other resource users. Ironically one feature of her strategy is to claim usage rights for a much larger area of the estuary than she was initially able to utilise, in seeking to extend the role of her co-op she sought to prevent independent local development projects.

Much of this chapter has argued that the outcome of interventions in local areas is influenced by the responses of local actors to these programmes and that these responses are shaped by the way in which local actors assess the implication of such programmes to their livelihood strategy. The final section considered the implications that such programmes had on the livelihood strategies of actors who decided to participate in them. Again it could be

suggested that there is a mismatch between the development framework, which portrayed the co-op and the A.A.E.S as mechanisms for effecting social change in the area, and the fishermen perspective, which was concerned with pursuing a livelihood strategy. The notion of a project which could help to move people off of unemployment and into employment appears relatively obvious and easy to understand. However this model was not compatible with a form of economic activity where substantial negative as well as positive fluctuations in income levels occurred, a concern which formed an intrinsic part of local livelihood strategies in this area. Ultimately the co-operatives ability to effect a transition from unemployment to employment was limited because the increased degree of control it exerted over the fishermen reduced the degree of flexibility they had when formulating strategies to maintain income in an economically marginal fishery. Only a year after joining the scheme a number of the fishermen were experiencing problems with the scheme. Equally it needs to be pointed out that others prospered. The nature of livelihood strategies is that they result in variable outcomes. The point is that there is nothing inherent in the state programmes themselves that led to the success or failure of individual actors. The question of whether certain actors were successful or not related to how well they succeeded in incorporating the schemes into their own livelihood strategies. The failure of this project to recognise the nature of the challenges facing fishermen in devising livelihood strategies in the area left some fishermen more exposed and vulnerable to the very fluctuations in income which had contributed to welfare dependency in the first place.

The responses of many of the local actors living in this area applied the same approach towards the various arms of the state without making fine distinctions between them. Even in the case of development organisations which claimed to be involved in participative development strategies there was a lack of direct involvement with the wider community and lack of knowledge present in the village about these organisations. This contributed to the belief that these organisations were part of “the government”. The possibilities that the Partnership could change the primarily adversarial nature of the relationship between local people and policy interventions of any kind was not improved by the widespread practice amongst state agency staff and development workers of employing the “Passage Mentality”, a form of labelling, to describe a range of negative local attributes including welfare dependency, hostility towards outsiders and innovation laziness and tax avoidance (See Wood et al 1985). This negative image of the village was invoked by almost all the staff

encountered in the area during the study to explain a wide range of issues and problems encountered by them in the area.

In summary the data presented in this chapter raises some interesting issues in relation to the way in which state interventions operate in practise calling into question some of the fundamental notions that underlie such initiatives as the Partnership. Not least of these is the notion that local development involves a package of measures, which include as a central element the notion of local organisation, managed through consensus building based on expert knowledge. Within this framework a key idea is that locals will support efforts to address commonly identified problems in a structured way using the planning and other forms of expertise that they can access through the Partnership. This chapter demonstrates that there is considerable variation in the local responses of both staff and the putative beneficiaries of programmes such as the Partnership to such programmes. It is the actors existing life world that provides a context in which they firstly interpret and subsequently formulate responses to the new economic threats and opportunities that the Partnership presents to them. It may perhaps make more sense to ask an alternative question of such programmes. Rather than attempting to evaluate actor responses against predetermined ideas about what programmes should do in specific areas, it may perhaps be more useful to ask how they are used by local actors and it is to this question that the penultimate chapter in this study turns.

Chapter 12 Income Maintenance and Local Development

12.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have demonstrated some of the benefits of employing an approach to the study of state interventions which incorporate elements of an anthropology of development. Addressing the issue of local development in this way reveals a story which differs significantly from that outlined in the formal development policy discourse, among other things calling into question the way in which this discourse is employed in this process and pointing to the implications this has on the way in which issues of power and the question of control were worked out. Formal development discourse links ideas about the future of rural areas to models of change that reflect the interests and ideas of policy makers and development professionals. This forms the basis for a specific form of expert knowledge which is utilised by development professionals to, as Callon put it make, certain accounts or translations irreversible (1985, 1991). This process has an important bearing on the possible outcomes envisioned in development programmes. In the case of Dutch agriculture Van der Ploeg (2003) demonstrates something similar, illustrating how the expert systems employed by development advisors close down future options so that a specific state sponsored development project emerges as the only viable development choice. The data presented in this study has illustrated how, as an organisation vested with specific expertise the Partnership defined issues such as unemployment in a specific way (See for example McCullough 1986) linking them to a specific set of attributes which include economic inactivity and a form of “dependency culture,”(See for example Rourke 1994, Gaffickin and Morrisey 1999, Leonard 2000, 2002). Having defined the issue in a specific way the Partnership then outlined responses to the problems facing the area based on this analysis. In the case of unemployment the Partnership suggested that it could assist people move to a new state, one of employment readiness and eventually employment or self-employment. Such programmes thus incorporated certain assumptions about these issues and the place of the community and the role of local development organisations in addressing them which are informed by the interests of certain actors in the policy making process (Gaffickin and Morrisey 1990). A significant feature of the Partnership programme was the way in which it conceptualised the notion of employment and unemployment as dichotomous states and its

role in actively facilitating moves from one state to the other a feature which distinguished it from “passive” policy responses to unemployment (See Lister 2001).

The previous two chapters examined the extent to which assertions of the type outlined above are borne out in the actual way in which a local development programme was worked out. It focussed in particular on events at the local level in order to develop an understanding of how encounters that occur in specific localities during the implementation of policy interventions, involving the staff of a number of organisations and other local actors shape the outcome of these policies. It was shown that objects which are introduced as part of such interventions become the subject of exchanges or negotiations during which the strategies adopted by these actors have a fundamental bearing on the way in which these objects come to be understood and employed locally. The reality of how local development programmes are constituted appears to vary considerably from what is suggested in formal discourse. These observations point to what may be a significant defect in the formal approach to local development. It fails to recognise the fact that the socio-economic life of those who are regarded as being in a marginal economic position can be complex. It includes activities that, while clearly related to the sphere of production, also have rich socio-cultural relevance. Development programmes tend to apply specific understandings of activity in distinct categories such as employment, unemployment and the economy which fail to recognise these complexities. The previous two chapters illustrate the fact that despite the efforts of such programmes to tidy local activities into such classificatory schemes, local actors can and do respond in a range of radically different ways to the introduction of new programmes and that such responses have an influence on the way in which these programmes are worked out in practice. In addition, such responses are influenced by existing income strategies. For this reason an examination of how such programmes are worked out needs to consider what Midgely (1986) referred to as the question of how groups in specific situations secure the resources to reproduce their lives. Such an approach in the previous chapter revealed contradictions between formal elements of policy interventions and the reality of programme implementation. Local actors employ different forms of knowledge and understandings in looking at new programmes. Consequently they formulate ideas about the nature of the problems they face and the best responses to them, which are widely at variance to those suggested in development policy discourse. This suggests that the power that the formal development discourse has to shape the way in which state interventions are implemented is

limited. Staff are constantly engaged in balancing the priorities of development programmes against the forms of knowledge and consequent strategies adopted by local people.

At local level the question of power in the development process is more complex than is suggested either by those who regard local development positively, as for example a means of enhancing local governance, or those who regard such programmes in more negative terms (Meade 2002, 2005). The data examined in this study suggests that actors' responses to specific state interventions are based on discursively rational assessments of the potential impact of objects associated with such programmes on their own interests. This finding is highly significant in relation to the problem posed in this study. The data presented here suggests that negotiation and conflict are significant elements of such programmes even where such programmes claim to be of a participatory nature (Leeuwis 2000). In the case of local fishing households we see that their responses are related to their attempts to maintain an adequate level of income which is in turn an element of what are termed livelihood strategies. Interventions encouraging them to become involved in new areas of activity were met with diverse responses, reflecting their efforts to redirect and reshape these programmes in the context of these strategies. Local actors neither support nor contest the ideas embodied in formal local development discourse. Resistance, where it occurs, involves formulating responses to these programmes which advance the projects of local actors while compliance is partial and influenced by similar considerations. This has a key bearing on the way in which the Partnership went about its work. It also bears on questions that are critical to this study concerning the way local development interventions are shaped during implementation. In this chapter this questions is investigated further by examining the extent to which the observations made in the previous chapter apply more generally to the way that the responses of local actors shape the implementation of one partnership programme, the A.A.E.S.

As has been shown the A.A.E.S scheme was based on a particular Partnership perspective on unemployment the principal features of which are that it conceptualised employment in terms of participation in what is described as the formal economy. By contrast those activities that lay outside the formal economy are defined as being part of what are variously described as the informal, black or grey economy. The previous chapters suggested that such distinctions are devised in administrative contexts. They differ considerably from local understandings of work and employment contributing to the degree of divergence between the way in which programmes are designed to work and how they actually work in practice. In Passage East it

was suggested that the scheme possessed features which lend themselves to local variation between the programme as conceptualised and as implemented which were of significance in understanding how the programmes was worked out in practice. In this chapter the extent to which this situation applied more generally is considered by examining the efforts of staff to implement the A.A.E.S and the responses of local actors to these efforts across the county as a whole. This will be done by broadening the analysis to examine the extent to which the insights into how fishing households responded to the A.E.ES have a wider relevance amongst those defined as unemployed by the Partnership. The next section of this chapter considers the implications of the existence of specific approaches to the conceptualisation of employment and unemployment on the study of local development policies addressing the employment issue in more depth. The potential implications that the findings made in the previous chapter, concerning the existence of differing local ideas about the same issue are also considered. Having done so these observations will then be applied to an in depth consideration of the Partnership's A.A.E.S throughout County Waterford, examining in detail how such considerations shaped the responses of a range of actors to what was regarded as a flagship Partnership programme, one of the few it operated that directly supported its key target group, the unemployed.

12.2 The Partnership, employment policy and the informal economy

Development discourse associates economic behaviour with a particular form of temporal and spatial organisation which relates it to participation in the formal labour market. Within this perspective understandings of economic behaviour are governed by very specific rules of interpretation that associate work with the certain forms of capitalist production. This particular approach to economic behaviour embodies concepts about the permissible ways in which needs are to be met, value generated, resources allocated and power distributed in the economic sphere. Such a perspective dominated the approach that the Partnership programme adopted towards unemployment, through measures aimed at preparing the unemployed individual for re-integration in the labour market. Simultaneously this perspective excluded other productive activities lying outside of the realm of the regulated economy from being considered in the same way. By associating work with a specific form of participation in the regulated labour market other forms of work or ways of meeting needs are deleted from public narratives (See Woolgar 1986, Law 2004). Alternatively where such activities are

recognised they were labelled in ways which exclude them from legitimate discussions on employment and work. When dealing with the unemployed a particularly significant feature of this discussion was the use of the term informal economy to describe such activities. The notion of the informal economy has been employed in numerous research contexts to describe a range of ways in which people address a variety of socio economic needs ranging, from unpaid child minding undertaken by family members through to unregulated trading, and tax evasion. The only common feature linking these activities often appears to be the fact that they occur outside the regulated sphere of activities generally defined within public policy as the formal economy. In this discourse, the treatment of informal economic activity relies on observations of what is formal and by inference legal and good economic activity, while de-emphasising the significance of what are described as informal activities as either legitimate, valuable or indeed noteworthy means of meeting needs¹. As with much of the literature on local development ideas about the nature of economic activity often appear to be based on arbitrary taxonomies (Whatmore et al 1987, Marsden et al 1994) unrelated to actual social practices. Indeed looking at the wide range of activities that have come to be linked to the term “informal economy” it clear that the informal is less a distinct category in itself than a label attached to those activities that do not fit into the formal economy a range of phenomena which are not part of the formal economy and are unregulated by the State. However given the range of activities encompassed, the possibility that anything can be inferred about the way in which these phenomena operate from this classification is dubious. In Ireland in depth investigation of the informal economy is limited. What work has been done tends to focus on the participation of marginalised groups in the informal economy such as the travelling community (Helleiner 2003) women in economically marginal situations (Leonard 1995) or communities experiencing economic difficulties associated with the troubles in Northern Ireland and long term welfare dependency (Gaffikin and Morrisey 1999). While such studies offer important insights into the significance of the “informal sector” to certain marginal groups, they continue to frame this analysis in terms of the

¹ The existence of an informal economy is viewed much more positively by researchers in developing economies who have pointed to the potential that this sector offers those who are in marginal positions in relation to the formal economy (Bouman and Hospes 1994 & Hospes 2004). This may perhaps prompt questions as to why, in the context of developed states with better welfare services and more extensive social policies, the informal is seen as a problem whereas in less developed states it is seen as being a potentially beneficial phenomena by researchers.

exclusion of these groups from the “formal economy”. Leonard, for example, refers to the informal sector as involving “coping strategies” for marginalised groups (2000).

The previous chapter illustrates the potential limitations of a perspective on economic behaviour based on the type of pre-determined categories or typologies described above. This approach is inherently reductionist, reducing the economic actor to an element of an economic reality, a concrete abstraction denoting an ideal rational economic character (Daly 1991, 1994). Daly’s work points out that this perspective does not give due recognition to the social dimension of economic life. However as the previous chapter demonstrates in Waterford economic behaviour is significantly influenced by supposedly "non-economic," issues. As Leonard pointed out repeatedly in her exhaustive studies of patterns of work and non-work in Belfast economic behaviour is not always guided by a simple desire to maximise earnings. Life choices are governed by other considerations and choices as to what people do with their time and what they consider to be an acceptable level of subsistence vary; "*When wages were high or prices low workers cut down their number of hours work as they were able to achieve the expected level of subsistence with less labour. ...Thus early industrialists attempted to impose a rigorous labour discipline on their employees,*" (Leonard 1991 p. 7). In a rural context, Van Der Ploeg’s work on farm enterprises and on styles of farming clearly illustrates the influence of social and cultural factors in shaping variable responses to external market pressures and expert advice (1994). While in relation to micro finance practices Villareal makes the point that “*markets are constituted in social interaction... ...The ways in which social and symbolic resources are deployed and made significant is thus essential.*” (2010 pp. 128-129) This approach raises a number of points that are of significance in this discussion. In particular it shows how actor’s participation in economic activities of all kinds involves a combination of both economic and non-economic factors.

The activities of the fishing households considered in the previous chapter highlight this reality. Their responses to economic problems and opportunities were informed by both economic and non-economic considerations. In particular it illustrated the link between questions of identity and economic decision making. While alternatives to persevering in the fishery exist, for those who opt to continue, the role that fishing plays in their lifeworlds informs their decisions to act as they do. When considered in detail it becomes quite clear that the supposedly financial landscape is embedded within a wider web of socio cultural issues (Bouman and Hospes 1994, Lontz and Hospes 2004). Economic and cultural features

of this life world are wholly interdependent and it is meaningless to attempt to analyse these "economic" practices in isolation from the field of social relations in which they are situated. Thus in order to understand how actors engage in any specific form of income generation we need to widen the analysis out, to include both the economic and non-economic factors that the actors themselves are likely to take into consideration when making such decisions.

This study suggests that a focus on livelihoods is useful mechanism for widening the analysis of economic life. Livelihoods are socially constructed, and involve the maintenance of networks of norms and value through which social relationships are produced and reproduced. It involves the use of a variety of different mechanisms for securing resources, and meeting needs. Within livelihood strategies, economic activities are intertwined with other practices and are influenced by cultural and social considerations that have to be seen as valuable in their own right. Thus the analysis focusses on the role of the economic in the maintenance of a wider way of life incorporating "*actions of a range of types economic, informal economic, formal economic reciprocal religious etc which serve dual purposes of accomplishing certain cultural necessary tasks,*" (Daly 1991 pp 79 -102). Focussing on livelihood strategies changes the nature of research questions that can be usefully asked and meaningfully answered making for an analysis of development programmes that is better able to shed light on the crucial issues that are at the heart of this study. Such questions concern the impact the actor's behaviour has on the working out of the development programme. In particular the question of how power is worked out in this process can be examined. It is necessary to recognise that when entering into such a study it is not possible to assume what aspects of economic practices are the most significant in advance. Work and economic activity involve both the technical and economic aspects of work and the reproduction of socio-cultural life on an on-going basis. Whilst production, exchange and consumption serve to assist the meeting of material needs, this is not the only function they serve. The socio cultural significance of certain elements of such processes also needs to be considered.

This study examines the introduction of a local development programme. In doing so it has sought to focus on the role that actors play in this process. If actors are purposive then they pursue goals and in order to do so they exist within a wide network of social relations. The actor's choice of goal and of strategies is related to the resources that are available to them including not only financial, material and human resources but also the knowledge that they

possess and their ability to influence others. Thus economic life also entails practices during which the production or reproduction of meaning is important. The point is illustrated by Varenne in a study of sub-urban lifestyles in Ireland "*the machines make conditions.... the people make their own lives for themselves the members of their households kin and networks of friends and acquaintances. However overwhelming the constraints that frame the people, they must still perform the rest of their days and in the process produce a particularity, a difference that the casual might miss*" (Varenne 1993 p.112). For Varenne this idea points to the importance of looking at the "minutiae of social life". Practices in all spheres including the spheres of production and consumption can be usefully studied as emergent. It is through looking at the fine detail of social interactions as they occur that an understanding of the meaning of such practices is possible.

The previous two chapters have illustrated the importance of the "minutiae" in understanding the socio-economic life of specific localities. Chapter ten for example, illustrated that an activity such as fishing is not simply about extracting a material resource in the most physically efficient way available to the fishermen. Indeed it is possible to argue that if they were purely driven by a desire to maximise income most of the fishermen wouldn't fish at all. Such insights are vital to an understanding of the way in which actors respond to local development programmes. The response of fishermen to efforts to encourage collective action is informed by their own knowledge of the estuary and their place within this resource system. This illustrated the fact that the "fine detail" is very significant to the way in which local development programmes are worked out revealing how these schemes were shaped through exchanges during which local field workers, their "clients" and other locals sought to incorporate the programme into their lifeworlds in a way which supported their projects. It is only through looking at such activities from the perspective of these actors and examining the socio-cultural significance of fishing and other economic activities that the way in which these considerations influence local responses to the introduction of new development interventions can be fully understood. Over time fishermen have proven capable and willing to incorporate new objects and practices into their life worlds based on their own assessments of the implications that these objects have to their livelihood strategies. New species have been introduced along with new equipment. However these objects are incorporated as part of a social world that the fishermen make themselves and as such form part of a slow process of evolution in local livelihood strategies rather than a radical break with the past. When confronting new local development programmes fishing families sought to incorporate

elements of the new programme into their livelihood strategies as an additional income source within their existing repertoire. Such responses were driven by assessments of the implications that the new programmes had for the existing income strategies of fishing households. In this case therefore the answer to some of those questions asked in the first chapter of this thesis concerning who controls the partnership and how local people respond to it is quite clearly linked to the way in which individual actors and households assess the programmes likely significance to their own projects and income strategies. The working out of the Partnership is intimately linked to the question of what it means to be involved in the fishery and also indeed to the understandings that the staff bring to their efforts to implement the programme.

The A.A.E.S programme was one of the few that the Partnership introduced which was specifically targeted at the unemployed. It contained within it a certain conceptualisation of the nature of employment and indeed unemployment. The previous chapter demonstrated how these ideas clashed with local ideas about income generation. The official conceptualisation of being unemployed is based on an administrative model that conceptualises unemployment in terms of the relationship between the unemployed, the State and the regulated formal economy. The unemployed however must “act out their days” and in doing so they are producers of socially meaningful acts. It cannot simply be assumed that the relationship they enjoy with the formal economy is the single most significant aspect of their behaviour. Therefore an understanding of the way in which the A.A.E.S operates must involve developing an understanding of the work people do as part of “being,” unemployed. In order address this question and hence the wider issue of how local actors respond to new development programmes, careful attention needs to be paid to the patterns of behaviour, texts and words used by the unemployed.

12.3 The Area Allowance Enterprise Scheme; Formal approaches to economic development.

This section considers the concept of unemployment that was carried through into development practice by looking in depth at the A.A.E.S programme as outlined in formal discourse. This scheme was one of the first introduced after the Partnership was launched. Its aim was to encourage people who were long term unemployed to re-enter the formal labour

market by becoming self-employed. The reasoning underlying the introduction of the programme was scarcely novel. It had long been argued that a major difficulty for those in receipt of benefits was the high rate of marginal taxation that they experienced in taking up employment. For those in receipt of benefits securing a low income job resulted not only in the loss of the payment but of other "secondary" benefits such as the right to treatment under the medical card scheme. The disruption or "breaking" of claims in situations when people sign off the register in order to take employment, also means that one is no longer termed long term unemployed² a classification which brought with it some additional benefits such as eligibility for certain training and employment schemes. The problems posed to those in receipt of unemployed by the threat of loss of benefits on taking up employment were widely recognised in the period leading up to, and immediately following the introduction of the A.A.E.S leading to a debate during the early 1990's about alternatives to means tested benefits (See for example Healy 1994).

The A.A.E.S. sought to address some of the perceived obstacles facing the unemployed in gaining employment in the formal economy. Under the scheme individuals in receipt of unemployment benefit or unemployment assistance for over a year were permitted to remain in receipt of Welfare Payments and related benefits for the first year of self-employment. This would it was hoped provide an incentive to people to avail of opportunities to start a business during the crucial "start-up" period of the first year. The continuation of benefits would provide an additional income, and cushion the unemployed person and their family from the poverty trap. While at this point the solution to the unemployment problem was associated nationally with economic policies which it was hoped would bring about a general increase in the level of employment, the A.A.E.S provided an alternative option in Partnership areas, encouraging the long term unemployed to become involved in self-employment.

The scheme was operated jointly by the Partnerships and the D.S.W/S.C.F.A. While payments under the A.A.E.S continued to be administered and funded centrally through the

² The definition of Long term unemployment is itself largely arbitrary; within the European Union it is defined as a period of unemployment of twelve months or longer. In practice The D.S.W/S.F.C.A adopted a slightly different criteria by defining long term unemployment as being in receipt of unemployment benefit or assistance one year, as the Partnership programme continued eligibility to some programmes originally intended for the long term unemployed was extended to recipients of other benefits.

D.S.W/S.F.C.A, the Partnership was responsible for administering the programme. This involved considering applications, deciding on them, monitoring participants on the scheme and providing a range of additional supports to the participants in the form of technical and financial assistance. In each area it was the Partnership that ultimately decided on eligibility and the application procedures. Under the department's guidelines applicants could only be considered for the scheme if they had been registered and in receipt of unemployment benefit or assistance for a period of one year and were resident in a designated area. Beyond this basic requirement the scope the Partnerships had for discretion was quite broad. The way that eligibility was determined differed considerably amongst Partnerships. In some instances the Partnership's formally interviewed participants, in others evaluation committees, which included local business professionals, assessed the applications. The criteria required that the Partnerships support commercially viable proposals. Yet on this point the Partnerships applied varied criteria in determining what constituted a viable business. Most partnerships required that a significant amount of attention be paid to the preparation of some form of business plan by the client. Initially the completion of such a plan was a pre-requisite to participation in the scheme in Waterford and in many of the other Partnership areas. Most partnerships also insisted that the project should demonstrate some degree of viability. There was also a concern with questions of displacement. It was expected that applicants' projects should not threaten existing businesses although the extent to which this requirement had a real bearing on the programme is questionable. The applicants were also required to agree to comply with other requirements the Partnerships imposed. This was of significance in relation to the range of additional supports that the partnerships provided.

Within the partnership programme the view was taken that in addition to the obvious problem of income, the unemployed would experience additional problems in attempting to set up their own businesses. These related to the financing of projects and the skills necessary to run a business. Therefore, in addition to the retention of their benefit payments for one year, participants on the programme were offered the opportunity to access a bundle of financial and technical assistance. The Partnerships were given responsibility for providing these supports. Funding was to be made available to the Partnerships to undertake this work and to allocate to individual participants as grant aid. The Partnerships employed staff to oversee the administration of the programme and support the participants. Again a considerable degree of scope was allowed to the individual Partnerships in devising these measures. While this resulted in variation on the detail in all Partnership areas the nature of

these supports drew heavily on formal models of business development. The importance of good preparation and planning was identified as a key area in which the programme could provide help. The programme also laid heavy emphasis on the acquisition of business skills by the unemployed person. Indeed progress in the business was associated with the acquisition of such "skills," Thus underlying the A.A.E.S was a model of enterprise development which supported the notions of employment and unemployment mentioned above. The emphasis was on the technical challenges facing people wishing to start a business. Once a potential applicant approached a Partnership with an idea, they were to be subject to a set of procedures and training that would help them "make a transition into self-employment". Emphasis was laid on the need for the self-employed person to adopt a specific set of disciplines presented as good business practice. To this end a range of start your own business courses were introduced in a number of the Partnerships, including Waterford, to teach such skills. The courses generally drew on generic business training indistinguishable in many respects from courses offered in the traditional education sector. They provided introductory classes in management, marketing, tax procedures and bookkeeping. Additional assistance with book keeping and tax affairs through the provision of access to accountants, business advisors or staff was also a major feature of the programme. Another issue that was of key significance in the way in which the A.A.E.S was administered was the requirement for applicants to comply with state regulation, particularly in relation to tax. All the Partnerships emphasised the need for participants on the scheme to maintain proper business records. It was for this reason that the Partnerships provided assistance in book keeping or accountancy in the form of training, printed material and/or access to an accountant or other advisor. In addition most Partnerships also insisted that the applicant register as self-employed for tax purposes. The extent to which this obligation was enforced varied. In the case of some partnership' this involved relatively straightforward monitoring in the form of a phone call or occasional meeting with the client. However in extreme cases the Partnership staff sought to ensure that their clients complied with bookkeeping procedures and required access to their client's books.

Again it is clearly the case that the Partnership approach implies certain things both about the nature of enterprise and the position of the unemployed and their status in relation to the Partnership and the economy. It identifies specific barriers that face the unemployed in their efforts to become self-employed, these barriers primarily relate to specific things that the unemployed lack, skills, know how, and finance. What the Partnership proposes is a model of

good practice based on what is presented as rational, business practice. The market is a place in which competition is based on the effective application of business plans and marketing strategies. Rigid compliance with the legalities of business life is taken as a given. The success or failure of businesses is closely linked with adherence to these understandings. The Partnership defines its role as assisting its unemployed clients to comply with this model. However an interesting feature of this particular perspective is the heavy emphasis placed on the clients need to comply with the regulatory requirements of businesses. By contrast the Partnership approach offered little in the way of support or advice concerning, product development, marketing, cash flow management or other areas of expertise in which it could be anticipated that its client base may experience some deficiencies. Indeed little mention is made of the whole question of the generation of the business idea itself. Beyond requiring that the client prepare a business plan and providing them with some assistance to do so, the Partnerships had little involvement in examining the feasibility of new ideas. Instead emphasis was placed on the provision of support in evaluating ideas and assistance that enabled the participant to comply with the formal disciplines and regulations that surround the enterprise. In terms of business development the area in which Partnerships appear weakest is in relation to the development of the product, while the obstacles to self-employment which the Partnerships best addressed related to deficiencies in business administration and tax affairs.

A number of issues present themselves when the approach the Partnerships adopted to the implementation of the A.A.E.S programme is considered. Whilst the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of the Partnership's A.A.E.S programmes are seldom clearly outlined they reflect an essentialist perspective on economic behaviour. Income generating activity is reduced to a commercial essence. As part of the Partnership idea of progression, the services and projects undertaken by these organisations were depicted as being sequential, following a trajectory that concluded with a person creating a "viable" enterprise. The A.A.E.S. was an important element in the "treatment" making it possible to suggest that the problem of unemployment can be resolved through the delivery of certain types of training to the unemployed individuals. Success and failure is portrayed as being linked to the client's willingness to embrace a range of skills and practices that are related to a formal model of business development. The heavy emphasis within the programme on the acquisition of "enterprise skills" strengthens the idea of "transition," between a state of being untrained and unemployed to a state in which people function as able entrepreneurs. Yet the

skills and abilities that the Partnership emphasised related to such issues as taxation and bookkeeping, skills that are essentially related to administrative issues. As was the case with the manager of the shellfish co-operative discussed in the previous chapter, the demands made by the tax system on programme participants became the rationale for local staff adopting what were in some instances highly invasive systems of monitoring and control over A.A.E.S clients. It also involved the imposition of an administrative burden on clients which, for example, far exceeded that required by bank clients drawing down business loans. While stressing the importance of such requirements, the Partnership simultaneously ignored numerous other arguably more significant skills that have been identified as valuable to those starting enterprises (See Henry, Hill and Leitch 2005). The consequence of this approach is to even further reduce the extent to which the socio-cultural aspects of livelihood strategies are recognised in the Partnership's programmes while extending the control exercised by its staff.

12.4 The A.A.E.S in Waterford

W.D.P operated the A.A.E.S from early in 1992 with a total of two hundred and twenty five people availing of the programme up to the end of the study in 1998. As was the case nationally, the operation of the scheme in Waterford was viewed as one of the major success of the A.B.R. In the period studied it was claimed that seventy five per cent of the projects survived the first year. In addition a further ten per cent of participants were believed to have gained employment or gone into further training as a result of being on the scheme, claimed as another positive result of the programme. While there were significant similarities in the approach the twelve Partnerships adopted towards the programme there were also some significant areas of difference. These are of particular significance when considering how the scheme was worked out in Waterford. In most Partnerships the A.A.E.S was treated as an enterprise creation initiative and in fact constituted one of the major areas of activity for many Partnerships in this regard. The programme was in most Partnerships implemented by an enterprise officer whose responsibilities involved the administration of the programme itself and the further provision of practical and, where appropriate financial assistance. Generally the enterprise workers had some experience and/or training in finance or business

however in many of the Partnerships the enterprise officer's had no direct personal experience of either working in or running a commercial enterprise³.

Waterford differed in that the A.A.E.S was treated as a service to the unemployed. The officer initially responsible for the programme was a graduate in community development and by her own admission had no background in business. The scheme was run by her as part of a wider brief as the “services,” officer meaning that in addition to running this scheme she was also the officer in charge of all the Partnership’s services to the unemployed. She reported to a board sub-committee for services to the unemployed which in turn reported to the board. In addition to its general supervisory responsibility for any Partnership actions classified as services to the unemployed this subcommittee was responsible for decisions regarding grant assistance or financial allocations to A.A.E.S participants. The subcommittee included a local Saint Vincent De Paul⁴ activist, representatives of FAS and the D.S.W/S.C.F.A a representative of the unemployed and a member of the V.E.C. Participation by business representatives was limited to one member who seldom attended. Whilst in theory the sub-committee shared the same status as the others, the manager viewed this group as the weakest of the sub-committees. It contained members of the state agencies including FAS which he felt had caused the Partnership the most difficulty. While in other committees local businessmen⁵ familiar with the need to conduct meetings in an efficient manner were actively involved he considered the services sub-committee to lack organisation. He also questioned the commitment of some of its members, particularly the state agency representatives pointing to the fact that of all the subcommittees this was the only one that normally held its meetings during business hours because the public servants involved would not attend during their own time. In comparison to the tourism and enterprise subcommittee the services sub-committee was poorly resourced, something that was regarded by both the officer and members of the sub-committee as evidence of the managers lack of interest in what had originally been the Partnerships principal target group, the unemployed. Indeed the fact that the Partnership had allocated responsibility for the A.A.E.S to this subcommittee suggested that W.D.P’s priorities differed significantly from those of other Partnerships. While in other Partnership areas the A.A.E.S was a very significant component of the

³ The post was in many cases a relatively junior one and was regularly held by recent business graduates in the early stages of their career.

⁴ The St Vincent de Paul society is a major catholic charitable society which operates throughout Ireland providing services to “poor and disadvantaged,” clients.

⁵ The use of the term businessmen is deliberate illustrating the reality that none of the business people on the board were women.

enterprise programme, in Waterford the area allowance constituted by far the principal service to the unemployed operated by the Partnership until the introduction of the L.E.S in 1997. The decision to include the A.A.E.S in the Partnerships programme as a service to the unemployed was in keeping with the managers overall strategy of attempting to concentrate as much of the Partnerships own resources in the area of enterprise development, while making use of the resources of other agencies to fulfil the organisations responsibilities in other areas at minimum cost to W.D.P itself.

The sub-committee was responsible for overseeing the work of the officer employed to work as the unemployment services officer. While in principle this individual was to deliver a range of services, in reality, the limited amount of resources given to the subcommittee restricted the scope of the position. The job was largely restricted to the implementation of the A.A.E.S. This involved both the administration of the programme and of the additional financial and practical (technical) assistance provided by the Partnership. One significant innovation introduced by W.D.P was the operation of a low interest loan scheme. While most Partnerships opted to issue grants the W.D.P provided loans repayable at five per cent interest rate to a significant number of A.A.E.S participants instead. The staff and manager tended to view the use of these loans as extremely beneficial. The enterprise officer suggesting that the availability of a specific fund managed by a committee familiar with the needs of the unemployed offered a valuable alternative source of financial assistance. However she saw the benefits of the loans not simply as a financial contribution. The preparation of applications for grant and loan assistance provided a means of encouraging people thinking of going onto the programme to plan effectively and adhere to good financial disciplines. Loan repayment schedules ensured a means by which projects could be monitored on an on-going basis. The ability of recipients to manage repayments effectively acted as an early warning system for the Partnership; difficulties in making payments allowing for the rapid identification of problems needing to be addressed. W.D.P's manager and the organisation's own literature claimed that the use of loans instead of grants meant that clients had a greater stake and "sense of ownership," of the project⁶.

⁶ With the increasing availability of cheap credit during the latter half of the 1990's the attractiveness of the partnerships revolving loan facility declined sharply. By 1996 no loans were being offered to A.A.E.S participants.

Though in theory the operation of the programme was under the supervision of the subcommittee, the officer had a considerable degree of freedom in running the scheme. In agreement with the D.S.W/S.C.F.A staff member who sat on the subcommittee it was decided that an elaborate system for assessing the applications was not necessary. Rather than the subcommittee itself deciding on applications, in effect she was given a free hand in deciding who should participate. The sub-committee's involvement was therefore further reduced. It was only involved in the approval of grant and loan applications made by the participants and to approving the allocation of funds to provide additional supports such as training courses.

In Waterford, the programme came into operation at the end of 1992. It was publicised by the Partnership via a series of posters that offered support to unemployed people interested in starting their own business. Initially the Partnership operated a series of what it described as "clinics," basing officers in various locations for half a day per week. It was hoped that these would provide opportunities whereby prospective applicants would approach the Partnership about, among other things, the A.A.E.S. These proved ineffective and were discontinued in June 1993. Following this people who were interested in the scheme would contact the officer in Dungarvan where she was based. These contacts took the shape of a phone call or a personal visit to the office. While no data was available as to how such people came to hear about the Partnership it was apparent that some were referred by local community groups or FAS. However it was the D.S.W/S.C.F.A that acted as the main source of referrals. On contacting the Partnership an individual would be told about what was on offer. The A.A.E.S was outlined to them in simple terms. In addition the officer would use the opportunity afforded by this contact to establish some basic facts about the clients. This included the client's name, address and location, a general idea about their proposed project and the social welfare benefits that they received.

Unless an applicant was ineligible for some obvious reasons (Such as not being resident in the Partnership's catchment area or not being in receipt of social welfare) the officer arranged to meet them for a more detailed discussion of the scheme either in the office or at the applicant's house or place of work⁷. As a consequence a considerable amount of the officer's time was spent outside the office. The purpose of these meetings was twofold; firstly to

⁷ In many cases these were home businesses run out of the individual's residence.

enable the applicant to complete the application procedure and secondly to provide a prospective participant with business advice. The staff officer needed to verify the individual's welfare status and evaluate the suitability and the viability of the proposed business. The D.S.W/S.C.F.A eligibility criteria were relatively straight forward, the officer merely needed to ascertain that they had been unemployed long enough to qualify for the scheme. This was done by simply phoning the Department and quoting the individuals R.S.I/P.P.S number⁸. However, the Partnership's own criteria for deciding to place people on the programme were not clear-cut. In fact it was the staff officer herself who was primarily responsible for making these decisions. Such assessments were based on her own views as to the proposed business. In effect this left her with a considerable degree of discretion in determining who was to be accepted. In determining the client's suitability she placed considerable emphasis on the extent to which the prospective client would "*take the programme seriously*". By this she meant that she had to be assured that they were being sincere in their approach to the programme and would not simply go back on welfare payments after the first year. The clients own background and personal circumstances were an important factor in considering an application. Finally she also considered the project itself.

In order to carry out this assessment the officer established a practice of requiring the applicant to develop a business plan. She provided a template, which outlined headings that were to serve as a guide to the type of information that should be provided. These headings included the promoters personal details and background, an outline of the idea itself, an outline of the staff and management structure, marketing analysis and strategy, outlines of where finance was to be sought as well as financial forecasts based on the clients expectations of the projects potential. Depending on the complexities of the project the promoter would meet the officer on a number of occasions to produce a business plan. The plan was based on the "template," that the officer provided consisting of a sheet of paper including a number of headings under which the applicant was to fill in details relating to themselves and the project. In addition they were expected to present a basic set of figures including a simple cash flow, balance sheet and profit and loss account. The plan when produced was taken by the officer to be evidence of the projects viability. She attached great significance to the fact that clients undertook this exercise, viewing it as evidence that they

⁸ Revenue and Social Insurance Number in 1998 this was renamed the PPS - personal public service number

were would to comply with her requests and that they were as she saw it “*willing to make an effort*”. She also claimed that the procedure allowed the client to think about the potential of the project, enabling them to consider in a more detailed way what would be needed for the project to succeed.

Subsequently the Partnership purchased a software package which was designed as an aid to business forecasting. It was intended to enhance the Partnership staff’s ability to provide financial analyses of projects applying for assistance. In order to use it, the person in question was asked to complete a questionnaire that included data relating to the income and expenses associated with the proposed venture. Having entered this data the package created profit and cash flow forecasts and enabled the officer to analyse the business to a much greater extent than had been possible before. The more sophisticated aspects of this package included the creation of ratio and sensitivity analyses. It was used both by the officer administering the A.A.E.S and other members of staff providing assistance to individuals applying for assistance through the enterprise and tourism sub-committees. The officer responsible for the A.A.E.S used the package with a number of applicants. She stated that the forms were useful because they made the applicant “think”. Having used the forms to encourage the applicant to enter financial details for the programme she used it to create draft financial forecasts in the form of a cash flow, balance sheet and profit and loss account. While the package itself was not intended for use as a management accounting tool she employed it to prepare a set of simple accounts for the applicant, thus making the work she had been doing with them already more straightforward. Rather than extending the service, it was useful to her in simplifying her workload⁹.

The first officer employed to manage the A.A.E.S placed great emphasis on her own continuous involvement in making the project work. She believed that the involvement of only one member of Partnership staff gave the service an identifiable public face. Those on the scheme dealt with one person and this allowed the development of a good working relationship between the staff member and those on the programme. She also believed that her involvement made the scheme more accessible. She did not feel that she acted like a

⁹ While the programme was sold to the Partnership on the basis of its ability to carry out “powerful business analysis,” it was primarily used by the staff as a way of preparing business plans. When the Partnership renewed its office equipment requiring additional licenses the use of the package was discontinued.

bureaucrat as she was more than happy to meet clients in their own homes and to facilitate them in other ways, such as through making meeting times convenient and assisting them with forms and enquiries to other agencies. Generally she believed that she was able to allow for greater responsiveness and flexibility in dealing with her clients. Furthermore the ongoing involvement of one Partnership staff member meant that the problems of specific projects could be responded to rapidly. This, she felt, also made it possible for her to alert participants to other relevant services in a timely manner. While the fact that only one member of staff was involved in the programme may have been beneficial it also reflected the limited resources that the Partnership was prepared to commit to this programme. The A.A.E.S was not given a high priority in terms of either staff or other resources.

The additional technical support offered to the Partnership's clients included assistance with book keeping and tax affairs. Indeed this was a central element of the application procedure. On applying the applicant was advised that they would be required to register for tax purposes. The clients were then offered the opportunity to meet a local accountant in order to carry out this procedure. Of all the elements of the scheme the process of ensuring people registered for tax was one that the Partnership attempted to apply most uniformly. Initially FAS also delivered further enterprise training, a modified form of their own enterprise training programme. This was a programme that had originally been devised by FAS to provide enterprise training to unemployed people who were interested in starting their own business. The course was delivered as a full time programme and was expected to be undertaken prior to people commencing a business project. In its modified form A.A.E.S participants could attend training modules on a part time basis outside business hours while their business projects were being set up. It was the officer's belief that the part time format was more beneficial. The delivery of such training while clients were actually in the process of establishing businesses enhanced the relevance and value of the programme allowing them to draw on their own practical experience and concerns.

While the W.D.P programme appeared to represent a coherent set of measures, in reality the scheme's operation varied significantly from the way in which it was formally described. Indeed over the course of the study considerable changes occurred in the way the programme was run moving the programme away from the framework outlined above. From the outset the procedures the officer had developed herself were not applied uniformly this was due to the variety of different situations that applicants outlined to her. In practice she found that

many of the applicants were interested in projects that were so simple as to make a complex business plan pointless. She also suggested that many of her clients were unable to complete a business plan. For some, she suggested, writing a “*few figures on the back of an envelope represents a huge effort*”. In other instances staff members of other agencies recommended clients to her. Informal understanding with the staff of a number of local C.E schemes and with local FAS and D.S.W/S.C.F.A staff meant that if they indicated that someone was suitable for the scheme they would be treated sympathetically. In some instances she placed people on the scheme when it was clear to her that they were already working or would proceed regardless of her support on the basis that they may as well be on the scheme as not. Thus the formal criteria that participants should prepare a business plan and apply for the programme were in many cases irrelevant to the actual circumstances of real clients.

Following the first two years of operation many of the elements of the programme were discontinued. In particular the requirement on the part of clients to enter into a planning exercise was increasingly disregarded. In addition the Partnership’s provision of funding to the programme was substantially curtailed following the conclusion of the A.B.R programme. Whilst under the action plan the Partnership had submitted for that fund it had been required to outline a spending programme to support the A.A.E.S, in the plan submitted for LEADER II little mention was made of the scheme. This was justified by the manager on the grounds that the A.A.E.S represented a poor use of resources. In particular he seized on bad experiences with some clients who had received loans and grants as evidence of this. In particular referring to one individual who had used money for a business trip, which the manager believed, had actually been used to fund a holiday. In a number of other instances the Partnership had lost out on loans paid as a result of projects failing¹⁰. He increasingly came to believe that the Partnerships use of funds had to be seen to be directed towards what he termed “quality projects.” By this he meant well planned innovative new businesses which were fronted by what he viewed as capable promoters. Given the background of most A.A.E.S clients and their limited resources he believed that they were unlikely to generate this type of project. In 1995 it was decided that applicants for grant assistance under the A.A.E.S would be treated in the same way as all applicants for enterprise grant assistance and they would have to apply for funding to the enterprise sub-committee of the Partnership. This

¹⁰ It is worth noting that while the Partnership also had bad experiences with a number of clients funded under the broader enterprise support programme, these were regarded as isolated incidents by the manager. In the case of problems with the A.A.E.S they were treated as being evidence of deficiencies in the programme.-

sub-committee required applicants to provide full business plans and attend an evaluation interview as part of the application process. He justified this approach by arguing that if they were to be successful in business A.A.E.S applicants would have to stand up to the rigorous standards applied to all businesses¹¹. The effect on the level of funding allocated to A.A.E.S participants was dramatic. While under the initial A.B.R programme some £30.000 was allocated to A.A.E.S participants following this change only one A.A.E.S project was funded.

The FAS training originally viewed as a success, was also discontinued. In part this was due to the deteriorating relationship between FAS and the Partnership. In addition and despite their earlier support for this programme, both the manager and the services officer began to suggest that the scheme was ineffective. A significant number of the businesses started by early participants who had received this training failed. Many of those who were meant to participate didn't attend and some of those that did questioned its value. In addition the services officer began to feel that for many A.A.E.S clients the course wasn't relevant. In this respect her comments reflect the concerns expressed by Garavan and O' Cinneide (1994) concerning the relevance of the skills mix taught on enterprise programmes in the Republic of Ireland during this period and the failure of such training to deliver the type of competencies necessary to effectively run a business. By late 1995 the scheme had thus been largely reduced to the provision of the benefit itself and the financial and tax advice in the form of a free referral to a local accountant. Whilst the officer said that this was a useful innovation which had resulted from the working relationship she had developed with two accountants, a number of accountants indicated that they would have been happy to offer a free consultation anyway and indeed often did so with potential new clients.

The Partnerships own approach to the A.A.E.S thus changed, in part at least, through the emergence of disparities between the model of enterprise development applied and the reality of working with the unemployed. This resulted in a considerable scaling down of the "additional supports," that the Partnership provided. There were a number of reasons for this including a recognition by the Partnership staff that the projects proposed by applicants were in many cases simply not amenable to the type of planning and development inputs that the

¹¹ Although it could be argued that under the A.A.E.S scheme as operated they were often subject to more stringent controls than was the case for other people.

Partnership original proposed. These drew heavily on conventional ideas about enterprise development. However this conceptual framework was of little relevance to many of the applicants to the programme. Such was this divergence that the services officer evoked the absurd pointing to the nonsense of expecting grass cutters and construction workers to assume the role of entrepreneurial managers on businesses with annual turnovers which were in some cases significantly less than the income derived from welfare payments (See Webner 1980). In addition as time went by it became increasingly clear that many of the "enterprises" that the applicants were interested in starting up simply did not correspond to the type of business start-ups envisaged in the formal model. Indeed in many cases the clients "new" businesses were in fact non-regulated economic activities which they had been involved in while also claiming benefits. In effect therefore while the scheme was defined in the official terms as an enterprise development programme in reality her approach recognised that to a large extent it acted as a mechanism through which the unregulated and untaxed economic activities of people in receipt of benefit could be legitimised. Indeed in many instances she was sent prospective clients from the D.S.W/S.C.F.A because these individuals were known to be working. In this situation the A.A.E.S also appeared to suit the D.S.W/S.C.F.A officials themselves. It became a habitual practice for officers of the Department to contact the Partnership to let them know that a person was "on their way" and needed to get "sorted out". That is to say that they had advised someone they believed was working while claiming benefits to apply for the A.A.E.S. Thus both the Partnerships staff and those in the Department recognised that the A.A.E.S was a way for people being paid "under the table" while signing to avoid the ire of the Department by regularising their affairs. Whilst responsibility for policing the social welfare payments system resides exclusively with the Department and its staff, there can be no doubt that the existence of the A.A.E.S was useful to the Department in this regard. It provided clients with a more attractive mechanism for withdrawing from the welfare system and made it easier for the Department to pressure claimants to regularise their economic activities. For the D.S.W/S.C.F.A staff this was a much better solution than that of detecting and proving welfare fraud. Withdrawal of a payment on this basis is a serious and complex matter. It may require an investigation, in the case of someone who is working and signing (the principal scenario). It requires firm evidence in the form of first-hand accounts from informants or documentary evidence that someone was paid for work. In some instances it was believed that the Department would

conduct raids on premises or sites to catch people working. Amongst unemployed people whom the researcher spoke to this aspect of the Departments work was not popular¹². Amongst the unemployed there was also a belief that certain people acted as informants (spies) receiving payments from the Department for "ratting" "snitching" or "informing". In Passage numerous anecdotes and could be heard about those who had been informed upon or who had informed on people. As were occasional rumours that the Department was on the point of "doing a swoop"¹³ The availability of an option such as the A.A.E.S offered D.S.W/S.C.F.A staff the possibility of offering a person in receipt of a payment who they suspected was working, a less unpleasant option than the continued risk of getting caught.

Of equal significance in altering the Partnerships approach towards the A.A.E.S were the increasingly negative views of the manager of W.D.P towards the programme. He had always seen the A.A.E.S as incompatible with his and the Partnership's overarching concern with "real" enterprise development. Following the conclusion of the A.B.R and the granting of LEADER II funding the programme was becoming less important to the organisation. Thus as the scheme progressed its operation changed as a consequence of decisions made by the staff. These decisions were in turn a reflection of the staffs own ability to deconstruct the A.A.E.S. recognising that the scheme aims and objectives, its mode of operation and purpose as outlined in formal discourse were radically different to the way the scheme was viewed by the staff of other organisations and how it was worked in practice. Many of the basic ideas underlying the programme were not applicable in practice. During the events following the introduction of this programme in Waterford the scheme was effectively incorporated into the wider regulatory project of the D.S.W/S.C.F.A. This turn of events was made possible because of the inconsistencies between the way in which this programme conceptualised unemployment and the actual livelihood strategies of the unemployed. Thus the employees of state agencies responded to the introduction of these programmes in ways which were

¹² A welfare officer interviewed during the course of this study denied that this was the case claiming that he had an excellent relationship with the unemployed and had never encountered any hostility on their part to any of the work that the department did.

¹³ As mentioned in the previous chapter the Department's capacity to police the system, and the extent to which it was actually did conduct raids, or indeed had the capacity to do so, is unclear. During the entire period under discussion the researcher never saw or heard of a raid having taken place nor was he able to speak to a participant or subject of such a raid. While social welfare inspectors did police the system the primary means of detection appeared to be more mundane than mention of raids and informants suggests.

significantly different to those suggested in the formal discourse of development policy. This however raises a further question concerning the extent to which unemployed people's responses to the programme contributed to the variation between the way the programme was expected to work and the way it worked in practice. This question is considered in the next section.

12.5 Area Allowance Clients.

As already discussed a substantial number of previously unemployed individuals participated in the A.A.E.S both in Waterford and nationally. The scheme supported a wide range of projects from craft businesses such as pottery and wood turning to light engineering, catering and alternative farm projects. In Waterford alone the list of businesses supported included a vineyard, ostrich farms and a music recording studio. The scheme was also a favourite amongst those promoting the work of the Partnerships at national as well as local level. Throughout the 1990's particularly clever or visually appealing area allowance projects found their way into the national media. One Partnership's enterprise officer coining the term "Pat Kenny stuff" to describe projects she considered to be particularly media friendly and thus potential segment fillers for the chat shows hosted by the Irish television personality of the same name.

The visual appeal of some of these more high profile projects concealed the fact that many of those on the scheme were involved in far more mundane activities. Indeed when considered in detail and despite the considerable diversity which was undoubtedly a feature of the programme, there are some discernible patterns in the type of projects undertaken relating to both the clients themselves and the projects they took on in Waterford. These suggest that overall the programme was considerably less innovative than was suggested by its star turns. Of those participating in Waterford the vast majority were male; out of a total of two hundred and twenty two participants only thirty three were women. There are other differences between male and female participants. Women on the scheme tended to be younger, only four of the thirty-three women were aged forty or older while nineteen of the women on the scheme were aged thirty five or younger. By contrast, of the men, fifty seven were aged thirty five or younger while one hundred and eight were aged forty or older and fifty nine of these of these were aged forty five or older.

The bias toward projects being attempted by middle aged men in the A.A.E.S is perhaps a factor in the nature of the projects supported the majority of which involved manual work. A total of forty-five of the projects were directly related to the construction industry. A further thirty one involved other manual trades. This category included car mechanic services, light engineering and welding. Twenty of the projects involved driving and delivery services of which eight were hackney drivers¹⁴. While twenty eight fishermen joined the scheme in the entire county, in all but three instances they applied for the scheme as a consequence of their involvement in aquaculture projects. One of the prime areas from which the more media friendly of the A.A.E.S projects was habitually drawn was that of arts and craftwork, but in total this category accounted for only eighteen of the projects supported by W.D.P. Whatever its claims to innovation in other respects the programme did little to challenge traditional gender divisions in the labour market. None of the female applicants were involved in construction or fishing two of the major areas in which A.A.E.S participants were active. Two were involved in transport related projects. Services industries accounted for the majority of the female participants including three hairdressers, two child-minders, three aroma-therapists and three retail businesses.

Despite the programmes claims to be supporting new businesses, a common thread linking these projects was that the actual projects tended to be in established areas of the economy. Again whatever its claims to be supporting new enterprise the preponderance of the projects included the use of skills in traditional manual craft areas such as the construction trades including block laying, carpentry and plastering. In the majority of cases the new business project involved the participant in an activity in which they had been employed previously. There was a notable absence of projects involving more advanced technical skills in new areas. Only five projects required computer skills, of which two were typing services. When the forty five service projects are considered a slightly different picture emerges. Amongst these projects a large number were what could be defined as unusual projects involving the provision of products or services of a novel or innovative nature. This included a parascending business, a private detective, a tennis instructor and a recording studio. Of the total of forty five service businesses, twelve involved activities which had not been carried

¹⁴ Hackney licenses are licenses issued to drivers of vehicles wishing to carry passengers for hire. All taxi licences in County Waterford were in fact officially Hackney Licences, In theory this means that they cannot be hailed but must be pre-booked. In reality such regulations were never enforced.

out in the county beforehand nine of which failed after the first year. The remaining services required skills and involved activities that were already in existence in the area such as hairdressing and childcare, as was the case in the manual trades in many cases the new business involved the individual in returning to a previous occupation.

Only six of the schemes participants possessed third level qualifications relevant to the proposed project. These included a business consultant, two computer trainers and a computer consultant as well as an auctioneer and a woman qualified in horticulture. Many of the rest had limited educational qualifications. Of those involved in the manual sector the vast majority had served some form of apprenticeship or had “picked up” skills through work experience. The majority of this group did not possess a leaving certificate.

Information on the extent of project failure is difficult to ascertain, since such failures were not recorded officially by the Partnership as its involvement with the projects ceased after twelve months. After this time clients on the project were entitled to transfer onto the D.S.W/S.C.F.A. Back to Work Scheme under which they could continue to avail of a reduced rate of payment for another three years¹⁵. The information that does exist suggests that of those projects which were supported, the majority did survive the first year. This is perhaps unsurprising given that the participants continued to receive their full rate of unemployment payment during this time and thus had some income available to them regardless of business performance. When all the projects are considered over the full period of the programme’s operation a total of fifty five projects are known to have failed during or immediately after the first year. Failure rates varied relative to the nature of the projects. Of the known failures thirteen were craftwork projects, nine were related to the construction industry, three were drivers and nineteen were services. In total fifteen female and forty males had reported their businesses to have failed. Failure rates were thus highest amongst women and craft workers and lowest amongst male manual workers.

As has been shown the Partnership’s own practices initially depicted the programme as a structured process, through which unemployed people with ideas for new enterprises would be assisted to start their project. The means through which this would be achieved drew

¹⁵ See the previous Chapter 9

heavily on elements of formal business training, relating to areas such as marketing and accountancy. In addition a premium was placed on the desire for new and innovative ideas. However while the Partnership had expressed a desire to foster innovation and employ safeguards to ensure that the projects assisted would not directly compete with existing businesses. In practice this was only partially achieved. While the image promoted nationally and locally was of a scheme that encouraged new entrepreneurs to develop innovative small business ideas, the pattern of project start-ups suggests that the programme was actually primarily used by men with manual skills in established sectors of the local economy. Of particular note in this regard were the construction industry, light engineering, fishing and car maintenance. Many had extensive work experience in these industries prior to becoming unemployed, and these individuals possessed attributes that were included in the Partnership's profile of the long term unemployed; middle aged men who had poor academic education and a manual work history. This is particularly interesting given that in its original research on the unemployed, the Partnership had concluded that this profile was a major factor in explaining why such people were unemployed. Thus and again in total contradiction to the ideas of the formal development discourse relating to question of economic decline and the nature of unemployment, the principal role that the Partnership's A.A.E.S played was to facilitate people to re-enter existing industries employing traditional manual skills. Far from being innovative the scheme was mostly used by people whose business required no new skills and which operated in existing areas of the economy. Moreover the scheme boasted a much higher success rate in relation to these projects. The failure rate amongst the more "innovative" projects requiring new or more sophisticated skills was substantially higher. A further piece of evidence suggesting significant discrepancies between the Partnership's concept of how the A.A.E.S should work and the actual experience of the scheme in operation is to be found in the impact (or indeed lack of impact) of the termination of the training offered by F.A.S business training. This had no discernible impact on the number of people applying to join the scheme. Neither did it have any obvious effect on the level of success of the ventures, as the rate of failure remained stable. In fact, the reduction of the level of extra support offered by the partnership also had no discernible impact on the schemes success rate.

Considered in detail the nature of the projects suggests further discrepancies that may account for the degree of variance between the scheme as outlined in theory and its operation in practice. Of the construction and other manual trades projects two patterns are discernible.

About half of the promoters set up as independent tradesmen including; plumbers, carpenters and mechanics. As such they advertised their skills through such media as local papers, shop notice boards and by word of mouth in competition with existing local operators. The majority operated from premises they already owned, in many cases a shed or garage attached to their own home. Many also owned the necessary tools. The start-up costs for such projects were be minimal as were the costs associated with stopping the project should things go wrong. Advertisement costs for many were also minimal as they were entering what was rapidly becoming a sellers' market given the shortage of manual skills that began to emerge as construction activity and car sales began to expand in the mid to late 1990's. However a substantial group of the manual workers involved in the scheme had a single customer. Amongst this group were a number of construction workers who while being officially classed as self-employed were entirely employed as subcontractors to one person. The situation with the fishermen was similar. While required to operate as self-employed their earnings were in most cases closely linked to the fortunes of one buyer, such as the South East Shellfish Co-Operative in Passage East or Meitheal Tra na Rinne, another shellfish co-operative operating in the west of the County. It was quite clearly the case that the ideas relating to the A.A.E.S and business start-ups do not provide a particularly satisfactory explanation as to why the programme worked for these types of groups and clearly failed to be as successful with the innovative projects more immediately identifiable with the programmes initial aims. Indeed a consideration of some of the wider changes occurring in the local economy may be of more significance in explaining how the scheme worked as it did. By the middle of the period under discussion, the Republic of Ireland was experiencing significant economic growth and with this a substantial increase in construction activity. Individuals who had previously been unemployed were now benefiting from labour shortages in this industry. In addition as previously noted the aquaculture business was also undergoing a period of expansion supported by high levels of state investment. In effect, it could be argued that the A.A.E.S provided businesses in both industries with an accessible source of labour without the administrative overheads or legal responsibilities incurred by hiring labour directly. Simultaneously it offered participants a way of legitimising their economic activities. However as self -employed individuals A.A.E.S participants were responsible for their own tax affairs and did not enjoy any of the protections they would have as to employees. The net effect of this trend was to make it easier for the employers concerned to take on casual employees as needed while foregoing tax, PRSI and other expenses associated

with direct employment. While the A.A.E.S may have represented a good deal for participants it arguably offered an even better one to employers.

The experience of two participants exemplifies this trend. On contacting the Partnership office they informed the staff member that they had recently met a contractor after hearing through the grapevine that he was looking for block layers. When they approached him the contractor indicated that he was interested in employing them. However he was only prepared to hire subcontractors. The contractor advised them to contact the Partnership in order to avail of the A.A.E.S. and sort out their tax affairs. For the entire year that they were on the scheme their sole source of work was this contractor. Besides receiving the payments their only involvement with the scheme was occasionally to contact the Partnership and a visit to an accountant to register for tax. This was not an isolated case and in fact it became clear to the researcher that the availability of the A.A.E.S was well known amongst local contractors and that some of them actively encouraged people to avail of the programme and work for them as subcontractors rather than employees.

When the type of projects which were supported under the A.A.E.S are considered in detail it not only confirms that the programme was as implemented was significantly at variance with the programme as outlined in formal development discourse but suggests that in many ways the programme functioned in a way which directly contradicted many of the assumptions that underlay it.. The client base for this programme was drawn from amongst actors returning to work as manual tradesmen in established industries who had previously worked in the same field and who in many cases were approaching the Partnership on foot of guarantees received from potential employers. As opposed to the Partnership's official line that they were assisting people to get back to work, in many instances they were dealing with people who were already working. In some cases these individuals were referred by the D.S.W/S.C.F.A who had advised them contact the Partnership in order to "get their affairs in order". Many of the participants had their own tools and even workshops and the type of self-employment activities that they engaged in did not require huge start-up costs. They were well placed to take up occasional work and stop such activity on a casual basis. Many appear to have been doing so for a considerable period of time before approaching the scheme. Just as in the fishery these were industries in which there was a tradition of unregulated employment and cash payments making it easier for people to slip in and out of employment with some ease. The scheme also worked for actors familiar with the practice of combining several sources of

income as part of a livelihood strategy. It is clearly the case that the many of the participants in the A.A.E.S appear to have utilised the scheme in a way which was similar to that of the fishermen discussed in the previous chapter. Rather than employing the scheme to initiate new businesses they incorporated it into established livelihood strategies. Indeed as the programme developed the use of the scheme by significant numbers of people functioning on the fringes of the regulated economy came to be viewed as inevitable. As the services officer put it "*I know that a lot of them are coming here to regularise their activities. I don't really worry about it, at least if they are already doing something they have an idea it will work*". This situation rendered the original elaborate combination of supports and business planning irrelevant.

12.6 The A.A.E.S and livelihood strategies.

The previous section of this chapter suggests that rather than acting as a support for people starting their own business the A.A.E.S programme was used throughout the county in a way which is similar to that described for the fishing households in the previous chapter. Local actors sought to incorporate it in their existing livelihood strategies. It also points to a more general issue and one which was raised at the beginning of this chapter. This concerns the way that local development discourse and in particular the Partnership conceptualised the economic position of the marginalised groups with whom it works. As previously outlined the partnership model of economic development defined unemployment as exclusion from specific forms of work that occur in the regulated economy. More specifically the A.A.E.S concerned itself with a specific group of people, who were not active in the regulated labour market, those in receipt of unemployment benefit for more than one year. The partnership model was very clear in its prescribed solution to this problem, re-integrating the unemployed person into "employment". When the Partnership speaks of employment it is very clearly not referring to all activities geared towards securing resources to meet needs but rather to participation in the formal economy. Of particular importance in this regard was the requirement that people were seen to comply with the states regulations as regards tax. Indeed much of the so-called enterprise training and support associated with the scheme was actually focussed on participants' responsibilities as regards their tax affairs.

Local development discourse conceptualised the relationship between employment and unemployment as a rather simplistic dichotomy and its role as being to help marginalised groups to make a transition from an economically dysfunctional position to that of participants in the regulated economy. Within this approach the role of the Partnership has almost therapeutic overtones. One important impact of this model was that the formal outline of the scheme and its operation appears to "delete" activities other than those associated with the regulated economy. In the case of the A.A.E.S we see that formally little consideration is given to the economic activities that people engage in prior to becoming involved in the scheme. The assumption is that such individuals are unemployed and thus available for work, meaning participation in the formal labour market. In considering the operation of the scheme the question of how it may or may not relate to the other activities of the unemployed is not given any significant consideration. The only fact of significance as regards the economic activity of the unemployed is that they are in receipt of unemployment payments. So questions as to how the new programme can be integrated into the existing livelihood strategies of the unemployed are discounted because the performance of the scheme is defined and understood by the Partnership within a framework that excludes such considerations.

Yet as has already been illustrated in the case of the fishermen and is suggested above the unemployed do not simply act as passive recipients but respond to such programmes strategically. Considered in this light the question ceases to be about the extent to which the A.A.E.S was able to effect a "transition," or transformation in the status of a person from unemployed to self-employed, but rather one of considering the way in which clients responded to the presence of these schemes in the context of their own livelihood strategies. However if, as has been argued and as data presented in the previous section suggests, these marginal groups are in fact capable of devising and pursuing livelihood strategies, regardless of what strictures are imposed on them. This has a bearing on the way in which these programmes are worked out and in particular on the extent and limitations of the power that certain groups of actors may exercise in this process.. It may also call into question the entire episteme underlying the local development approach. This section considers this issue examining the participation of certain local actors in the development network.

As we have seen the A.A.E.S proved popular amongst certain actors whose livelihood strategies involved specific types of employment which appeared to exist over a significant

period of time in a residual position on the fringes of the regulated economy. Such forms of economic activity appear to be typified by certain features. Earnings tend to be unpredictable, ranging from nothing in slack periods through to potentially big earnings over short periods of time. They appear to be forms of work in which there are relatively limited start-up costs and where the cost of both entry and exit into the business were low and tend to be in areas of the labour market where there has traditionally been a lack of strict regulation. Within such industries the A.A.E.S has some obvious attractions. In the short term at least, as a means of actually legitimising these activities in response to the demands of the D.S.W/S.C.F.A or to make it possible for them to avail of new work opportunities in areas of employment in which they were already experienced. However it also suggests that in these cases the assessment of the value of the A.A.E.S was primarily related to short term considerations within the existing livelihood strategies of individuals involved in industries in which earnings are inherently unpredictable. For this group it appears that the presence of the scheme was not a means of establishing a new business, but rather of preserving an existing livelihood strategy in the short term. Could it thus be the case that the A.A.E.S was employed by these actors as a response to the inherent weaknesses of certain industries rather than as an enterprise support programme? One example I was told about by a welfare official concerned a musician living in the area. While in receipt of welfare payments he also played country music in pubs charging between £50 and £150 per night. Like many musicians playing in small pub venues he did not declare this income for tax purposes. Demand for his services varies and is subject to periodic lulls. He plays a limited repertoire in a small number of local venues and he has he has his own "following" that is people who will make a point of going to the place he is playing in. As with many other performers he also has a day job, occasionally working as mechanic, but in his case he was officially classed as long-term unemployed and had been so since losing his job at Odlums Mills some 5 years previously. Whilst he was still in receipt of social welfare payments the fact that he was in the music business was well known in the locality. Both a local Social Welfare inspector and the staff at the local office were well aware of the fact. Indeed as his name was advertised most weeks in the local press and indeed on occasions in the local radio they could scarcely avoid knowing. A Department official eventually advised him that he should consider the possibility of applying for the A.A.E.S. Subsequently he approached the Partnership claiming that he felt it would be difficult for him on the scheme, that the music was "not going well" and that on its own the music couldn't support him and his family. His concerns related not only to the loss of benefit but also to the wider implications of going on the scheme. He was

concerned about the tax implications of the A.A.E.S. He envisaged scenario in which all of his earnings would be assessed for tax and of having to "pay them half of everything I make" and that this would "break him". Indeed the prospect of having to register for tax appeared to concern him more than the loss of the Social Welfare payment. In response to this the only real argument in favour of his joining the scheme was that the D.S.W/S.C.F.A were on to him and that in all likelihood if he didn't agree to joining the scheme he might lose his benefits. Following this meeting a number of further contacts were made before he eventually agreed to go on the A.A.E.S after he received an assurance that if things didn't work out he could go back onto unemployment assistance.

This individual's motivation for enquiring about the A.A.E.S was the fact that the D.S.W/S.C.F.A told him to. Here rather than replacing an existing pattern of economic behaviour it was that pattern of economic practices that made the A.A.E.S. a potentially useful option for the individual in question, albeit at this time the least-worst option. However as he himself pointed out the nature of the business in which he was involved was at best marginal and the likelihood of it ever becoming a viable stand-alone business was remote. It appears that while people like music they are not prepared to pay enough to enable musicians to live comfortably on the proceeds (at least not country musicians from Waterford). Thus as a livelihood strategy being a musician ranks alongside being a fisherman as one which seems to exist in a perpetual financial twilight zone between the regulated and non-regulated economy. This example illustrates that, besides fishing, there are other livelihood strategies in which the A.A.E.S can be utilised in ways that differ considerably from those envisaged by the programme designers. They are able to do so because rather than embracing the development discourse and in particular the Partnership's model for new business start-ups. The scheme could be made to fit in with these livelihood strategies In the case of some individuals such as the man described above this was a strategy that had been sustained over a considerable period of time. For him the A.A.E.S was a way of maintaining this situation rather than moving to a new situation. Participation in the A.A.E.S was not viewed as an opportunity to start a new business but as a response to an immediate set of circumstances which would enable him to retain a regular income.

Thus it appears that approaching the question of how actors respond to local development programmes by examining how it is incorporated into their existing livelihood strategies is one which opens up many interesting possibilities for research as well as offering some

significant critical insights into the way the Partnership conceptualised the economic behaviour of marginalised groups. Not least is the possibility that the latter pursue livelihood strategies which incorporate significant, sometimes non-regulated forms of work, while being regarded by the state in primarily negative terms these actually make significant positive contributions to the overall wealth generating potential of an area. The suggestion that this is the case grows stronger if the response of other applicants to the A.A.E.S and their historical involvement in other programmes over time is considered. While the A.A.E.S was the first scheme to maintain welfare payments to a person who was establishing himself or herself in self-employment a significant number of those involved had previously availed of FAS's social employment scheme (S.E.S). The S.E.S was later reformed to become the C.E. scheme also available to long term unemployed people. Under the scheme participants were paid the equivalent of a social welfare payment plus a small extra "expenses" payment. In return for this allowance the participants were required to work 39 hours every two weeks. As participants in this scheme individuals were not monitored by the D.S.W/S.C.F.A, and they were not required to be available for work. They were thus in a position to take up other employment in their own time a practice that some of those involved in such schemes in Waterford did. Thus this scheme, which preceded the A.A.E.S. catered to the group who were ultimately to make up a significant portion of those who became involved in the latter scheme. At least in theory a person who was involved in C.E could transfer directly to the A.A.E.S thus retaining a benefit and earning additional money. Indeed the Partnership staff member implementing A.A.E.S had reached an understanding with supervisors of local C.E. schemes. People on the point of leaving the S.E.S/C.E scheme were treated sympathetically by the Partnership when applying for the A.A.E.S. It would therefore seem that while presented as a new initiative, in some respects the A.A.E.S constituted a continuation of a pattern whereby participants in particular state programmes could combine this income with earnings from a range of sources.

12.7 Conclusion the A.A.E.S. "Curing" the informal bug.

Dealing with long-term unemployment was the raison d'etre of the Partnerships and solving the problem through education and training leading to "employment readiness" or self-employment initially constituted the principal aim of the original A.B.R. The means of achieving this was presented in terms of a specific form of discourse. This discourse tells us something about the Partnership's perspective on the unemployed. The fact that emphasis is laid on certain needs that must be addressed in order to move an unemployed person to a position of "employment readiness," suggests that the attributes of the unemployed need to be addressed. Whether they are in the area of education, skills and training or of problems relating to the quality of life in their community, all are key issues that the programme sought to address. Within this framework the role of the professional development worker is clearly defined. They have the know-how needed to plan and implement measures that will address these deficiencies in order to bring the unemployed person from their present situation into a new one. Despite the emphasis laid on local involvement in the planning and implementation of programmes the model of expertise employed stresses the importance of technical inputs in the implementation of programmes. In the case of the A.A.E.S a key feature of the scheme was its presentation as a means of generating enterprise. The unemployed were to be furnished with the means of moving from unemployment to sustainable self-employment. In the process they were to be assisted with the planning of the business, and with acquiring the skills necessary in order to successfully bring that plan through to fruition.

When considered in depth the approach adopted by the Partnership via the A.A.E.S appears somewhat paternalistic. A set of skills that unemployed people need in order to succeed are outlined, the implication being that they lack something the Partnership can provide them with in order to be successful. A particular feature of concern here is the emphasis that is laid on conforming to tax requirements. In this respect it would be worth considering the extent to which the ability to correctly fill out a tax form has ever been the basis for the success of any businesses. As one local entrepreneur in Waterford told me "*if god wanted us to do books then why did he invent chartered accountants*". Indeed it would also be interesting to establish what research the Partnerships or A.D.M undertook in order to verify the exact significance of the skills associated with the tax system when compared to others in areas such as marketing or cost control in the development of successful new businesses.

This chapter began by suggesting that such models of enterprise development and of the relationship between employment and unemployment are at best, simplistic. Relating entrepreneurial success to an individual's access to enterprise skills and perhaps more pointedly to an individual's ability to comply with tax and other regulatory measures. Such approaches are based on ideas about the economy that reduce income generation to participation in the formal labour market. In doing so they fail to give recognition of the complex nature of the work that goes into the livelihood strategies of both the implementers and members of their "target" groups. What this and the preceding chapter demonstrate is that the economic life of unemployed individuals is much more complex than the model suggests. This is something which is of vital significance to how local development programmes are worked out at local level. While the long term unemployed may indeed be portrayed as the victims of unemployment that does not exclude them from actively striving to formulate and pursue a livelihood strategy. Reassuringly and despite the best efforts of certain commentators to reduce them to the role of the passive subjects of development programmes who await animation via the lightning bolts and tesla coils of professional development discourse, the data presented in this chapter suggests that actors in even the most marginal of situations have the ability to respond to these circumstances creatively. What the Partnership model manifestly fails to do is take account of, or even acknowledge that the unemployed are knowledgeable and capable actors who respond strategically and assess the potential that such programmes have on their own livelihood strategies. While it is entirely plausible, and indeed desirable in many cases, that some of those concerned will identify that the Partnership project is aligned with their own. It is equally conceivable that others will see no relationship between the goals of the development network and their own interests while others will attempt to capture the initiative, defining elements of the local development network in ways which domesticates it within their network and supports an alternative development project determined by the local actor. This latter is in large part what the second half of this chapter suggests. Rather than responding passively to the arrival of the Partnership some locals are in fact capable of significantly influencing the implementation of Partnership programmes in ways that are, at least in part, in line with their own strategic interests.

In the case of the A.A.E.S the meaning of the programme was worked out during exchanges involving two groups of local actors both of whom deconstruct the programme and seek to define it in ways that reflect their projects. One of these groups, the staff of the organisations involved, is capable of deconstructing the programme, looking beyond the formal discourse to determine how to best utilise elements of it to support their own projects. While the programme was intended as an enterprise support scheme the actions of these actors sees a considerable reduction in the programmes content over time as staff of different organisations incorporate it into existing patterns of state intervention, emphasising its regulatory and disciplining functions over its more creative business development role. While for their part we see another group of local actors, the programmes prospective clients, attempting to incorporate the programme into existing livelihood strategies. As a consequence the A.A.E.S largely becomes a mechanism to maintain existing livelihood strategies amongst the marginalised rather than to replace them. This is not to suggest that all applicants ignored the original idea behind the programme in Waterford. Some innovative new businesses were established and at an exhibition in 1993 the researcher was lucky enough to meet and talk to a number of these promoters. The exhibition displayed an astonishing degree of diversity and creativity. Candle makers rubbed shoulders with entrepreneurs who carved buttons out of antlers. There was a professional recording studio there as well as a wood turner all bearing enthusiastic witness to the capacity of local people to generate an array of innovative and ingenious new products. It was just that the majority of these innovative projects failed while those actors who incorporated the programme into their existing livelihood strategies tended to stay the course in larger numbers.

The net effect is that through the interaction of staff and members of the target group a scheme intended to act as a means for the unemployed to establish new businesses and which made frequent reference to the need for planning and enterprising attitudes became a mechanism through which numbers of people were able to maintain a payment while also pursuing other activities, previously classed as “informal” or even more negatively as part of the black economy. In addition the scheme was effective in helping some others who were involved in traditional manual trades to re-enter these trades during a time of unprecedented growth in demand. While the scheme suited many of the participants it should also be noted that it also suited some employers who could now hire people as self-employed subcontractors rather than employees. Furthermore from the perspective of the D.S.W/S.C.F.A the scheme also had its advantages getting individuals into the tax net and off

social welfare. A significant feature of this process was that certain types of activities lent themselves to the scheme and that, ironically perhaps, these were in areas of activity such as construction, the fisheries and indeed music with high levels of casual and seasonal employment. In the case of construction it is also the case that this industry is prone to cyclical growth and contraction. Furthermore the cost of becoming involved in all of these industries was relatively small. In short these industries tend to offer significant amounts of unstable employment, which incurs low opportunity costs for employer and employee making it relatively easy to slip in and out of employment. They are thus industries in which a source of labour available on short-term contract with a minimum of paperwork or fuss who can be employed on a casual basis is an advantage. The A.A.E.S placed people offering that labour in a position where it could be made available on this basis because in the short term at least they could avail of a basic income from the scheme in slack periods while also reducing employer's obligations as regards tax compliance. In the context of the building boom of the later 1990's it would perhaps be tempting to describe this situation as a happy accident, a win all situation which suited the Department, the unemployed and the employers. The longer term outcomes of this programme may offer more cause for concern, particular in situations when employment in sectors such as construction contracts dramatically.

What the preceding two chapters show is that local actors can formulate and pursue their own livelihood strategies. In part at least their ability to do so enables them to maintain a better standard of living than would be the case if they were utterly dependent on social welfare payments or on casual manual employment. A strong argument can be made to support the view that it is the very fact that they occupy a peripheral position in relation to social welfare and tax that enables them to create and maintain such livelihood strategies. The utility of the A.A.E.S was that in the short term it facilitated this situation by enabling them to continue to work for a year while receiving a social welfare benefit. However two issues present themselves. One is the implications of reduced levels of income in subsequent years. As benefit payments are cut back will the individual be capable of turning the type of manual employment that is available to them in industries like construction into a sustainable source of income, or is it the case that a significant proportion of the participants will find themselves back where they started? Second it is pertinent to ask if this type of work constitutes the basis for a decent level of income in the long term if taxation is taken into account. In short it is worth considering whether the A.A.E.S which appears to have

functioned as a short term measure supporting a current income strategy, or the basis of a long term measure that will result in the creation of sustainable self-employment.

It is argued here that the latter is not the case. A crucial mismatch exists between the technicist approach of the Partnerships and their target group's economic practices. What is missing from the Partnership perspective is recognition of the existence of any economic behaviour on the part of the unemployed worth noting in terms other than "the black economy". Cast in the role of "victim" the central concerns of development and its assertion of the need for a series of measures that will transform a person from unemployed to employable may be non-issues for the unemployed. As Van Der Ploeg (2003) demonstrates the frames of analysis used in scientific research are such that the issues that are of central importance in the reproduction of the local social formation are either ignored completely or so abstracted as to be of negligible significance. An examination of how local actors respond to such schemes through their pursuit of livelihood strategies offers a means for formulating an understanding of how people live and of how they strive to improve this situation. A lack of any recognition of this is of central significance in creating difficulties in the relationship between the local development programme and its clients. For the Partnership, economic development along certain lines takes on the appearance of a structural imperative. However in the production and reproduction of social forms we are not dealing with a dichotomy between employment and unemployment but rather with a range of options which are availed of by some actors in the reproduction of local social forms.

One consequence of this mismatch is that while those responsible for implementing the programme seek to impose its framework on their clients, these clients, local actors pursuing radically different strategies are successful in partially "subordinating" the scheme in ways which enable them to secure their own objectives. Power, in encounters between local actors and the staff of development organisations can be resolved in ways that differ radically from what is suggested in formal policy discourse. Power in local development thus appears to be a multi-layered phenomenon. In some contexts it appears that certain sets of actors have considerable control whilst in others the roles can be reversed. In this instance it would seem to be the case that during implementation, local actors exercise a considerable capacity to control the way the project is worked out. While the staff still exercise considerable control over the way in which such events are accounted for in the development pseudo-project.

In relation to the actors discussed in the last three chapters we see that far from being passive in relation to state unemployment policy, they strive to develop income strategies, which access an array of resources in order to meet needs in accordance with their own lifeworld perceptions of self. Recalling what Whatmore et al (1987) referred to as the problem of assuming that if certain phenomena share similar morphological features in common and in distinction to others then they can be categorised on this basis. In the case of the model of economic life the Partnership used there is an elevation of the role of formal economic activity, that is to say regulated taxed economic activity at the expense of reducing everything else to the ranks of a nebulous ill defined "informal economy.". Yet if anything the experience of the A.A.E.S on the ground suggests that it is these marginal and previously unregulated activities that offer certain local actors a possible means of improving their economic situation. The tragedy is that in their efforts to make recipients into "good entrepreneurs" development workers ignore or even deny the existence of such activities within this group. Instead employing forms of discourse which have little positive to say about the position of the unemployed. The observations presented in this chapter point to the existence of a substantial non-formal sector ranging in scale and nature from the doing of favours, as in the case where for example someone who is a mechanic fixes a neighbours car in the expectation that this will be reciprocated, through to welfare fraud. When considered in this context, it should be clear that the concept of the informal economy as deployed in the literature often refers not to a clear and scientifically grounded conceptualisation of economic activities. Rather it is a notion that is used in a rather nonchalant manner often as a pejorative referring to the undeclared work of unemployed people and their families. In reality there is scarcely any aspect of economic activity which does not possess some "informal" elements. As with any concept that seeks to explain everything, the term informal economy explains nothing. It is this concept and indeed the way of conceptualising economic behaviour of which it is part, rather than specific economic actor which is at fault. Yet the Partnership approach to the A.A.E.S almost entirely came to focus on tax compliance and the question of legitimising informal activities. The Partnership's failure to acknowledge that its target group do have an economic life is ultimately misguided. By failing to develop an understanding of the mechanisms that people use to make ends meet they have lost the chance to capitalise on what people actually do by forming policy initiatives that can assist them to enhance their income in the long term. Instead the Partnership model deletes such activities, denying the existence of livelihood strategies that have developed over a significant period of time. It is however worth considering whether when considered in this light a short-term measure such

as the A.A.E.S are the most appropriate means of addressing the long-term needs of such a group. The A.A.E.S has a specific set of objectives and a beginning a middle and an end. However the picture that is presented above suggests that a group of that scheme's participants have been involved in a certain form of livelihood maintenance over an indefinite period of time. A longer term approach that takes a realistic look at the long-term livelihood maintenance strategy of this group and seeks to capitalise on such activities rather than minimise or legitimise them may be of more value to them in the longer term.

Chapter 13 Conclusion: Through The Looking Glass, Exploring the World of Local Development?

“When I use a word,’ Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, ‘it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less.”

“The question is,” said Alice, “whether you can make words mean so many different things.”
The question is,’ said Humpty Dumpty, ‘which is to be master — that’s all.”

Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*

13.1 The Mythopoeia of development

The introduction of various local development programmes in the 1980’s and early 1990’s was considered as a significant watershed in Irish public policy. It involved the adoption of an approach to addressing development issues at a local level which heralded a new and dynamic relationship between the state and civil society. Many academics and policy commentators warmly greeted these events. Words such as transition, transformation and paradigm shift abounded. It appeared as if local development policies in Ireland represented a new and brighter world for local communities. Such programmes came to be regarded as offering a new form of governance which had the potential to address societal concerns more effectively than other forms of intervention, assuming a significance which transcended their direct contribution to addressing specific policy objectives. This study has attempted to throw light on events that occurred during this critical period. The decision to attempt this study was based on the researcher’s personal observations about how local development operated in practice. There often appeared to be an immense divergence between the way in which formal discourse accounted for events that occurred during development programmes and events as they were worked out in practice. Indeed entering the world of local development seems to involve entering a looking glass world complete with its own rules and conventions, language and symbols as obvious to its inhabitant’s as they were inaccessible to the outsider. Inhabiting that world requires a certain suspension of disbelief, a commitment to the mythopoeia of development and a willingness to accept and indeed contribute to a local development pseudo-project reinterpreting the reality of policy design and implementation in ways that suggested that events during implementation accorded with the understandings

outlined in formal policy discourse. Moreover within this world, different actors involved in different contexts but linked within the overall framework of the initiative, defined it in radically different ways. Furthermore they pursued agenda's that were scarcely related to those of other actors involved. This suggested that not only was the world of local development was one in which the actors employed a multiplicity of perspectives, but that matters which appeared to be of the utmost importance in some situations, scarcely figured in others while all were somehow articulated in a development programme.

This study embarked from the suggestion that the perspectives currently employed in accounting for the way in which local development programmes are designed and implemented are themselves subject to the distorting effects of the development looking glass. Not least in suggesting that any single research perspective could itself capture what goes on in a local development programme. For this reason the study has attempted to develop a new approach to local development which is capable of at least recognising the presence of this distorting mirror and the multiplicity of perspectives it produces. By doing so it attempts to produce a more reliable account of the experience of an actual development programme.

The theoretical and methodological elements of this perspective were outlined in the first two chapters of this study. It was shown how existing approaches towards development programmes did little to decipher the looking glass world. Instead in many ways they presented a picture of these schemes which supported the conventions and perspective of that world. Questions concerning the issue of power for example were cast in terms of stark dichotomies. Local development is either inclusive or exclusive (Shortall 2004, 2008) elitist or collectivist (Thuesen 2010) involves protest or participation (Cary et al 2004) and aims to either reclaim society or reinvent governance (Powell and Geoghegan 2004). Advocates of the approach celebrated its ability to empower and animate while critics expressed concerns about its role in depoliticising development issues, limiting space for legitimate protest or indeed extending the degree of control exercised over the lives of citizens by the state (Cary et al 2004, Meade 2002, 2005). It was argued that the processes that occur during the working out of such programmes are infinitely more complex than such perspectives allow and that research employing such frameworks fails to recognise and investigate the critical question of what actually happens during the implementation of development programmes. Instead such analysis is based on a fatal association between the morphological features of

these programmes and the processes that occur during their operation inferring ideas about the latter from the former. As a result, researchers have tended to fight battles over abstract principles employing data drawn from an analysis of the formal components of these programmes.

One of the principal implications arising from this observation is that it points to a weakness in the theoretical and methodological literature relating to local development because such approaches have tended to focus on the morphology of such schemes. Far too much attention is paid to the study of the formal components of programmes. Such forms of analysis have failed to recognise the potential role that other factors may have had on the way in which such interventions have been designed and implemented. The conclusions this research draws concerning the analysis of how such schemes operate suggest that such approaches tend to reflect official ideas about such programmes, concerning the way in which decisions are made and how power is worked out. What is required instead is an approach that pays attention to the processes that occur during the design and implementation of local development programmes. This provides a perspective which can overcome the analytical constraints present in existing research by firstly avoiding the kind of a-priori decisions incorporated in previous studies and secondly by concentrating on events that actually occur. In addition such a perspective needs to pay attention to the relationship between the events that occur during local development programmes and the scientific and policy discourses which are employed by actors to account for these events. This involves incorporating a recognition of the reflexive nature of the relationship between local development programmes and research concerning it, into any new perspective. Such an approach needs to recognise the existence within the local development programme of a multiplicity of sites in which a range of actors are engaged in specific encounters which produce variable and unpredictable results yet retain an understanding of the relationship between them.

While very little of what is suggested above is altogether novel such an approach has not been attempted in relation to Irish local development programmes, in developing such a perspective the researcher drew on a wide literature including in particular, a significant body of work which was developed in non-European settings. This included in particular numerous pieces of work undertaken by researchers examining the practices that occur during the design and implementation of development projects in a wide variety of cultural settings, employing methods which allow for direct observation of interactions between

actors involved in development projects. The theoretical approach employed in this study thus employs features of the ethnography and anthropology of development used quite widely in non-European settings to a study of an Irish local development programme. To a significant extent therefore, the novelty of the approach employed in this research and its capacity to contribute to the literature, lies in the fact that it attempts to apply such an approach to Irish local development for the first time.

The study draws from three theoretical approaches; actor oriented sociology, network theory and discourse analysis, to develop a set of conceptual and methodological tools with it was hoped could be used to first generate and then interpret empirical data concerning the processes that occur as local development programmes are devised and implemented. This approach was utilized to examine how specific actors embedded in varied socio-cultural contexts and located in different sites contribute to the dynamic production of this programme over time. These tools are applied as part of a modest anthropology of development which examines a specific local project. In so doing the relationship between events in different sites was also unveiled showing how they mutually and contingently influence each other. The result is a study which is the first to employ such a theoretical approach in the study of local development programmes in Ireland. Adopting this approach required a re-examination of some issues which formal development policy discourse claimed had been resolved in certain ways. These include not only the question of how issues of power and control were resolved in real development settings but also questions relating to models of policy practice and client behaviour. A particular emphasis in this research was thus placed on the role actors played in shaping the programme through the strategies employed in interactions, during which the meaning of the intervention was negotiated. However, while placing emphasis on the significance of the role of actors it is not suggested that the study of development should solely focus on the analysis of events involving actors during encounters in certain localities to the exclusion of wider issues of power. On the contrary such issues are of fundamental importance in the study of local development. It is however to suggest that in order to develop an understanding of these issues close attention needs to be paid to how power is worked out collectively by a range of actors located in different sites and sociocultural contexts in the development process. It is also to reclaim the historical context which has made possible the conditions of existence for these new programmes developing an analysis which focusses on such programmes in the wider social world in which they are situated. A fundamental element of the perspective employed in this

thesis is that it links the nature and working out of power in local development to the fine print of such programmes where these issues are made manifest in real time encounters between actors. For this reason the thesis pays attention to a range of material relating to different sites within and stages of, the local development programme and including in the latter third of the thesis the views and strategies employed by local actors in their encounters with the programmes implementers. Again while this is often acknowledged, few studies have attempted to undertake an analysis which explicitly links the study of local actors' strategic behaviour to wider questions of power in the design and implementation of local development programmes.

The theory and methodology outlined in the first two chapters propose a symmetrical study accepting as a starting point the idea that nothing is known about the subject being researched in advance and employs theory as a means to go about deciphering these objects through disciplined forms of scientific enquiry. This approach emphasises the central role of empirical data in providing the basis for explanation, as it was put in chapter one, proceeding with "the data at its fingertips and theory at arms lengths" by generating considerable amounts of empirical information. This data provides an account of the emergence of the concept of local development from its adoption in senior policy making circles through to the implementation of local development programmes in one rural location.

At national level the reasons behind the emergence of the new local development programmes were considered. This involved an analysis of the range of external and internal factors which contributed to the emergence of the local development approach in the Republic of Ireland in the mid 1980's and early 1990's. The analysis undertaken in this study suggests that this period saw the introduction of forms of professional discourse related to local development which were utilised by policy makers in formulating a range of new programmes. This new discourse legitimised certain ideas about local development, forming the basis for a new mode of ordering which outlined how the networks organised around local development should be organised. Efforts to implement these programmes involved attempts by actors embedded in this network to enrol others in line with the local development "project" thus extending it. The story of what happened as this open ended network expanded and was contingently constituted by a range of different actors during the operation of a local development organisation in one area makes up the bulk of this study. Various chapters examined data relating to specific sets of events employing this novel

perspective. This was done in order to address questions of critical importance to an understanding of the genesis, introduction and implementation of local development programmes in the Republic of Ireland

The first of these questions concerned the emergence of local development in formal policy discourse. A feature of Irish public policy prior to the local development “boom” of the late 1980’s and early 1990’s was the tendency for policy of all kinds to be devised and implemented by national bodies. This made the wide scale adoption of local development programmes all the more interesting, raising further questions as to the interests that the introduction of these programmes served, and also the reasons underlying their being accepted by so many people so quickly. Of particular note in this respect was the support the approach found amongst academic and policy researchers. Employing the theoretical perspective outlined in the first chapters of this thesis made it possible to re-examine the emergence of local development as a policy approach in ways that challenged existing narratives. While much of the discussion surrounding these events has focussed on the formal dimension of such programmes and in particular on what policy texts say about development. The approach employed in this thesis has focussed on the role that such forms of discourse play as strategic resources employed during on-going policy practices. Such practices appear to transcend the formal dimensions of specific programmes and are deeply embedded aspects of administrative behaviour. Considering the emergence of the new local development programmes in this light raised questions about the extent to which existing perspectives on local development provide an adequate account of how and why local development programmes emerged at a certain point in time. In addition it provides an account which is based on, and better explains the available data concerning the historical development of rural policy and the relationship between administrative practices and external stimuli which drove the adoption of new local development programmes at a particular point in time. This illustrates the potential of the theoretical perspective employed in this study to address such questions in a way that provides a better account of how such events are played out than is the case with other more established approaches. Another result of employing this theoretical perspective was that it made it possible to deconstruct official ideas about local development. This makes it possible to identify further questions relating to specific elements of the implementation of these programmes which the formal policy discourse tends to suggest have been resolved in certain ways. Such questions included those concerning space and locality in local development and the influence that these concepts had on the

implementation of local development programmes. While the issue of locality and in particular notions of spatial disadvantage lay at the heart of the local development approach what does an examination of one particular area reveal about the role of these ideas in local development?

Having considered the emergence of the local development model and evaluated the significance of the locality and spatial disadvantage which underlay the approach, the study then turned to a number of other questions. These generally concerned the question of power as it relates to these new programmes. Again the perspective adopted in this thesis made for a novel re-examination of such issues. In many respects formal ideas about local development and indeed research relating to it are founded on very specific ideas about how questions of power are resolved in local development. Formal discourse concerning local development is replete with references to the creation of local consensus. According to this perspective development programmes are sites in which local interests are reconciled and people brought together in support of common goals. Such goals are not simply aspirational the notion that such programmes can achieve a degree of local consensus lies at the heart of the local development approach providing much of its legitimacy in the absence of real democratic oversight. However the perspective adopted in this study revealed that despite what is suggested in formal discourse local development programmes are contested domains in which the dominance of specific groups over others is as likely an outcome as the generation of consensus. Moreover during these struggles the idea of consensus building itself and the mechanisms put in place to achieve it are themselves resources which certain actors are able to employ to further their own interests. It was possible to identify a number of specific questions relating to this issue. The first of these concerned the impact that the new local development organisations had on the relationship between locally based actors and the State. Did the creation of new partnerships facilitate a genuine devolution of power to the local level? or did the local organisations remain creatures of the centre? A related question is that of who controls the local development organisation? In this context considerable attention was paid to the formation of the local board of a development body. Such boards played a crucial role in the local development approach constituting the primary vehicle through which it was envisaged that actors could be brought together to agree on development objectives. This raised a further question, how is power distributed within the board itself? In this study this issue was also addressed through an in depth examination of the board of a local development company.

In addition the more general question of how local development programmes affected existing power relationships within the local community was also considered. It has been argued by their advocates that local development offered a means through which local measures intended to move the locality along the path of a set of agreed development goals could be identified. The programmes of actions decided upon would be agreed locally thus ensuring that programme would benefit the wider local community. A further question thus concerned the extent to which local development organisations were ever likely to be able achieve these aims, and if not a further question emerges concerning the position of those who choose or were excluded from the process through which the aims of such programmes were agreed at local level.

The proceeding questions primarily focus on the local development programme itself and involved encounters during which actors were directly engaged in activities which had concerned questions of power and decision making within the Partnership. In addition as such programmes are implemented local development becomes entangled within a wider range of local events as actors come into contact with the Partnership through the various programmes it operates. Such encounters also have a significant bearing on the outcomes of these programmes. This consideration may have a fundamental bearing on how the programmes come to be incorporated into the lifeworld of these actors. For this reason the latter part of this study considered these questions, examining how local actors responded to the introduction of the Partnership.

The range of questions that this study generated illustrates the merit of employing a theoretical perspective which embraces symmetry. It allowed the research undertaken in this study to be led by the data. This provided for a richer analysis of events as they happen and also made it possible to reveal the linkages between of events occurring in different arenas. This study does so by undertaking an empirical examination of one local development organisation in order to produce insights into how local development policies actually work. In the rest of this chapter the extent to which this study has answered the questions listed above are considered. By doing so the potential value of the methodological approach outlined in chapters one and two as well as its weaknesses are further explored.

13.2 Local Development: A new paradigm?

Policy approaches become popular for a reason, local development became particularly popular and acquired a certain ideological significance for certain actors at a particular point in time. The first questions examined in this thesis were how and why this occurred. In order to answer this question chapter three examined the historical evolution of policy approaches that impacted on the development of rural areas in Ireland, while chapter four examined the introduction of local development programmes in the late 1980's and early 1990's with a view to gaining some insight into the process that made this situation possible. It also became clear that a significant feature of this process was that alongside the introduction of these programmes a particular narrative emerged which was significant in providing a formal account of the emergence of these programmes. The initiatives were often depicted as a long overdue recognition of the latent capacity of local communities to participate in their own development, these programmes abilities to address perceived power imbalances between communities and the state was also outlined as was their potentially significant role in protecting the rural way of life. For this reasons, besides examining the way in which development policy approaches emerged and evolved over time. The relationship between various policies and the narrative that was developed to account for them was also examined.

The details outlined in chapter three suggest that there has been a longstanding tension in Irish Policy concerning the development of rural areas between ideologically important policy objectives and more practical policy priorities. The former, which included such issues as the desire to be seen to support rural communities, the promotion of petty commodity production and the protection of the “small man” (Curtin and Varley 1991) have long co-existed with the latter, which involve protecting the economic interests of larger producers and commercial agriculture. While at certain times greater emphasis may have been placed on ideological policy objectives contributing to the adoption of forms of policy which recognised the specific problems facing certain areas at certain times, the general pattern of public policy in Ireland has been for centrally administered sectoral programmes to dominate. Programmes which have embodied a specific concern with local or regional issues have been introduced on occasions to address specific issues on an ad-hoc basis, in some cases redressing the negative effects of sectoral programmes. However rather than constituting alternatives to such programmes they ran alongside them.

Chapter three also demonstrated that specific forms of discourse and practices employed in established policy networks create the "conditions of existence," in which new policies emerge. While much emphasis was placed on the "newness" of local development in the 1980's and 1990's, the process through which policies relating to the development of rural areas had actually been introduced in the past was on the whole contingent, piecemeal and inconsistent. Even in the case of measures that have been made to consolidate or rationalise existing provision, such as for example with the creation of FAS. Such measures appear to have been primarily driven by short term concerns, a desire to tidy up administrative mess rather than any desire to impose a more rational framework on policy interventions. What chapter three demonstrates is that in reality policies are the product of certain policy practices. In the case of Irish policies towards rural areas such practices include the retention of decision making centrally, an antipathy towards the creation of strong local or regional bodies, the introduction of new programmes as an opportunistic response to the availability of funding and the tendency to expand local programmes to incorporate an increasingly larger number of areas. The existence and recurrence of such practices provides evidence, albeit indirect of the footprints of agency in the way in which policies are actually introduced. While few policy researchers would deny that such issues are a factor in policy implementation, it remains the case that much of the analysis of local development policy continues to focus on the formal texts that are produced when such programmes are being developed and introduced. Less attention is paid to the role that policy practices play in shaping new policies. Such issues are relegated to the periphery of discussions about policy as externalities or latent effects. However chapter three suggests that in reality such practices lie at the very heart of policy making and points to the value of employing a theoretical framework that allows for an analysis of how policies emerge based on the empirical facts concerning the historical emergence of these programmes rather than the analysis of abstract ideas about them.

Chapter three concluded by suggesting that the question of whether and to what extent these established forms of policy practice had a bearing on the shape of the new local development programmes introduced in the late 1980's and early 1990's was one that needed to be considered. In chapter four this issue was investigated further through an in depth examination of the factors that led to the adoption of local development programmes during this period. While it was claimed by a number of commentators that the programmes

introduced during the 1980's and early 1990's employed an approach that was innovative, in many respects it was shown that despite their supposed novelty the adoption and implementation of local development programmes proceeded in ways that involved the continuation or re-visitations of established policy practices. The programmes were introduced opportunistically in a piecemeal fashion to avail of funding opportunities. While presented as an important milestone which would encourage more participatory forms of local development these new programmes lacked substantial powers. The State continued to exert significant if less direct control over the new local development organisations. The new bodies had little influence over the work of other state organisations. In the main they were confined to the role of independent new projects administering their own funds which in the case of LEADER groups and the C.E.B's primarily involved administering enterprise grant programmes. This reflected the states preference for weak single purpose entities. The choice of the areas initially included in these programmes and their subsequent rapid expansion into de-facto national initiatives echoes the experience of previous programmes and suggests that the local development boom had less to do with a commitment by the state to the spatial and local dimensions of these programmes than it has to do with funding opportunities and political pressures. Perhaps most crucially, as in previous eras there was a significant divergence between the ideological significance attached to these programmes and the State's practical commitment to them. The bulk of the State's activities continued to be undertaken through traditional sector based national agencies. As was the case with previous programmes the new local development initiatives were introduced alongside and not as an alternative to such programmes. This is a significant point since it raises very serious questions about the extent to which such schemes represented a real interest in and commitment to a reworking of community state relations.

Chapter four thus confirmed that in many respects local development programmes reflect established policy practices which pre-date and transcend the ideas incorporated into local development discourse. The evidence suggests that these bodies were established primarily as a means to draw down certain types of European funding. Far from embracing the ideas underlying local development the State's introduction of local development programmes was a contingent response to the external stimulus generated by the push and pull effects of E.U. policy in the form of C.A.P reform and the introduction of a series of European Community initiatives aimed at supporting community, rural and local development. While local development programmes may have enjoyed considerable visibility and were widely held up

as evidence of the state's commitment to disadvantaged and rural communities, the bulk of the state's resources continued to be committed to national programmes administered through centralised, sectoral departments and agencies. This suggests that at the very best these programmes represented an exceptionally limited attempt to adjust such relationships regardless of what the rhetoric surrounding these programmes indicates.

This conclusion is given further weight by subsequent events as a process of enforced "cohesion" has resulted in the amalgamation of many of the original local groups into what are now in most instances single, county wide organisations administering local development and LEADER programme funding within the boundaries of existing sub national administrative units. There has also been an extension of the monitoring and control of these organisations at national level most notable in the "mainstreaming," of the current round of the LEADER programme (2007-2013) which placed these groups under more direct and extensive departmental supervision. These developments have seen a slow but sure reduction in the autonomy afforded to such local groups, a tendency to consolidate them into the local arms of tightly controlled national programmes scarcely distinguishable from national bureaucracies that local development initially challenged. In many respects this represents a reversion to type on the part of the Irish state which illustrates the longevity of the policy practices mentioned above and raises questions about the validity of still popular interpretations of the emergence of local development as a paradigm shift¹.

All of these factors suggest that the emergence of local development programmes in the Republic of Ireland differed widely in practice from the policy transition described in the literature. It is clearly the case that the principal factors shaping this process relate to concerns about specific practical problems and opportunities that confronted policy makers. In formulating responses to these concerns they employed established patterns of policy practice. Amongst the most fundamental features of such practices is that they tended to support established patterns of power and control over decision making. This was the context into which the new local development programmes were introduced in the 1990's. It also suggests that the process through which local development programmes were introduced involved two different sets of tasks. The first are those practical steps that were undertaken in

¹Much attention was paid in the most recent operational programme to the importance of preserving the bottom up element of the local development approach while also providing for more stringent top down monitoring of the programme was previously required (C.A.P Rural Development Unit 2007).

order to establish the project and the second were those steps involved in producing an account of these events that complied with the ideas about them contained in formal policy discourse. The ability of certain actors to control the latter had a fundamental impact on the way in which such programmes were introduced.

13.3 Locality: As the unit and vector of development

A feature of the theoretical perspective employed in this study was that it was intended to make it possible for the significance of certain features of the programmes being examined to emerge through an examination of the empirical data at each stage in the research. Observations based on this data assisted in the identification of specific issues which formed the basis of further research questions. A key feature that emerged from the examination of the emergence of the local development approach was the divergence between formal accounts concerning new development programmes and the reality of how such programmes were adopted and implemented in practice also. One feature of this discourse which the study investigated in depth is the role of locality in local development. The discourse about local development defines such programmes as involving the targeting of resources to specific areas as opposed to others, a strategy which necessarily required some form of policy justification. In the case of local development programmes, a particularly significant element of such justifications was derived from the concept of locality itself. One of the basic ideas underlying the local development approach was that certain areas could be identified as suffering from disadvantages. The spatial dimension contributed to the level of disadvantage experienced in these localities. To this was added a second element in the justification of local development programmes, the idea that initiatives which included mechanisms to actively involve local people in the design and execution of development improved the capacity of these programmes to respond to the problems facing these areas. The concept of locality and in particular notions of spatial disadvantage lay at the heart of the formal discourse concerning local development. By defining localities as both the unit and the vector of action these ideas set local development programmes apart providing a justification and also a basis on which areas were to be included in such programmes. From these basic notions many of the fundamental precepts of the local development approach sprang forth. What then does an examination of an actual area selected for inclusion in what was to

become a series of local development programmes tell us about the significance of locality and spatial deprivation in an applied setting?

Chapter five attempted to answer this question through an examination of the physical landscape and socio-economic characteristics of County Waterford. This examination highlighted a number of issues that arise out of attempts to implement such programmes. Amongst the most significant is the question of this area's inclusion in the A.B.R programme. Waterford showed little evidence of possessing the characteristics of either an urban or rural disadvantaged area. Indeed agriculturally it ranked as one of the most prosperous and, with the exception of some small pockets, best structured areas of agricultural production the country. Unemployment rates were also unremarkable by national standards. Yet, not only was the area included in local development programmes which were justified on the basis of some of the spatial arguments outlined above, but this continued to be the case long after it had been clearly established by a number of parties that the area was not particularly disadvantaged and that W.W.D.P in all its forms was failing to direct much of its resources or efforts towards disadvantaged groups².

A consideration of County Waterford's involvement in local development programmes thus provides more evidence of the divergence between formal statements concerning local development programmes and the way in which such programmes are implemented in practice. In this case the extent to which the spatial criteria mentioned in relation to this programme applied in practice is open to question. Indeed this was confirmed during the study by senior figures in the Partnership who clearly stated that they had personally lobbied for the scheme after the failure of the I.R.D's W.A.R.D. LEADER application. It had been the failure of this application rather than any interest in or concern with the specific issues of long term unemployment that had spurred these individuals to lobby for the A.B.R. Yet the actors involved in the national co-ordination of the partnership as well as figures at local level continued to uphold the original idea that the A.B.R was a programme *for disadvantaged areas*. In the case of Waterford it is quite clearly the case that the local development approach was being employed to allocate resources to what was in many respects an *advantaged area*. Yet spatial disadvantage continued to form the justification for

² This continues to be the case. However in 2012 the organisation did receive a warning that it would face the withdrawal of some funding if it did not do more to address the "social agenda"

allocating additional resources to designated areas and also for the vesting of a degree of power to a local board over the allocation of these resources outside of the established systems of governmental accountability. Crucially for the future evolution of the local development approach this rationale and the ideas that it supported continued to be applied to local development programmes long after their status changed from that of a series of special responses in certain areas to being de-facto national programmes embracing a number of areas which like Waterford exhibited few of the characteristics of a disadvantaged area.

This leads to a second more general concern relating to the reliability of ideas about locality as the unit of designation in such programmes. As already mentioned an important aspect of local development approaches was the idea that areas have characteristics which identify them as “disadvantaged” or otherwise experiencing issues of a specifically spatial character. These characteristics can be defined, measured and used to identify areas for inclusion in the programme. However, even the cursory examination of Waterford’s economy outlined in chapter five shows that this area does not fit easily into such crude categories as disadvantaged rural area or urban unemployment “blackspot”. Nor was it possible to easily attribute the areas economic problems, such as they were, to any single specific problem or set of problems. In fact the economy of County Waterford has in the past, and continues, to exhibit a considerable degree of diversity and vitality across a range of economic sectors. Waterford’s economy is complex and has been articulated with a number of local and larger production and trade networks over a long period of time. The complex, multi-functional nature of the Waterford economy means that any account of this area which suggests a specific causal link between a certain economic problem, or deprivation “syndrome” and this geographical space are almost certain to be misleading. Certainly the county contains specific areas which suffer from features of rural decline and urban deprivation. The county also contains areas which are relatively affluent and have benefitted positively from the very same processes of agricultural and industrial change which have been associated with the “spatial disadvantage” experienced by some areas. These observations suggest that the county is far too big a unit to allow the level of sensitivity necessary to identify an area as disadvantaged or not. Yet the State continued to evoke ideas relating to localities and communities to support these policies long after it became clear that the areas incorporated within local development programmes contained multiple localities experiencing different challenges. Indeed more recent events have seen the consolidation of supposedly “local” development organisations into the large and entirely arbitrary “Local action group”. While doggedly

employing the terminology associated with local development along with the positive connotations associated with words like local and community the Irish State's local development programmes have moved away from an approach in which locality has any practical significance.

An examination of the inclusion of Waterford in the A.B.R and subsequent LEADER programmes reveals a potentially fatal flaw in the area based approach as employed in the Republic of Ireland. This strategy is to a very substantial extent based on the idea that specific socio-economic development issues were attributable to spatial factors. However if, as an examination of County Waterford suggests, these ideas do not apply to geographical units of this particular size then what particular size of geographical unit is the appropriate one when it comes to the question of identifying a "disadvantaged area". While it appears to be the case that local development embodies a strong intuitive notion of what constitutes a disadvantaged area, when it comes to the identification of such areas for inclusion in local actual programmes this clarity rapidly dissipates. A host of conflicting ideas are employed by a number of different actors to define localities in a variety of different ways. Questions concerning what constitutes a specific locality and spatial deprivation are complex but local programmes attempt to simplify these questions. Indeed a feature of more recent local development programmes appears to have been a tendency to intensify this trend, associating local development programmes with existing local administrative units and assessing spatial deprivation through the quantitative analysis of a basket of individual and household deprivation indicators. This makes it possible to compile the equivalent of national league tables of deprivation scores. While this approach associates certain socio-economic problems with certain geographic areas, they do not necessarily demonstrate a causal relationship between them, or indeed a causal link between the locality and/or the community and the resolution of these problems.

While ideas about locality and spatial deprivation are crucial to the local development approach the case of Waterford suggests that in reality there is a lack of clarity and precision as to what locality means. In this case little effort was made by those actors involved in the designation of areas for inclusion in such programmes to consider the significance of internal complexity within aggregate areas, in the case of Waterford this resulted in a programme for areas encountering specific problems of spatial disadvantage being implemented in an area that clearly didn't experience such problems. This situation was exacerbated by the use of

specific forms of data relating to individuals and households as proxy measures for spatial deprivation or spatial disadvantage. While this approach suggests a degree of precision, it too is primarily arbitrary. There always appears to be the possibility that small alterations of the boundaries can put an area into, or raise it out of, the disadvantaged category. However what is perhaps the most insidious feature of this process is the way in which the loose conflation of individual and spatial ideas about deprivation resulted in making all the residents in specific areas eligible to apply for certain benefits on what were in the case of West Waterford and subsequently the entire County the most tenuous of grounds. Since by definition area based programmes target areas there is always a possibility that such programmes will benefit individuals in the designated area who may be less disadvantaged than individuals in other non-designated areas. This is justifiable in policy terms specifically because such programmes are primarily targeted at disadvantaged areas. This in turn suggests that a crucial aspect of local development programmes involves ensuring that they apply measures to address the spatially linked development challenges and also that particular care is taken to ensure that the appropriate areas are selected for inclusion in such programmes. The evidence presented in this study suggests that in the Irish case these measures fell very wide of this mark. The way in which such concepts have been applied in local development remains poorly theorised leading in the case of Waterford in the designation of a diverse and relatively affluent area as disadvantaged. Ideas associated with local development concerning the disadvantaged areas were applied to an area to which they had little relevance. Despite the central importance to the local development approach of such concepts as spatial disadvantage, this case suggests that there was considerable elasticity in the application of such ideas in the selection of areas for inclusion in these programmes.

This also suggests that policy research plays a less central role in the selection of areas for inclusion in such programmes than the formal discourse suggests. The designation of at least this area was the result of a less clearly defined process informed by a number of different considerations. One of the many ironies that can be seen in this process is that, while the inclusion of Waterford was undoubtedly the result of a wide range of factors, one of the implications of its selection was that it became the subject of a particular narrative that was compatible with the local development discourse. In portraying the areas as disadvantaged and rural this narrative took little account of the County's socio-economic complexities. Its substantial industrial base and history was almost ignored, as were its substantial urban populations who were to remain significantly under-represented in W.W.D.P and its later

manifestations. This had implications for the evolution of W.W.D.P programmes which continued to focus principally on the County's smaller rural communities³ to the neglect of its significant urban population.

13.4 The partnership, the community and the state.

A consideration of how Waterford came to be included in the area based programme is further evidence that of the divergence between formal local development discourse and what actually happens when such programmes were implemented. Indeed it appears that such gaps are an inherent feature of the policy process. Whether it really applied to County Waterford or not, local actors utilised the language and ideas associated with the local development approach in encounters during which the actual shape of the local programme was worked out. Chapters six, seven and eight demonstrate how the development discourse was employed by different local actors in Waterford in ways which ultimately determined the question of who controlled the new programmes and its priorities. Again there is a considerable irony in the way this process was worked out. While the local development discourse was formulated at E.U. and national level in order to facilitate the creation of a local coalition capable of agreeing local development goals, these same ideas provided certain actors with the resources to ensure that events on the ground could be worked out in ways which supported their own development projects. Once the genie of local development had been let out of the bottle it had the capacity to mutate in unpredictable ways producing outcomes which differed significantly from those suggested by the development discourse. This observation relates to the crucial issues which lie at the heart of this study concerning the question of how power was worked out in the new initiatives.

Several aspects of the question of power in local development were considered in this study. Among these was the impact that local development programmes had on the relationship between the State and local communities. An important feature of the local development approach was the possibility it offered to reshape this relationship. The new organisational structures employed in local development would enable locals to participate in decisions

³ This situation has continued through to the present. In 2012 for example of 38 projects funded by W.L.P 29 were based outside of the Counties large urban areas of Dungarvan and Tramore which only had 4 and 5 projects funded respectively. Two thirds of the projects (23) were based in the organisations West Waterford heartland.

about the issues the programmes would address and how they would operate. Decision making and to a certain extent power would be devolved from national bodies to local organisations, the new programmes would, in the language employed in local development discourse empower local organisations. This process was depicted in formal terms as embodying elements of an expert system defined by senior policy makers. Through this expert system the state sought, depending on the researcher's perspective, to facilitate or impose a certain set of ideas about local development on certain areas, enrolling local actors into the local development network along the lines envisaged in formal discourse.

From the outset events in Waterford differed considerably from the pattern suggested above, resulting neither in the devolution of power to an inclusive local development coalition or the imposition by the state of an inflexible development agenda on a local body. Rather from the point when it was decided to include West Waterford in the A.B.R certain local actors demonstrated an ability to exert a considerable degree of control over the introduction and management of a local development programme. An illustration of how they were able to do this is the way in which the decision to include the area in the A.B.R was reached. This had little to do with the considerations and criteria outlined in formal discourse. Rather the scheme's introduction in the area was a result of the ability of a group of local actors to utilise existing informal networks to influence the decisions made by the state. Of particular significance was the involvement of individuals who had links with Waterford Foods. A noteworthy feature of this group's involvement in this process was that they claimed it was they who initiated the contacts with central government. This is significant given the general idea, prevalent within the local development discourse of the need to "animate" local actors and subsequently to build up their capacity to engage in local development. In successfully lobbying for the inclusion of the West Waterford area this group, which could be reasonably described as being members of a local elite, revealed itself to be extremely animated and displayed a capacity to engage in local development which equalled and in certain cases exceeded that of some of the policy "experts" involved in the design and implementation of the programme. It is interesting that the original involvement of some members of this group in the I.R.D's W.A.R.D proposal, and their subsequent efforts to attract the A.B.R into Waterford was a reflection of the perceived imperative that senior figures in Waterford Foods felt to be seen being actively involved in local affairs. Powerful as this local elite may have been they still felt it necessary to behave in ways which they believed would make them look well in the eyes of their shareholders and suppliers in the local dairy industry. This echoes

and indeed confirms the point made by Long that during such interventions actors “*cross cut administrative boundaries*” (Long 1989). In this case it was quite clear that the motivations of this group of actors related to a much broader set of concerns than those relating directly to the programme.

The decision to include West Waterford in the A.B.R demonstrates that figures within the local business elite were able to exert (through informal channels) a considerable degree of influence on the shape that the programme took. What is more this decision suggests that at national level senior decision makers were themselves willing to override some of the basic ideas in the local development policy discourse pointing to the limited extent to which these events were shaped by the constraints of formal local development discourse. Rather certain local actors had a substantial ability to influence the course or indeed “capture” the initiative during dealings with the State that were conducted through established but largely informal networks. An analysis of local development which concentrates on formal administrative structures is unlikely to produce accurate insights into the question of power in the development process which, as the discussion in chapter two indicates, has been a major focus of such analysis. During the events examined in this study it was clear that a range of factors shape the outcome of encounters between localities and state, encounters during which some local actors had better access to senior decision makers than those implementing the programme.

While the reality of local development differed from the formal depictions of this process the formal discourse retained an important bearing on the on-going relationship between the W.W.D.P and the state. Much as locals may have been able to influence state decisions it remained the case that the organisation was required to demonstrate that it was in compliance with the partnership model. In Waterford the organisation thus faced the challenge of attempting to balance the interest of its board in enterprise development and the requirements of the programme. They were relatively successful in this endeavour. This suggests that rather than being passively swept into the development network these actors were able to subordinate elements of the programme to support or at least not to oppose their interests. In part they were able to do so because of the divergence that existed between the formal discourse of local development and the reality of programme implementation. This situation generated ambiguous spaces which provided avenues which key board members were able to exploit to ensure the organisation pursued a strategy in line with their interests. An important

factor in shaping the relationship between certain local actors and the state thus related to the capacity of these actors to manage the ambiguities inherent in the local development discourse, pushing through their own priorities while also producing accounts of these events which satisfied the programmes national co-ordinators.

One of the ways in which they achieved this was through making use of those discretionary powers that the board possessed. The board made the fullest use of the autonomy it enjoyed to advance the Partnership's role as an enterprise support agency by appointing a manager who was sympathetic to this approach and producing an action plan in support of this goal. A second avenue which the organisation used in support of this course of action was the formal discourse itself. Key board members and later the manager stressed that the actions which the partnership pursued were endorsed by a local board which was representative of opinion in the area. The fact that in this particular case the board contained some exceptionally capable local business figures enhanced the manager's capacity to sustain this argument in the face of local criticism and the occasional demands of A.D.M and other national agencies that the Partnership change its tack. In this case the local development approach was hoisted on the petard of its own contradictions. Loosely applying the notion of locality allowed for the inclusion of West Waterford, an area which was by no means particularly disadvantaged, in the programme. The areas local population included senior executives in some of the country's foremost commercial enterprises. Having afforded these actors the opportunity to participate in the programme the formal discourse provided them with a repertoire of arguments that they could employ to justify the course that the Partnership adopted. In these circumstances the idea that such actors would not exercise considerable control over the course that the local project would take is almost inconceivable. By skilfully managing the ambiguities that existed in the discourse surrounding local development programmes, the manager and core members of the board of W.W.D.P were able to create room for manoeuvre in their dealings with the state while remaining in compliance with the formal requirements of the A.B.R and later programmes. The mythopoeia of Waterford the disadvantaged area meant that they were simultaneously able to have a considerable influence on the shaping the programme took at local level.

13.5 Working the board: Local elites and local development?

Members of the local elite were able to exert a considerable influence over the shape of local development in Waterford through their ability to engage in this process, utilising their own contacts and indeed aspects of the local development discourse itself. However while it may be tempting to regard Waterford as something of an aberration, an example of what happens when the “wrong people” get involved in local development. The actual processes through which the question of power is resolved in local development differ significantly from that envisaged in formal development discourse and are in fact, as likely to result in the involvement of just the type of actors who came to dominate the Board in Waterford as any others. The situation as it developed in Waterford was made possible by the same processes that were in place elsewhere. Indeed despite its clear skew towards enterprise development W.W.D.P. was conscientious in ensuring that its programme complied with the formal requirements of the A.B.R. Establishing the Partnership involved the formation of a board made up of a range of local actors with varying interests and projects in relation to the areas development. The expectation of the formal development discourse was that this situation would result in the emergence of a consensus concerning local development. Whether this was the case or not it was undoubtedly true that the board constituted an arena in which actors pursuing significantly different projects encountered each other in relation to the meaning of the new programme. The second power relationship discussed in depth in this study concerned the outcome of these encounters and more specifically the question of who controlled the board.

In the early days of the Partnership two factors played a pivotal role in the make-up of the board. The first of these was the formal requirements of the A.B.R which stipulated that the local boards were to be made up of eighteen members representing the state agencies, social partners and community sector. The second was the existence of a core group of board members with considerable business experience at senior management level. As was the case in relation to its dealings with the state the capacity of these actors to work within the constraints of the programme in a way which reflected their views on how the organisation should work was pivotal. It enabled them to influence the selection of many of the other Board members. In doing so they again relied or were influenced by existing networks of contacts within the area to identify suitable additional candidates for inclusion. The result

was a board which had strong representation from the farming community in West Waterford and, significantly, a number of members who had links to Waterford Foods. For the core group this secured a considerable degree of support within the board, together with their considerable managerial know how, this made it possible for this core group to control such key decisions as the appointment of a manager. For this reason there was little evidence of overt discord within the board during the early days of the Partnership.

In Waterford therefore, the board was initially brought under the control of members of the local elite through their ability to control the initial selection of members and also through their experience in board room procedures. It is noteworthy that while these key figures and some of the state agency representatives had considerable experience in management some board members from the community sector did not. While the A.B.R guidelines regarding the formation of boards stipulated that they should have a broad representation of local interests. In large part the board itself remained a black box with little consideration being given to how events in the boardroom would affect the outcomes of the programme. The guidelines did not address the possible effect that different levels of experience in the boardroom might have on the outcomes of this process. The data from Waterford suggests that the board provided a context in which a particular core group of individuals; members of the local elite with experience in just the type of procedures involved in running a board and a coherent vision of what they wanted to do with the Partnership, were able to establish and maintain a considerable degree of control over decision making.

13.6 Creating Inclusive Mobilisation: The Community, State Agencies and W.W.D.P.

The fact that the A.B.R was secured as an alternative to the LEADER programme suggests that the motivations of those involved in the effort to achieve this differed from those envisioned in the formal discourse concerning the A.B.R. As has been shown the group that retained control of the board were successful in steering the organisation in a particular direction, “working away” from certain elements of the A.B.R and focussing on enterprise support. The A.B.R did however impose some limits on the extent to which they were able to do so. Indeed an important feature of the board’s success in pursuing its agenda was ensuring they remained, at least on paper, in compliance with national programmes constraints and expectations. Two such expectations concerned the question of the involvement of the

community and State. Given that the A.B.R. was aimed at supporting local development it can scarcely be regarded as surprising that W.W.D.P would be required to work with communities in general and community groups in particular. The programme did after all stipulate that the board should include representatives of the local community and indeed its operating guidelines mentioned the employment of community development strategies. Community groups constituted one of the principal ways in which local people could be mobilised and empowered to take ownership of the project and thus of the areas development. Equally given the views of the core board members it was unsurprising that they would be somewhat reluctant to commit resources to activities such as community development which lay outside of their core area of interest, enterprise development. Nevertheless it remained the case that the Partnership had to deal with the wider community, a situation which had the potential to cause difficulties for the board and present community groups with a context and also a justification for raising specific issues of relevance to them. Such issues were not unknown to actors in W.W.D.P; indeed they had employed some of these ideas themselves in justifying the decisions they had made concerning the Partnership.

The board was also required to engage with the state agencies. The manager of the partnership felt that the state agencies would be reluctant to co-operate with the Partnership, a suspicion which events partially substantiated. He was also concerned that certain state agencies would react negatively to the Partnership if they began to perceive its activities as a threat. Regardless of his concerns it nevertheless remained the case that, as with community groups, the Partnership had to deal with the state agencies during the implementation of its programme. Regardless of how harmonious things may have appeared to be at board level this would inevitably create situations in which the position adopted by the board and manager would be open to challenge by both the community and the state agencies. Thus two additional issues relating to the question of power in the programme emerge, concerning the relationships between the Partnership and both community groups and state agencies.

Initially the Partnership avoided serious confrontations adopting and implementing measures which avoided conflict. This changed when the Board decided to apply for LEADER II. It was believed by senior figures in W.W.D.P. that the criteria that would be used to award LEADER II funds would take into account the degree of local support for, and involvement in, the organisation. To be successful an organisation had to demonstrate the inclusive mobilisation of the local community. A community consultation and subsequent submission

of local contributions to its LEADER II application would enable W.W.D.P to demonstrate that a degree of local consensus and support for the plan had been achieved. The consultation thus offered an important context in which the hitherto muted question of the power relations between the Partnership and both community groups and state agencies would be brought into sharper focus. An interesting sidelight on this situation is that while W.W.D.P was described as a local development organisation it only initiated this process in response to the external stimulus provided by the possibilities of LEADER funding.

Chapter seven examined the first stage of a process during which the Partnership planned and conducted two large public meetings during the consultation. The data demonstrated that at least initially, their status as the “experts” in this process was significant in enabling the Partnership board and staff to shape this stage of the consultation. It also illustrates the extent to which the Partnership’s actions were influenced by the expectations that LEADER II would require applicant groups to produce evidence that there was widespread local support for a development agenda that complied with that of the LEADER II programme. This fuelled the Partnership’s desire to ensure its consultation demonstrated inclusion, influencing the shape of the consultation. The Partnership actively sought to identify a specific type of group, the catch all area based economic development group, for inclusion in the consultation. Many of these groups had of course assumed this role as a result of the Partnerships advice that they approach the C.E.P. In this instance we see that the agency staff and certain groups “worked towards the LEADER programme”. W.W.D.P’s perception of what LEADER II would require resulted in the selective recruitment of groups which matched these requirements. This included many groups with members who fitted the managers definition of local “movers and shakers” from the business community. The selection of these groups in turn provided evidence of local demand for LEADER. A cumulative cycle supporting local development was established by people with much to gain from local development. Though billed as inclusive this process advanced the development priorities of certain locals while excluding those of others further solidifying the narrative of Waterford the disadvantaged *rural* area in the process.

During the study the researcher enjoyed extensive access as the staff prepared for the programme of consultation. During this time the role of the staff in shaping this process became clear. The decision to firstly increase the number of groups involved and secondly increase the area for which the organisation would make the application added to the

complexity of this task. The former decision increased the potential that specific local actors would challenge the partnership during the meetings. The second meant that the staff would have to deal directly with another state agency. In order to make the challenges these additional factors generated more manageable the key staff fell back on elements of professional development discourse. The planning of the meetings was conducted in the technical language of development which defined the staff's roles as skilled professionals. This approach was used to justify the imposition of tighter control. As a result the extent to which these events could facilitate genuine consultation was reduced. Thus while the Partnership's board and chairman exercised a considerable degree of control over the decision to apply for LEADER funding the staff exercised a considerable degree of power over the shape that the consultations took. Both in the design and later in the actual course of undertaking the consultation process the staff's power was related to their position as experts and their use of a professional development discourse. This enabled them to define elements of this process and the role of various actors in it in ways that suited their interests. Of particular note in this respect is that while their decisions concerning the shape that the consultation took were justified on unproblematic technical grounds. In reality these decisions combined such considerations with the staff's desire to avoid confrontation and make their own workload in relation to this process more manageable. We see therefore that the staff's power lay in the capacity their status as professionals gave them to utilise elements of development discourse strategically in ways that supported their own development projects.

Chapter eight examined events after these consultations during which staff from both the Partnership and the C.E.P again attempted to adopt a very formal technical language in dealing with the groups, this time during follow up meetings. A template for the proposed submissions and a scheme through which it could be used to assess the progress of specific groups was produced as a guide to this process. However during this phase staff had to contend with a radically changed context. Whereas the initial consultation meetings had taken place in the relatively controlled environment of a hotel function room and been primarily information sessions, the follow up meetings took place in small local venues. Furthermore the Partnership was seeking the active support of the local groups something that fundamentally altered the dynamics of these encounters. Finally the Partnership had less scope to control the agenda at these meetings thus affording local actors greater scope to engage with the Partnership in negotiations concerning the groups support for the initiative.

The actions of the W.W.D.P staff involved attempts to sensitise local groups, to have them accept a certain take on the area and conform to a certain development approach. However the fact that a number of separate classifications had to be drawn up, together with the great variation in the submissions produced shows that the staff did not retain the degree of control that they had achieved during the large meetings over this stage of the process. During these latter meetings they were engaged in face to face negotiations with what were in many cases very knowledgeable actors who recognised that the Partnership needed their support. Thus deconstructed some groups used their understanding of the Partnerships consultation and indeed their knowledge of the fact that two separate organisations were involved in this process to negotiate concessions from the Partnership. During this phase of the LEADER II consultation the use of different forms of knowledge by local actors and the staff were indelibly linked to the question of power and how this is worked out at local level. In the course of these encounters the seemingly clear distinction between the experiential understandings of local actors and the expert knowledge employed by the professionals lose much of their validity. This situation makes the claims made by development professionals concerning their ability to enhance local capacity appear naïve. In the case of D.F.B.A for example the line between the expertise of staff and local actors was all but dissipated as some of the professionals in this case adopted strategies that were similar to those of the local actors and some members of these groups displayed considerable awareness both of their own areas situation and of the requirements of the Partnership. In this case both professional and local identity are multi-layered. The outcomes of specific encounters between professionals and local groups had more to do with the specific negotiations that occurred during these meetings than any preconceived model or template of local development.

A careful examination of the consultation process thus suggests that an alternative reading of these events is indeed possible in which the power of the local development discourse to deliver local groups appears to be limited. In the first half of the consultation the Partnership took measures to ensure that dissent was reduced to a minimum. The role of the staff was crucial in this as they employed elements of development discourse in order to ensure the meetings went smoothly. Yet despite the Partnerships success in running these meetings according to plan the follow up meetings resulted in a variable response to the Partnership's initiative. While certain local groups produced projects which were in close alignment with those of the Partnership others did not. For some groups it may have been the case that they

simply opposed the Partnership for others it would appear that the Partnership project was almost invisible having little bearing on their interests. Collectively both chapters seven and eight suggest that the Partnership's claims to be able to represent local opinion are less than solid. In reality it was able to martial a degree of support within a specific segment of the local population who were members of a certain type of community group. The partnerships attempts to minimise dissent while engaging groups was presented as a technically driven exercise which involved encounters between the partnership and local groups during which they reached agreement on an overall strategy for development in Waterford and subsequently on the structure of a local submission. However this version of events did not actually reflect the reality of the consultation. This involved negotiations between actors who had become involved in a network in order to pursue a variety of interests. The findings of these chapters suggest that the outcomes of interactions between local groups and the staff of the partnership cannot be predicted in advance. They constitute dynamic power field in which the specific outcomes of individual encounters depend on the capacity of specific individuals. Despite the power afforded to the staff through their control over formal aspects of development discourse some groups proved to be adept at negotiating with the partnership. As a result they achieved outcomes that advanced their own projects while others accepted the ideas outlined by the partnership becoming enrolled in its project relatively passively. One thing that does appear to be universally true is that in all cases the groups themselves were not fully representative of the entire community living in the areas they represented. In most cases they were, like the partnership itself, made up of members of a local elite. On the question of whether the partnerships consultation process "empowered" the local community. The best that can be said is that it offered the opportunity for a certain fraction of the local elite a degree of power during encounters with staff members.

13.7 Local Brokers? Community groups and local communities

The inclusion of local development groups in the consultation process was deemed as important as the partnership attempted to demonstrate the mobilisation of the wider community. The local development discourse paid particularly close attention to the role such groups could play as both representatives and change agents. A study of the consultation that W.W.D.P undertook suggests that while the involvement of community groups ensured the incorporation of certain local actors into the development network it was

certainly not the case that this involved the universal enrolment of entire communities. Firstly because the groups selected for inclusion represented only a certain segment of that community and secondly because the consultation was itself a very restricted process. Nevertheless the outcome was again a series of events which accorded with a particular narrative that complied with the local development discourse. The Partnership's efforts to cover as much of the county as possible in the consultation, the careful efforts it made to ensure that the public meetings were free of discord, even at the expense of its developmental potential and the careful documenting of the local planning process seem to suggest that the crucial element in this particular process was to demonstrate that the meetings had occurred rather than any fundamental concern with what occurred at them.

Again however, the Partnership's behaviour once LEADER II was awarded represents an attempt to balance two conflicting concerns. In order to win LEADER funding it had initiated a process that put it in contact with a number of community groups. While the bulk of its proposed activities under LEADER II and later programmes would be targeted at individuals, in order to secure funding the Partnership had committed to the retention of a link with the community via the participant groups (through such initiatives as the Community Forum) and its proposal to use such organisations as conduits for local input. Unsurprisingly, given the ephemeral nature of some of the groups involved in the consultation, the implications of this situation were in many cases of little consequence. Some of the more nebulous entities cobbled together during the consultation rapidly dissipated, in some cases before the ink on their submissions was dry. In the case of other, more durable groups, their inclusion in the process had significant implications for the group itself and the relationship it enjoyed with the partnership, state agencies and other local actors. The incorporation of some groups in this network placed them in a powerful position as "representative bodies" for certain areas with important implications concerning the relationship between actors living in specific areas and the partnership. This concerned such matters as the implications that the designation of certain groups as part of the partnerships network of area based organisations has on the status of that group within the community, which local actors were able to influence the partnership, what the effects this has on the access certain actors enjoy to partnership resources and how the designation of certain groups impacts on its relationship with the community it claims to represent. In short the Partnerships selection of certain groups has an effect on local power relations which needs to be investigated.

Chapter nine undertook this investigation in the case of one such group D.E.W.T. This group had originally been established to promote the tourism trade in East Waterford an area which incidentally scored very high on GAMMA Ltd.'s deprivation "league table". The group's selection says much about the Partnership's ideas about what constitutes a suitable representative organisations. Discover East Waterford Tourism's membership did not reflect the relatively high levels of deprivation in the area being comprised almost entirely of tourism operators. It did however share a considerable degree of common ground with WDP and in particular with the Partnership's analysis that the area was in decline and that old industries should be replaced by new local enterprise (i.e. tourism). Equally, as an organisation seeking financial support for its activities, D.E.W.T found a sympathetic listener in the Partnership. However in addition to the financial benefits of involvement in the programme there is evidence to suggest that D.E.W.T was also aware of the political dimension of the consultation exercise and the value of being identified with and having access to the Partnership. Thus the most immediate effect of the D.E.W.T's inclusion in the consultation was to confer the status of a representative group on an organisation which represented a particular segment of the population and had clear ideas concerning the area's problems and the best solution to them. Rather than building local consensus around agreed development goals, the Partnership's consultation tied representation of this area to a particular group. The ineffectiveness of this approach as a means of building local consensus was illustrated when disputes emerged between conflicting interests in the area. Neither the Partnership nor this group played any role in resolving these differences.

This situation had significant further consequences. Once designated as the areas community group D.E.W.T came to the attention of a number of state agencies. As well as the Partnership itself it received support from FAS, the D.S.W/S.F.C.A and the C.E.B. It was clearly the case that all these organisations had an interest in supporting a specific type of community organisation. D.E.W.T status as a community group was consolidated by its involvement in the consultation with the result that the group began to benefit from the accumulated support of a number of organisations. The group expanded its activities accordingly becoming a catch all enterprise support organisation. As a result the group took on responsibilities, and subsequently debts, that related to a much broader range of activities than had been included in its original remit. Two important lessons can be drawn from the experience of D.E.W.T in this respect. The first is that to a significant extent D.E.W.T's

evolution into a catch all local development entity was driven by its involvement with the agencies. It was these bodies which provided the incentives which led, what had originally been a tourism group to engage in a much wider range of activities. Rather than simply supporting a community organisation, in this case the intervention of the various agencies had a direct role in reshaping the community organisation. Secondly it points to the potentially destructive consequences of this process. Rather than acting as a conduit for local development, groups such as D.E.W.T became adept at attracting funding, and absorbed a considerable amount of the resources allocated in this area. In the case of D.E.W.T this ultimately resulted in a group entering into commitments it could not sustain.

The inclusion of D.E.W.T in the application procedure also had implications for other local actors. The idea underlying the selection of community groups was that these entities would be a mechanism through which local views could be elicited and local involvement in the programme encouraged. However while the involvement of such groups certainly did involve the incorporation of local actors into the development network the case of D.E.W.T demonstrates that it was certainly not the case that this involved the universal enrolment of entire communities. The selection of D.E.W.T as the areas community group meant the exclusion of other voices from a critical node in the link between the Partnership and the wider population in whose interest it claimed to act. This resulted in a particularly biased view as to what local actors in this area favoured. The Partnership selected a group which had developed a narrative which while sympathetic to its interests was only representative of one specific sector of the local community. The Partnership and D.E.W.T gave the impression that what they were involved in was a new development drive which was operating in the face of inevitable forces of change. For another group, the fishermen, these issues were ones in which certain parties such as the State and tourism interests were actually working against them. The fact that the fishermen were largely excluded from the consensus approach embraced in the consultation process by both D.E.W.T and the Partnership led to the effective exclusion of their views from the Partnership's development strategy

The study thus raised serious issues concerning the role of the community in local development as depicted in discourse. Perhaps most significant is the concern that by suggesting that certain groups have the capacity to represent their areas not only did the Partnership fail to mobilise the wider community but its actions appear to have consolidated the position of certain actors at the expense of others, including some of the areas more

socially and economically vulnerable residents. The process through which this situation evolved, again highlights the degree to which a lack of clarity in relation to a basic concept central to local development contributed to the shape that the policy took in practice. Local development approaches stressed the *active involvement of those affected* by problems of spatial deprivation. Providing such “communities” with access to decision making was an important feature of this process. Such measures were envisioned as having developmental as well as direct practical benefits enhancing the capacity of these communities to embark on development related activities. However in Waterford what had initially been regarded as measures to facilitate the involvement of the under-represented in effect became a project seeking to demonstrate that there was widespread support of the full range of people living in the area for the Partnership. However when presented as such the Partnership’s choices as regards what groups it would involve conferred certain groups with a special status and the benefit of direct access to the partnership as that areas “community group”. The fact that the Partnerships selection of such groups was governed by preconceived ideas about what “serious” community groups should look like meant that in effect the wider community was represented by groups operating a similar agenda and representing similar interests to those of the Partnership itself.

13.8 Flexible Income Strategies: Local Development and the Local Actors

Many of the events examined in this study occurred during the formation and development of the Partnership itself. While undoubtedly pursuing certain personal and organisational projects, actors were in these instances involved in encounters that primarily focussed on the local development programme. For many other local actors the significance of these new initiatives may have little to do with questions concerning the emergence of development discourse, how areas come to be defined as disadvantaged or who controls local development organisations. Despite the significance attached to formal measures aimed at facilitating community involvement it is important to recognise that the majority of the local actors who came into contact with the Partnership did so as individuals. Such encounters related to one or other of the various programmes the Partnership operated outside of the process of partnership building or the elaborate network of community groups that evolved around the initiative. Thus to a very large extent the question of how the local development programme was worked out in practice concerns the way that local actors encountered and responded to

this problematic social object through encounters which occurred during the implementation of specific schemes and projects operated by the Partnership. Alongside an examination of the efforts of the Partnership to develop formal avenues for community involvement, an understanding of how the Partnership was constituted at local level must pay attention to these encounters. It was for this reason that the final chapters of the study shifted focus in order to address the task of assessing the impact that individual local actors responses to the introduction of the Partnership had on the programme. Thus in the latter part of this study particular attention has been paid to the way in which local actors incorporate local development programmes into their life world.

Chapter ten attempted to develop an understanding of the factors that were likely to shape local attitudes towards the introduction of a new initiative such as the partnership. Attention was given to the socio cultural context which shapes the way in which local actors define the area, its economic situation and their experience in dealing with the state in order to gain an understanding of the knowledge such actors draw on in formulating responses to new initiatives. This examination revealed a considerable gap between the views of state agencies and development organisations and those of local actors. Development professionals and officials employed by state agencies and indeed local community organisations defined the problems facing areas in a particular way. For example W.D.P and members of D.E.W.T, tended to regard the estuary as a tourism resource.

While the local development approach espoused by D.E.W.T and the Partnership envisaged a break with the past, and the importance of developing a “new” rural economy, it was far from the case that all local actors shared these views. Local fishermen for example continue to perceive their relationship with the area in terms of their identity as fishermen. Their responses to the areas problems and the introduction of the Partnership are informed by this fact. They do not depict decline in the fishery as inevitable. Instead they put forward an alternative analysis of the area’s problems which attributes problems in the fishery to outside factors and argues for more measures to support the fishery itself and to directly assist those negatively affected by changes in the fishery as opposed to measures aimed at promoting alternative economic activities. The data examined in chapter ten suggests that local actors formulate specific livelihood strategies based on their own knowledge and experience of living in an area. Their responses to state initiatives such as the Partnership were likely to be informed by a strategic assessment of their significance in respect of these flexible livelihood

strategies. In the case of some of the actors described in chapters ten, eleven and twelve it was quite clear that their response to the efforts of organisations such as the Partnership are informed by their assessment of the potential they had to contribute to the maintenance of these flexible livelihood strategies and not as alternatives to them. Local actors defined the problems facing the area in ways that differed radically from what was suggested in professional development discourse and by extension develop responses to these new initiatives which differ radically from those outlined by such programmes. This has implications for the working out of these initiatives at local level. While organisations such as the Partnership may seek to impose a particular set of ideas concerning the problems facing the area, local actors remain a capacity to contest this version of events, and advance alternative development projects.

An examination of the actual processes that occurred in this area as the Partnership sought to implement its programme, revealed some of the implications of the existence of these diverse perspectives on local development. Development initiatives prompt a very strategic uses of notions of local identity and of local participation as both the staff of organisations and local actors seek to advance their own projects. This highlights the weakness of the Partnerships own claims to have achieved a degree of local consensus about development. In reality this conceals conflicts between groups with radically different ideas about the best use of the areas resources. In some instances conflicting ideas about local identity and forms of local knowledge which had not been a feature of the Partnership's consultation emerged later. Conflicts arose in specific localities as the efforts of actors involved in the Partnership to establish the dominance of one set of meanings concerning that locality threatened the interests of other actors in the area.

Chapter eleven investigated this question further asking how local actors' interest in pursuing specific livelihood strategies shaped the outcome of state interventions and later of course those of the Partnership. The chapter examines how a series of such interventions were incorporated into the lifeworld of local actors. Again the data presented showed how the flexible responses of actors to such programmes were informed by lived experience as they incorporated aspects of local development programmes into their livelihood strategies. In the process the question of power in local development evolves in a new direction. While the staff of development programmes attempt to enrol the locals, they demonstrate a capacity to respond to such endeavours critically. Most local actors displayed little interest in the

question of who controls the Partnership but rather deconstructed policy interventions assessing their implications for and, in some cases, incorporating elements of them into, their livelihood strategies. A feature of this process is that local actor's responses to the range of state agencies they encounter are informed by their cumulative experience in dealing with a range of development interventions. There is no evidence that these actors spend time trying to understand the nuanced distinctions between the aims and objectives of different agencies or the finer points of policy "governance", rather schemes are assessed primarily with respect to their impact on the actors' flexible livelihood strategies. This suggests that at the level of implementation, questions relating to the administration of programmes are considerably less significant than questions of what practical benefits programmes provide. This suggests that the view that process is as important as product in such development programmes is not valid. This also suggests that in conferring a sense of ownership, the Partnership has generally been unsuccessful. Perhaps one of the most disheartening conclusions of this study from the point of view of those who championed the local development approach over traditional forms of state interventions is that local actors made little distinction between them.

Chapter eleven also highlighted the significance of the actions of the local staff of various programmes in shaping the outcomes of these programmes. In this role they too demonstrated a considerable capacity to act autonomously. The response of the staff examined in this study was as strategic as that of their clients. They too stepped outside the formal discourse concerning these programmes developing their own informal responses to the challenges they faced in working in this area. One such response was the use of the "Passage Mentality" as a rationale for justifying their actions in this area. When examined in detail the actual outcome of interventions is the product of the interaction between specific locally situated actors, a joint effort involving the active participation of the staff of the implementing organisation and their clients. However the way in which these actors produce these outcomes and the outcomes themselves vary significantly from those suggested in formal discourse. Again the existence of a parallel process of actions and the re-interpretation of those actions to suggest that they are aligned with the formal discourse appears to be highly significant. Staff members and local actors demonstrate a capacity to re-interpret and adapt elements of development programmes in order to balance the demands of formal discourse with the realities of working with specific actors in specific settings. In the process power is worked out in ways which are somewhat different to what is suggested in formal

discourse. Local responses to development are unpredictable resulting in significant differences between the ways in which the schemes were worked out and the way that formal development policy discourse defines such schemes. Members of the staff who, as local brokers with specific interests of their own to advance, utilise elements of the local development policy discourse selectively to support their own projects, while locals retain the capacity to resist by adapting aspects of these programmes to support their livelihood strategies.

These observations call into doubt some of the central elements of the formal local development discourse most notably the idea that locals will support efforts to address commonly identified problems in a structured way using planning skills and other forms of expertise that it can access through the Partnership. Considerable variation exists in the local responses of both staff and the putative beneficiaries of local development programmes. Rather than simply accepting the ideas outlined in formal discourse actors existing lifeworlds provides the looking glass through which they firstly interpret the new economic threats and opportunities that these programmes presents to them and subsequently formulate responses to them. At the conclusion of chapter eleven it was suggested that rather than attempting to study these schemes with reference to pre-determined ideas about how programmes should operate, a more useful approach would be to ask how such programmes are used by staff and local actors in support of their livelihood strategies.

Chapter twelve concluded this study by expanding the discussion of local responses along the lines outlined above to examine how the staff and clients of the Partnership utilised its principal direct response to the long term unemployed-the A.A.E.S. This scheme was intended to furnish the unemployed with the means of moving from unemployment to sustainable self-employment. In the process they were to be assisted with the planning of the business and with acquiring the skills necessary in order to successfully bring that plan through to fruition. Implicit within A.A.E.S therefore was a specific set of ideas about the causes of the unemployment problem, possible solutions and the role of both the Partnership and its clients in relation to measures intended to address the problem. This approach related entrepreneurial success to enterprise skills and an individual's ability to comply with tax and other regulatory measures. As with other aspects of the local development discourse this narrative incorporated some ideas about the local development process, the role of expert knowledge and the distribution of power in the development process. In particular this

approach cast the local actor as client, in a relatively passive role as recipients of a package of advice and support. In addition a particular aspect of the A.A.E.S was to place emphasis on the client's willingness to comply with the Partnership's guidelines and the regulatory requirements of the revenue commissioners and D.S.W/F.C.SA.

The data presented in chapter twelve suggests that in reality the meaning of the programme was worked out during exchanges between the staff and applicants. In these exchanges both sets of actors adapted the programme to their own interests resulting in the shape the actual programme took varying significantly from the formal model. From the perspective of state agency staff it is clear that the primary value of the programme did not lie in the possibilities that it offered to encourage people to support new enterprises. Instead its merits lay in its ability to provide a mechanism whereby individuals could be encouraged to give up welfare payments and register for tax. Organisations incorporated it into existing patterns of state intervention emphasising its regulatory and disciplining functions over its more creative business development role. Equally the prospective clients' responses differed from those suggested in the programme guidelines. Far from being passive in relation to state unemployment policy local actors strive to incorporate the programme into existing livelihood strategies. As a consequence the A.A.E.S largely became a mechanism to maintain existing livelihood strategies amongst the marginalised rather than replace them. A significant feature of this process was that certain types of activities lent themselves to the scheme. While the programme continued to be described as a measure to support new enterprises a strong argument could be made to support the view that the A.A.E.S was used as a short term expedient to support existing income generating strategies.

An examination of the way in which the A.A.E.S operates, highlights the limitations of conceptualisations of economic activity employed in formal development discourse. This defines such activity as regulated and taxed while simultaneously reducing everything else to the ranks of a nebulous ill defined "informal economy." Yet the observation of the economic behaviour of marginalised groups in the final chapters of this study demonstrates that, even in a supposedly sophisticated economy, actors address their resource needs in a range of ways. The model of economic behaviour which underpins the Partnership overlooks those economic activities which do not fit the formal label. Yet the experience of the A.A.E.S suggests that these marginal and previously unregulated activities offer certain local actors a possible means of improving their economic situation. In their efforts to encourage recipients

to be "good entrepreneurs," development programmes tends to overlook the existence of this possibility. Indeed such activities are regarded negatively in terms of the informal economy or welfare fraud. Self - reliance is to be encouraged only if it occurs within the confines of the approved and regulated economy.

It is interesting that despite its claimed wish to incorporate the views of local actors in responding to local problems, that partnerships devoted little energy to identifying the economic behaviour of its target group. By focussing entirely on a model of economic development that focusses on tax compliance and the question of legitimising informal activities it reveals itself to be more concerned with the imposition of a particular set of ideas about economic activity than with developing measures to enhance the economic wellbeing of its target group. The attempt to impose a model of economic behaviour on the A.A.E.S resulted in some idiosyncratic outcomes. Those actors with innovative projects of the type most closely associated with the A.A.E.S were most likely to fail while the less innovative manual projects enjoyed much greater success. Those who attended start your own business courses were less successful than those that didn't and overall, there appears to be little correlation between the programme's success and the provision of additional technical support. In many cases it appears that the scheme worked best when both the staff and participants took advantage of it to resolve issues which the scheme was not officially intended to address. That is, it worked best when it didn't work the way it was supposed to. Ultimately the Partnership's failure to acknowledge its target group's economic behaviour or to develop an understanding of the mechanisms that people used to make ends meet meant that, at the very least, there was a considerable gap between the Partnership's ideas about local economic development and that of local actors. The research presented here suggests that instead, the Partnership model overlooks the existence of livelihood strategies that have developed over a significant period of time. It is however worth investigating whether, when considered in this light, a short-term measure such as the A.A.E.S, is the most appropriate means of addressing the long-term needs of such a group. The A.A.E.S has a specific set of objectives and a beginning a middle and an end. However the scheme's participants had been involved in a certain form of livelihood maintenance over a long period. A longer term approach that takes a realistic look at the long-term livelihood maintenance strategy of this group and seeks to capitalise on such activities rather than minimise or legitimise them may be of more value to them in the longer term.

13.9 Conclusion

This study has examined how numerous actors located in a variety of sites participate in the collective work of producing a local development programme. Such an approach allows research to trace the evolution of programmes through a range of different arena's, making it possible to gain a more comprehensive overview about how these programmes are shaped. This allows for a more sensitive analysis of how such interventions evolve over time. In particular it allows for a much more sophisticated analysis of power in such programmes as a contingent property of the open ended local development network. By focussing on a range of sites it was suggested we can gain a better understanding of how power is worked out and programmes implemented across complex networks. There are limitations to this approach, most notably because of the varied nature of the access any researcher has to specific sites in time and social space. The approach adopted here is to recognise the existence of these constraints, to accept that examining the full range of sites involves looking at similar events employing the different data available to do so but to produce a narrative which at the very least demonstrates the relationship between these events. The result is a study which is necessarily a general survey. There is also merit to the alternative approach, of focussing on specific events in specific social contexts and there is little doubt that many of the individual issues examined in this study could merit such an examination. However it is argued that while there is a wealth of studies which focus in great detail on specific aspects of development programmes, there is a marked reluctance to join the dots by developing studies that link events in different sites and contribute to the overall question of how development policies work. This study is an attempt to do so.

One of the general observations that emerge out of this research is that properties such as power are simultaneously expressed on large and small scales. This study has sought to explore this question by examining the way in which the collective work of many actors in many sites jointly creates power relations. It is hoped that by demonstrating the value of such research not simply as a means of providing an overview of such programmes but also as a means to investigate the dynamic nature of the interrelationships between events that occur at different points or sites in this network, this research has provided a novel and innovative contribution to the literature on local development and added to the understanding of how such programmes operate.

A key theme in this study is thus the question of power in local development. This is a particularly significant issue in relation to the local development approach. In many instances such programmes relate the problems that are experienced by groups or communities directly to the lack of control that these groups have over the socio-economic decisions that affect their lives. Local development programmes seek to address this by introducing measures which direct resources to “disadvantaged localities. Thus the idea that power imbalances exist, forms the rationale for such programmes and measures to address these imbalances is an important element of the strategy that the local development approach employs. An obvious question in relation to local development is thus the extent to which this approach is able to address these imbalances? Is it the case that local development can empower local people or do, as some critics have argued, such approaches merely re-enforce existing power relations in a way which is ultimately to the detriment of local communities.

This study suggests that neither of these scenarios apply, that in fact power in local development programmes is worked out in much more complex ways, during which actors in a range of sites participate in encounters which collectively contribute to the shape that the programme takes. The study further suggests that much research on local development not only fails to recognise the complexity of power relations in these programmes but, by concentrating on the formal features of such programmes, looks for the answer to these questions in the wrong place. This study suggests that issues concerning power in local development are often worked out in informal settings outside of the formal policy network. This tends to confirm the ideas suggested by Nuitjen (2001, 2003) that organisational forms are the cumulative output of the activities of actors numerous sites in a dynamic network. Within this perspective the question of whether formal elements of local development policies result in either the devolution or retention of power are not as important as the question of how aspects of formal policy discourse are employed by certain actors in exchanges during which the meaning of local development programmes is worked out. A critical feature of this situation therefore concerns the implications of the way in which local development discourse is actually employed in local development.

One of these implications was the ability it gave actors to employ elements of that discourse selectively to provide a justification for certain decisions and actions. Thus for example the manager was able to justify his decision to apply For LEADER II on the basis that this

reflected the wishes of local people. A feature of this process was that it often appears to have resulted in the initiation of a cumulative process. Once a certain narrative, together with the behaviours and projects it supports becomes established in formal discourse, actors responded to this in ways which built a momentum in support of that particular narrative. So for example as we saw the Partnership working towards the LEADER programme the cumulative responses and actions of numerous actors resulted in the selective accumulation of evidence to support the idea that there was support for a certain form of development programme. The darker side of this process is of course, that while it conferred legitimacy on the views of those inside the process, it excludes other voices which may have been opposed. The local development discourse reveals itself to be capable of conferring power on certain local actors at the same time as it excludes others. This is important as a concern with issues of spatial equality and a belief in the merits of local approaches lay at the heart of the rationale underlying local development. It is this which justifies an approach which supports the appointment of local boards. However in the case of Waterford it would appear that the outcome of this process was to consolidate a degree of power in the hands of “the usual suspects”. In this case it is not only the case that the creation of an unelected and partially autonomous local board failed to achieve the objectives for which it was set up. It achieved in many senses the opposite, simultaneously enhancing the position of members of a local elite and providing them with an argument to justify this situation. This demonstrates how local development discourse can provide an important resource in encounters during which such programmes are worked out and also the consequences of conceptual laxity on the outcome of these programmes. The situation in Waterford arose because a local development approach, devised with the intention of addressing the development problems of disadvantaged areas, was applied to larger areas in a blanket fashion. The discourse surrounding these programmes resulted in the case of Waterford, in a perverse situation in which senior members of one of the country’s leading businesses were empowered to participate in local development programmes aimed at tackling disadvantage. Serious questions need to be asked about the validity of the approach and the rigour with which it was applied by researchers and implementers. Either local development programmes are targeted responses to the problems facing specific areas thereby requiring the empowerment of local boards or they are a national programme administering grant aid it cannot and indeed has not succeeded in being both.

A feature of local development programmes mentioned in the previous paragraph and one that seemed to be particularly significant in this study was the ability that certain actors displayed not only to recognise but also to manage the disparity that existed between what happened during the local development project and the way in which such events were depicted in formal discourse. At almost all stages in the local development process it not only appears to be the case that such an anomaly exist but that it is an important feature of the way local development works. The question of who controls development often appears to be related not simply to the ability of certain actors to make use of and control resources including the formal development discourse during critical encounters but also to their ability to manage the relationship between formal discourse and actual events; to manage both project and the pseudo project.

By approaching the question of local development in a novel way which took as its starting point the assumption that we know nothing about local development programmes in advance and that any investigation of how such programmes are worked out should be driven by an interrogation of empirical data. The study has thus addressed a number of questions concerning events in a range of sites in the development policy network. By doing so it is hoped that the study would provide a more meaningful analysis of what actually happens during a development initiative and offer a way of understanding the relationship between events at local level and broader questions of power in development policy. The findings of this study's findings contest certain aspects of the narrative surrounding the emergence of local development suggesting that is not an accurate reflection of how and why these programmes emerged. The introduction of local development was not the paradigm shift it has been portrayed to be. Rather it reflects longstanding policy practices. Which in turn suggest that these programmes did not arise out of a rational policy making process but were rather contingently produced by actors engaged in the policy making arena. Following from this conclusion another observation that can be made is that the introduction of these schemes did not represent a fundamental change in the nature of the State's relationship with communities.

The study also raises questions about the way that concepts of locality and spatial deprivation are employed in Irish local development programmes. In the case examined in this study the local development approach failed completely to recognise the complexity of the locality or demonstrate any causal link between the area itself and the “spatial” problems encountered

there. This is a key issue since it suggests that in reality there is no relationship between the logic employed to justify the local development approach and the programme as implemented. An interesting subsidiary point here, and one which is surely worthy of further examination, is the fact that despite the demonstrably tenuous nature of the links between local development programmes and the some of the ideas which are central to the approach when it was first developed concerning locality, spatial disadvantage and participation. These concepts continue to be employed in discussion of programmes which appear to have shed any practical relation to these ideas. There symbolic value far outlasting their practical usefulness.

Another key finding of this study concerns the assertions made in the local development approach concerning the issue of power and the capacity of local development programmes to bring about a re-organisation of power and control over local decision making. In the case of the Partnership examined in this study the creation of a local board failed to ensure a reallocation of power at the local level. Rather it consolidated the position of members of the local elite. While this may have enhanced the already favourable relationship these individuals enjoyed with the state it did not result in the restructuring of state community relations. Equally the introduction of a local development programme did not succeed in mobilising all the areas people or in enrolling them in support of an agreed set of development objectives. Despite its claims to the contrary local development was not an inclusive process, certain groups and individuals are excluded from the process as others find their position and influence enhanced through participation.

Taken as a whole the process of local development does not succeed in empowering local people rather we see it as a process in which a range of groups compete to control the resources introduced into the area through such programmes. One feature of this process is the role of the staff of local development programmes. Through the control they exercise over implementation and indeed over the interpretation of events in formal discourse they occupy a pivotal role in relation to the working out of these programmes at local level. The findings of this study suggest that in reality staff are active and interested participants who pursue their own projects. While the formal discourse surrounding local development pays little attention to these facts a consideration of the role that the staff's strategies and interest have on the shape that the local development programme takes, is of crucial importance to understanding how these programmes are worked out.

A final finding of this study raises further questions in relation to the implementation of local development programmes this concerns the responses of specific local actors. While local development programmes conceptualises the problems and challenges facing people in certain ways. This study suggests that local actors can and do respond to such programmes in ways which vary considerably from what is envisioned in these programmes. They do so with regard to how they assess the implication of such programmes for their own projects. Regardless of how the local development may be conceptualised by those involved in its design and implementation local actors retain a capacity to deconstruct such schemes and incorporate them into their own livelihood strategies. Seen up close the process of local development ultimately involves processes of negotiation and struggle. During the process of implementation staff and local actors seek to define elements of the local development network in a way that best advances their own projects. However it remains the case that such negotiations take place in a context in which such encounters are re-interpreted in line with the formal local development policy discourse. To a certain extent the way events are worked out between staff and local actors is a function of this duality.

The existence of this duality seems to be central to an understanding of key questions mentioned in this thesis. The success of certain individuals in advancing specific projects rests on their ability to live on both sides of the looking glass. The study highlighted a number of practical consequences of this situation. One, was the emergence within national policy of the local development paradigm. This study identifies a wide divergence between the formal explanations concerning the emergence of the local development paradigm and reality underlying the adoption of local development programmes. A second was the question of local elites and their capacity to secure and maintain control of the board. Part of their success in this respect related to their ability to “manage” the ambiguity that existed between the reality of the programmes implementation and formal discourse relating to these projects. A third was the role this disparity played in the way professional development workers it was shown how during the consultation and also during the implementation of certain programmes they balanced the requirements imposed upon them by the formal policy discourse with the practicalities of working with local groups and individuals. A fourth was the response of local people and in particular the interaction between local and expert knowledge. Local actors demonstrate an ability to deconstruct the new programmes,

evaluating their practical significance and incorporating aspects of the projects into their flexible income strategies.

Power within development works at multiple levels by simply focussing on the formal dimension of such programmes the work done in much local development research fails to provide an adequate picture of how such programmes actually work in practice. A particular feature of the practices that are outlined above is that in almost every instance we see that the ability of actors to advance specific projects is dependent on their ability to adopt strategies that support these projects. In order to do so these actors deconstructed elements of the programme. In a sense they were able to step back through the looking glass in order to evaluate the significance of aspects of the local development programme for their own projects and respond accordingly. Having done so they demonstrated a second and almost equally important, skill this was an ability to go back through the mirror and re-interpret their actions so that they appeared to be in line with and indeed supported by the local development paradigm.

One of the most compelling findings of this research is the power and indeed the durability that the ideas associated with local development approach has in this process. Indeed the advocacy of local development continues to argue for new models of local governance with ambiguous, informal and non-statutory mechanisms for at best partially democratic involvement by a range of actors. Perhaps more insidious is the fact that such approaches bestow the qualities of personhood to corporate entities and communities while denying it to unattached individuals. Not for the first time in history, notions of collective good of the community are employed at the expense of the rights of the individual. The concept of governance enables individuals and bodies to claim the ability to control programmes which involve the allocation of public funds with the broad endorsement of local forces while simultaneously exempting themselves from the obligation for democratic oversight. The idea that policies can induce more beneficial forms of collective behaviour is not a new one, indeed R.M. Titmuss (1997) one of the great advocates of the welfare state based his belief on the merits of social programmes on their capacity of social policy to create conditions that would foster altruism. The particular Hubris of local development lies in the in-built suggestion that such programmes can engineer collective action via an intravenous injection of participative development to the body politic. In the process the local development programmes discussed here have created a range of what Bierschenk et al (2002) define as

brokers who, whatever their motivations, base their claims to a significant role in this process not only on their ability to mediate the relationship between the state and local communities but on their capacity to “deliver” local compliance with specific state approved forms of “local” action through the new-fangled magic of governance. The further investigation of this issue is surely a topic of vital significance which merits further research and again it is clear that research concerning this issue should involve the type of in-depth focus on actors outlined in this study.

I began this chapter with a reference to the Looking Glass I thought that it might again be fitting to borrow a “fairy tale ending”. In this respect the data provides a range of options. There are echoes of Cinderella in the rags to riches tale of the emergence of the local development; the enthusiastic promotion of specific development programmes carries the hint of magic beans. Above all however the way in which power and ultimately resources were allocated in the events described in this study gives a very strong impression that not only were some people eating porridge and sitting in chairs that didn’t belong to them, but they also took possession of the cottage and evicted the rightful owners.

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