Ireland At Another Turning Point

Reviving Development, Reforming Institutions and Liberating Capabilities

FuturesIreland

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Table of Contents

1 Introduction and Findings

It is widely accepted that Ireland must progressively move to an innovation-driven stage of economic and social development. To achieve and sustain this requires not only specialisation in knowledge-intensive industry and services, but the creation of a 'learning society'. The Irish Information Society Commission argued that a learning society is one in which there is a widespread ability to find new solutions, deal with uncertainty and ambiguity, learn continuously from experimentation and turn technological possibilities into enduring prosperity and well-being (ISC 2005). The FuturesIreland project examined the challenge of enhancing Ireland's ability to innovate, learn from experiments and pilot initiatives, and turn learning into continuous improvement. To explore these challenges, we worked over 18 months with a large group of practical innovators and a smaller group of high-level leaders and thinkers.

The central argument of this report is that Irish people—in business, society and public service—are ready for much greater innovation, more widespread learning and richer accountability; but the capabilities and practices that support these are inhibited by features of our organisational system. This argument has significant implications for how we address the current acute crisis and how we lay the foundations for future prosperity and social cohesion. As in the 1950s and 1980s, Ireland is once again at a turning point. While there are, of course, reasons to fear that we are moving to a more uncertain and less benign context—economically, socially and in public policy—our central argument lends support to a more positive view of the turning point we are in and the transition we might experience.

This perspective on Ireland's ability to create a learning society is derived from the four main findings of the project. Here we explain these findings in a little more detail. Fuller evidence and argument in support of them is presented in later chapters.

FINDING 1
New forms of cross-fertilisation between the economy, society and public governance are increasingly evident, enhancing the ability to learn and innovate;

FINDING 2
Innovation and learning are systematic, almost always combining initiative, disciplined review and a willingness to confront challenges at three levels— institutional, inter-personal and personal;

FINDING 3
Systematic review provides the basis for both innovation and accountability, which is particularly relevant in a period when we seek more stability and accountability and yet face radical change;

FINDING 4
The kind of innovation and learning we have found cannot flourish, and cannot yield their full harvest, without profound change to our organisational systems, particularly our systems of control and accountability.

Overview of the Findings

These findings are based on evidence gathered from 183 innovators from business, social and cultural organisations and the public service. One-hundred and eighty three people told their story in the course of the project. In order to give the reader a flavour of the kind of innovation reported and discussed in the project Box 1.1 (on page 12) provides a very brief sketch of about 20 of the stories. As a glance down that Box shows; they included a doctor, planners, a lecturer, business people, parents, care workers, community volunteers, environmentalists, a GAA club, a lawyer, migrants and a social entrepreneur. The stories from all 183 people have been transcribed and all have been considered in the development of this report. The report explicitly refers to around 40 cases to provide a flavour of what we heard. Appendix 1 names all of the people who contributed.

The evidence we have heard shows people from all sectors of Irish life innovating in practical ways and solving problems despite numerous difficulties. The breadth of evidence heard demonstrates that operating in this manner is possible within many different sectors. In summarising the evidence, we illustrate that common assumptions—about the flexible business world versus the rigid public sector, or rigorous public organisations versus flaky NGOs—are confounded. There were exemplar cases in business and industry, but also among people working in education, health, planning and the arts.

FINDING 1

New forms of cross-fertilisation between the economy, society and public governance are increasingly evident, enhancing the ability to learn and innovate;

It has long been recognised that there was an interaction between the spheres of economy, society and public governance. Our work in this project suggests that the nature of this interaction is changing significantly. In particular, the interaction increasingly takes the form of what we call cross-fertilisation.

In listening to people who have undertaken innovative projects in business, social organisations and the public sector we were struck by the degree to which they learned from each other. Ideas, practices and methods, invented in one sphere, are frequently adopted in other spheres in order to address difficult problems. Not only are ideas and practices borrowed, but people and organisations in other spheres are found and drawn in as partners. They often hold some of the knowledge, expertise or influence necessary to make a project work. A second aspect of cross-fertilisation was also evident in the innovative activities we studied. It is very common to find close attention to the way organisational, inter-personal and individual factors interact. Efforts to make sure that capabilities and practices at these three levels are aligned can be seen as a second aspect of cross-fertilisation—although we discuss it at greater length under our second finding.

Cross-fertilisation seems likely to be more pronounced in the future. To see the wider meaning of this, consider the way in which the relation between Ireland's economy, society and government was traditionally understood. Society, including families and the church, was responsible for the formation of individuals and the creation of norms which stabilised social life. The individuals formed in society were available to the economy as workers and managers. The state provided overall order and supplied a number distinct things to both society and the economy. Although these three were interdependent, their spheres of operation were well defined and their modes of operation were quite distinct. Given the profound problems of the Irish economy and society in earlier decades, and the failure of the state to create a framework for economic development, this earlier form of interaction might even be labelled co-dependence.

The work in the FuturesIreland project—and wider developments in social science and thinking—shows that all this is changing profoundly. Individuals are no longer shaped in society and available fully-formed for use in the economy. Participation in an ever-changing economy is an important source of both individual development and social integration. Firms are, of course, dependent on the capabilities and character of the people that come to work in them, but they also play a big role in shaping those capabilities and character. Social organisations, once providers of residual services to passive and needy recipients, now interact with their clients in jointly defining their needs and the services which might meet those needs. While social organisations were once organised on entirely distinct principles, they now actively learn from what leading firms do. Indeed, at times they actively teach public sector organisations how to tailor service to changing and diverse social needs. While public bodies must still

comply with core systems of democratic and financial accountability, a large part of their work is conducted in deep interaction with social organisations and enterprises. The boundary between the public and the private is much less sharply defined, as many quasi-public and publicly-funded functions are undertaken by both private entities and associations. Many of the distinctions and differences traditionally drawn between public sector bodies, NGOs and business, are less pronounced that in the past.

We strongly believe that the the context for future decision making will be one in which there will be even greater cross-fertilisation between society, wealth-creation and public governance.

Innovation and learning are systematic, almost always combining initiative, disciplined review and a willingness to confront challenges at three levels—institutional, inter-personal and personal;

While every innovation and piece of learning has a unique element, our evidence suggests that far from being idiosyncratic or random, innovation and learning have definite systematic characteristics. In the many cases considered in the FuturesIreland project, from quite diverse contexts, a remarkable pattern became apparent. In Chapter 3, where we present the bulk of the evidence, we show that innovation and learning almost always involve three basic stages: getting started on a troublesome problem, reviewing experience in a disciplined way and confronting challenges at three levels.

While the need to get started is obvious, in one sense, where innovation is occurring in a context of uncertainty and ambiguity it takes on an additional meaning: taking initial steps without a sure solution to the problem at hand, sometimes without a sure sense of how the problem should be understood.

An outstanding feature of the many people who provided evidence to our project is their commitment to review and learning. Some used well-known methods of monitoring and review, while others invented tailor-made approaches. Some have embedded review in the formal procedures of their organisations, others are only beginning to consider how this might be done and its implications. But a striking commonality of those that achieved real innovation and learning was the practice of continuous monitoring of their basic activities, not just cost-benefit analysis and retrospective external evaluation of whole projects, policies or organisations.

The final systematic feature in the evidence we heard is the willingness to confront the challenges identified in monitoring and review. In telling the story of their acheivements, the innovators frequently made reference not only to challenges to the institution or organisation they worked in, but also to the nature and quality of inter-personal and professional relations, and to challenges of self-knowledge, self-development and personal or professional identity. These accounts of relatively successful innovation in business, public organisations and NGOs suggest that this requires particular institutional/ organisational arrangements, effective inter-personal routines and disciplines, but also individual capabilities and dispositions that make people comfortable

with monitoring and review and the associated change and ambiguity. Conversely, in stories of failure and frustration, lack of a productive relation between capabilities at these three levels was commonly described.

FINDING 3

Systematic review provides the basis for both innovation and accountability, which is particularly relevant in a period when we seek more stability and accountability and yet face radical change;

In Ireland now there is immense anxiety about accountability and how it can be improved. There is also considerable pressure on individuals and organisations to be more innovative. The evidence, collected in the FuturesIreland project, suggests that systematic review can underpin both innovation and accountability.

Systematic review refers to a range of techniques and processes that are used by innovators to link what they do with ways of improving and changing what they do. Innovation, in the evidence we have gathered, is rarely separated from performance and efforts to continuously improve. Innovators use a range of techniques—such as continuous improvement, quality frameworks and various customised processes—to ensure that they learn from what they do on an incremental and continuous basis.

The evidence shows that this kind of continuous review and monitoring can underpin both innovation and accountability by linking them. First, it can provide a way of supporting the innovator's efforts to learn which new practices are working and which are not. The examples, in chapter 3 show that in the face of uncertainty innovators break policies and procedures down into a series of manageable steps and subject them to review. They learn from this and formulate next steps which underpin innovation. The steps include new services and new products.

Second, this kind of review can underpin accountability. It can make matters more transparent and in this sense it can be productive for both those solving problems, network partners and those charged with evaluating work.

This combination of innovation and accountability means that change is not necessarily in conflict with a degree of stability and order. In fact, for many innovators creativity and innovation emerges from within a fairly ordered and systematic process of quite disciplined review. They also use this process of review to be accountable to authorities.

Evidence that systematic review provides the basis for both innovation and accountability undermines the traditional assumption that these two are inevitably in conflict and that, consequently, we must always choose which we want to prioritise.

Many of those working with metrics and data have created a means to turn the tools of compliance into tools for diagnosis. Others have persuaded those in authority that tools of diagnosis can be tools for compliance. This is important, as it suggests that what is required to achieve this capacity for incremental learning may be not be a radical system change; it may be more a way helping those in the system to find ways to 'tilt the mirror.' By this we mean helping participants to look at evaluation differently so that existing data and monitoring tools might be used more to support learning and compliance. And that existing diagnostic monitoring might be made more useful for the systems' needs for compliance.

In current circumstances, it is important to see that improvement based on continuous review is not confined to periods of stability and certainty; it is often prompted by crisis and uncertainty and can be part of the resolution of crisis. Consequently, this powerful capability may have particular salience in Ireland's current crisis as we discuss in our closing chapter.

FINDING 4

The kind of innovation and learning we have found cannot flourish, and cannot yield their full harvest, without profound change to our organisational systems, particularly our systems of control and accountability in the public sector;

When we explored the policy implications of these findings with a group of high-level actors we reached our only negative finding: the innovation and learning we have found cannot flourish, and cannot yield their full harvest, without profound change to our organisational system, particularly our public systems of control and accountability.

Many of those who reported achievements in innovation and learning also described constraints that hindered them in extending their success. In a high proportion of those cases, these constraints derived from existing systems of public sector control, organisation and accountability.

Reflecting on this evidence, members of our high-level Advisory Panel, discussed the need for the policy centre to redefine its role: from 'command and control' to 'leadership with delegation'. The evidence suggests that relations between the policy centre and local delivery could be reconfigured in ways that yield more tailoring of solutions to problems, more learning and more real accountability. This would require public organisations—at both 'centre' and 'delivery' level—to pay far greater attention to finding a more productive relation between organisational design, inter-personal relations in work teams and careers and professional identities. Such a system would neither be centralised nor decentralised, as conventionally understood, since the centre remains both important and powerful. Indeed, it is possible that better systems of local review and learning could help in recasting the organisational structures.

Certainly, the evidence strongly suggests that local learning can help recast over-arching policies and programmes. This is precisely what many of the organisations in the Consultative Panel have done—some completely revising how they fulfil their mission. The review and revision of programmes and policy would seem to be an important and relevant factor in thinking about the shape of the higher-level policy organisations that determine the policy framework and the allocation of resources.

Their experiences suggest that significant and very fundamental reform is required. We discuss this finding and its implications in Chapter 4.

Box 1.1 FuturesIreland: An Introduction to Some of the Stories Collected

1. An individual tackled absenteeism in a hospital by relying on the Swedish 3-3 model which encourages units to pool their resources so a full-time service can be provided on a part-time basis. Deploying this model allowed people to achieve a greater balance between professional and personal commitments and led to significant drop in sick leave.

2. An individual was concerned about customising public services around the real needs of people. He spoke of how lifestyle illnesses are not resolvable through a hierarchical doctor-patient relationship. Instead, patients were encouraged to talk about their lives to see how issues such as obesity could be curtailed without imposing something alien on people. People liked to socialise, so dog-walking clubs were formed that gave people the opportunity to exercise and socialise.

3. A Planning Authority which introduced an early warning system to enable issues to be spotted and addressed much earlier than in the traditional approach to planning. This included surveys among those interested in the development, the appointment of a community worker and the establishment of monthly forum to track progress.

4. A regional institute of technology increased the numbers of part-time students from 200 in 2003 to 2000 today. It followed a review of what they were doing with non-standard students and the conclusion that the institute was not interested in lifelong learning and needed to be changed.

5. A training centre for teenage parents who had dropped out of school was established. Thanks to its having a crèche, they managed to entice many young people back into education as well as teaching them vital parenting skills.

6. A local Irish subsidiary of a multinational company (MNC) developed a shared services centre for financial processing which provided overall cost savings for the MNC. Other services have now been added which has further embedded the site within the MNC.

7. A Vocational Educational Committee developed a training programme for staff in the health service that eventually involved 56 modules and 3000 people. Every person was involved in a stage of pre-learning assessment that involved tailoring the programme around their needs. Delivery involved a great deal of co-operation across disciplines and organisations.

8. An individual working for an American computer hardware realised the vulnerability of its Irish subsidiary, mainly because the low educational profile of its workforce made it vulnerable to cost-cutting or relocation. Despite efforts to strengthen people's capacities, the company closed but many individuals capitalised on their knowledge by forming a Technology Centre that has now many productive spin-offs thanks to some helpful intervention from state bodies.

9. A Chief Planner who developed a vision to bring about the regeneration of a major urban suburb. The approach adopted addressed the concerns of local retailers and built trust and confidence with them. This allowed the re-generation to include a programme designed to give employment opportunities to young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

10. A participant described the establishment of a Local Development Company in Waterford. This has adopted an integrated and innovative approach to the issue of regenerating a rural community. This includes the creation of an 'inventor's village' which provides space for and support for people with ideas for how to improve the wealth creating capacity of the community.

11. An individual established a green-schools initiative whereby she organises children to help clean up refuse in towns that are prominent in litter surveys. Children show up with their parents over a weekend and they all help to reduce the level of litter in their area.

12. A GAA club in Dublin agreed with a nearby university that its facilities could be used for training and matches. In return, students from the university provided tutorials for local children studying for Junior and Leaving Cert. The result was a significant improvement in the academic scores in the local area.

13. A Community Law Centre was established as many issues were not being resolved through the formal legal system. A number of citizens were trained in mediation skills, with the assistance of churches, local community groups and gardaí. A number of cases have been resolved thanks to this new resource.

14. A planner helped to revitalise a town by engaging with retailers. He persuaded them to upgrade their premises, sourced EU funding for pedestrianisation, and diverted regeneration funds to train young people, many of whom then obtained jobs in the local shops.

15. One individual developed a series of initiatives to raise standards in the area of childcare. She produced a DVD of Best Practice and an accompanying training manual. She then developed an accredited module in this subject which is now delivered throughout Ireland. She subsequently wrote a Code of Professional Practice for this sector.

16. People were concerned that the teaching profession was becoming dominated by people from the middle-classes so that pupils from deprived areas might lack role models. With the support of the HEA and colleges, people who might not fit the profile of a teacher in terms of background or educational achievement were encouraged to apply and sixty people have been placed so far.

17. To welcome the then accession states into the EU, an individual organised street markets in many towns in Ireland, gaining commitments from thirty-two embassies and local authorities. Each county was pared with an individual member-state which contributed something of its distinctive culture to mark the occasion on a 'Day of Welcomes'.

18. A group called the African Women's Network was formed to help migrants overcome barriers in the labour market. Training was provided on how to access the labour market and communication was developed with employers to help them overcome any reservations they might have about employing recent migrants.

19. An individual was concerned that music was being displaced from the school curriculum for a variety of reasons. So she linked up with professional musicians who would provide an hour's free tuition in a school. A rental scheme for musical instruments was also introduced. Thanks to this, attendance went up from 75 per cent to over 90 on the days music was being taught.

20. A migrant to Ireland started an organisation in Ireland called the New Communities Partnership to facilitate people facing barriers in gaining employment that was commensurate with their qualifications. Membership comprises of people from fifty different nations and the partnership has various bodies thinking on integration such Dublin City Council and the GAA.

21. An individual within North Dublin was concerned about the disappearance of jobs in industrial manufacturing and devised an accelerated training program to position people within a skilled career. The individual liaised with employers and a state training agency to deliver the kind of training companies wanted.

2

The FuturesIreland Project

2.1 Introduction

The FuturesIreland project was a foresight exercise designed to examine the conditions that would support Ireland's transition to a learning society. The project was undertaken by the National Economic and Social Development Office, at the request of the Department of the Taoiseach. Section 2.2 examines the origins of the project. Section 2.3 looks at its focus relative to other futures and foresight work in Ireland. Section 2.4 provides an overview of the process of inquiry, analysis and discussion used in the project. Finally, Section 2.5 describes an analytical framework that was developed in the project, as this helps to structure our presentation of evidence and analysis in Chapter 3 to 5.

2.2 Origins of the Project

The project had its origin in the final report of the Information Society Commission (ISC). In that report the Commission proposed that, following its work on information technology, a wider foresight exercise on the 'knowledge society' be undertaken. It identified a number of factors that should inform such an exercise and a number of themes that might be explored. These are summarised in Box 2.1. In the 2006 national agreement, *Towards 2016*, government stated that a knowledge society foresight initiative, focusing on Ireland's advance to the innovation-driven stage of socio-economic development, would be undertaken by the National Economic and Social Development Office (NESDO). NESDO began work on this in 2007.

Box 2.1 Shaping the Knowledge Foresight Exercise: Information Society Commission

The Information Society Commission made a number of suggestions on factors which should be taken into account or explored in wider knowledge society foresight exercise. These included:

- **Adopt a holistic perspective**: The need for a small country like Ireland to view its role in a holistic way, and to take the longer-term perspective necessary to mobilize and concentrate resources effectively around a sustainable path of development.

- **Focus on the capacity to deal with uncertainty**: Referring to the work of the German sociologist Ulrich Beck, it suggested that people and organisations in the twenty-first century will increasingly require the capacity and confidence to navigate an environment characterised by ambiguity, uncertainty, unpredictability and unreliability.

- **Find new or novel solutions**: It argued that many of the more complex issues presented by the digital era can be understood as problem situations for which solutions lie largely outside current ways of operating.

- **Learn continuously**: The ISC argued that the challenges the digital era the development of new know-how, and new models of organisation and ways of learning. It noted that thriving in a changing environment demands experimentation, learning about what is effective, and dispensing with the expendable.

- **Develop full potential**: The report pointed to the broader societal implications associated with the digital era and information technology and the need to develop the full potential of our human resources as the crucial issue.

- **Support user-centred learning**: It suggested that the challenge of bringing about the comprehensive availability of personalised (or user-centred) lifelong learning opportunities is one that will require new ways of thinking and operating, system-wide innovation, and a wider acceptance of responsibility by all stakeholders.

- **Capture the changing network relationship between Government, society and economy**: Government and citizens are increasingly operating in a network society in which they are becoming more and more equal and in which the strength of government is determined by the delivery of quality and by the joint creation and sharing of policy. Indeed policy can be said to be a coproduction" (Ref).

SOURCE:
Derived from Learning to Innovate – Repercieving the Global Information Society, pp. 54-55, Information Society Commission, 2005.

2.3 The Distinctive Focus of the FuturesIreland Project

A significant number of 'futures' studies have taken place in Ireland over the last 10 years. Some of these are listed in Box 2.2. Most such studies identify existing and possible trends and drivers of change and then use these to generate a number of scenarios. The scenarios shape debate among a range of stakeholders about future possibilities and policy challenges. A notable feature of many futures studies is that, while they identify three or four scenarios, they conclude by observing that the actual outcome—and whether it is a good or bad one for Ireland—will depend on how business, the state and society interact. Asking for example: will business be able to draw on individual and collective capabilities formed in society and the public education system? Will both business and society be able to rely on the public system to provide order, high-quality infrastructure, good regulation and responsive policy? Will the democratic and administrative system find individuals, social groups and economic interests willing to participate and cooperate in making public choices and producing public goods? The studies finish, therefore by noting the important connections between business, the state and society, but were not or are not in a position to explore them to any great degree.

Box 2.2 Foresight Work In Ireland

A number of futures studies have been undertaken in recent years. These studies provide insight into key trends and drivers of change:

- Shaping Our Future: Ireland 2025 (Forfás, 2009)

- Public Service 2022 (IPA, 2008)

- Scenarios for Ireland 2030 (DIT Futures Academy, 2008)

- Marine Foresight Exercise (Marine Institute, 2006)

- Imagineering Ireland: Future Scenarios for 2030 (DIT Futures Academy, 2005)

- Rural Ireland 2025 (Teagasc, UCD & NUI Maynooth, 2005)

- Engineering a Knowledge Island 2020 (Engineers Ireland, 2005)

- Borders, Midland and Western Regional Foresight 2025 (BMW Regional Assembly, 2005)

- Dublin City Foresight 2015 (DIT Futures Academy, 2003)

- Technology Foresight (Forfás, 1999).

Some of these studies have led to important policy decisions. In particular, the Knowledge Society Foresight, undertaken by Forfas in 1999, led to the creation of Science Foundation Ireland, which has been a conduit for dramatically increased funding for scientific research in Irish third level institutions

Rather than replicate existing futures work, this project sought to build on and complement these studies in four ways.

A. Rather than focus on the direction of particular trends and drivers, it focused explicitly on how people and organisations respond to change and uncertainty. In particular, the project focused on innovation and learning and how they occur in the context of uncertainty and ambiguity;

B. It focused on the interaction between wealth creation, society and public governance.

Two other, methodological, features also distinguished this project from existing futures and scenarios work:

C. Network thinking and analysis were used, reflecting our sense that networks are increasingly prevalent in efforts to address new and complex problems in a context of uncertainty and ambiguity;

D. It was decided to base much of the work on people's experience of innovation and learning in Ireland. This reflected our belief that experience of problem solving and innovation, and of the challenges involved, would help reveal the conditions of learning. The idea is that cutting-edge existing practices can provide what futures analysts call 'weak signals' of patterns that may become widespread in future years and decades. This approach is based on the belief that, in many respects, the future is here already in the practices and patterns of those actors most attuned to emerging possibilities.

This overall approach reflected an intuition that the way we typically describe the challenges facing Ireland's public governance—and maybe even the way they are analysed and understood—might be refreshed and reframed by taking more account of what is happening in society and business.

2.4   Organisation and Process

In order to explore these questions we created two key groups and consulted a number of individuals.

National Advisory Panel The 23-member Advisory Panel consisted of high-level actors and leaders drawn from across the Irish economy, society and the public sector. It was chaired by Peter Cassells, Chairman of the National Centre for Partnership and Performance (NCPP) and former General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Reflecting its composition, it focused on the national dimension of the work and possible implications for national policy and development. On several occasions, it discussed the evidence generated in the Consultative Panel and the ideas emerging from the work of the international experts. The membership of the Advisory Panel is shown in Appendix 1.

The Consultative Panel The 183 members of the Consultative Panel were chosen because of their track-record and creative ideas about life and work in Ireland. They were selected from all areas of Irish society: business and technology, education, health, environment, community groups, the arts and young people. Members of the Advisory Panel helped to identify innovative actors who might participate and others were identified through desk-research. Each of the 183 people on the Consultative Panel contributed three days to the project. Paula Carey, a consultant with Learning Networks, coordinated and managed the work with the Consultative Panel.

International Experts Four international experts worked on the project at various times. Dr Riel Miller is an economist who works as an independent consultant of futures and scenarios studies. In his years at the OECD, he pioneered that body's futures work. He assisted us in the design of the project. Professor Carlota Perez, of the Judge Business School in Cambridge University, and Professor Yochai Benkler, of Harvard Law School, advised the project team on technological trends and the associated changes in organisation, regulation and public policy. Professor Perez's contribution included a public lecture in April 2007, held in TCD, and a workshop with the project team and a number of members of the Advisory Panel. The fourth international contributor was Professors Charles Sabel, of Columbia Law School. He advised us on the design of our third round of inquiry with the Consultative Panel (described below) and participated in the four days of data gathering, discussion and analysis. The work with the international experts was chaired by Dr. Maureen Gaffney, Chair of the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF), and a member of the Board of the HSE.

2.4.1 Working with the Advisory Panel, Consultative Panel and International Experts

This section provides a brief account of our process of inquiry, shaped by the interaction between the Advisory Panel, the Consultative Panel and the international experts.

In its early meetings the Advisory Panel identified a range of economic, social, cultural and political challenges likely to confront Ireland in the years ahead. It highlighted the need to both draw on past Irish experience of managing change and to develop new thinking to cope with greater levels of complexity and ambiguity. Among these was the need to combine democratic decision making and accountability with effective governance of complex policy spheres and services in which expertise is a key factor. Members suggested that Ireland was at a turning point, moving from a familiar economic, social and policy context to a much more uncertain, and possibly less benign, combination of economic, social and political factors. In our final chapter we discuss the idea that Ireland is at a turning point and consider what the findings of the project imply for our understanding of the crisis and likely turning point.

In the first round of work with the Consultative Panel, in December 2007 and January 2008, we asked participants to describe in detail their experience of innovating and achieving change in an uncertain environment. The approach was based on an appreciative enquiry technique (Elliot 1999). The discussion took place in small groups that were professionally facilitated. While we draw on this evidence extensively in later chapters, two features are important in understanding our work process. First, in telling their stories, the participants in the Consultative Panel frequently made reference not only to the institutional or organisational context in which they worked, but also to the nature and quality of inter-personal and professional relations, and to 'self-knowledge', 'self-development' and personal identity. Second, in many of the cases reported, innovation and problem solving involved seeking alliances, resources and ideas from individuals and organisations in surprisingly different spheres of work. These two features of the early evidence led the NESDO secretariat, at the next meeting of the Advisory Panel, to propose an analytical framework, which we describe in greater detail later in this section.

In the second round of work, the members of the Consultative Panel were asked, first, to describe their connections and networks in greater detail and, second, to imagine how Ireland might be different in 2030. Participants were set the challenge of thinking about three particular aspects of an imaginary Ireland in 2030: health and well-being, enterprise and wealth creation, and education and learning. To support this, a case study was created based loosely on the proposed Grangegorman regeneration project in Dublin. The result was a picture of Ireland in 2030 which emphasised prosperity more centred on quality of life and well-being, widely available information technology more local decision making, new forms of community involvement, preventative medicine, tailored services available to all who need them, and experiential learning. It was notable that this vision of a desirable future differed little from that envisaged by the members of the Advisory Panel.

But the evidence gathered revealed a major disjuncture—between the widespread disposition to be flexible and to learn from experience, on the one hand, and the near despair about the limits of learning in our collective endeavours, on the other. Indeed, this disjuncture was a thread that ran through much of the evidence heard in the Consultative Panel and became a central subject of discussion in the Advisory Panel, as we discuss below.

In May 2008 that panel discussed this disjuncture and explored in some detail what it would look like to have a system that, on the one hand, allowed actors working in a concrete contexts to identify opportunities and threats and, at the same time, had a way of learning from, and generalising, what actors close to problems are doing. Drawing on their extensive experience at high levels in business, public policy and administration, social organisations, the arts and academic life, the members of the Advisory Panel acknowledged the limits of traditional command and control, but also that alternatives are poorly defined. They emphasised the need to think deeply about the nature of leadership, better forms of accountability and real responsibility. The members also discussed the importance of emotional competency and the personal motivations behind decisions.

In order for senior actors to work out a new approach at the 'centre' they required a clearer view on what is needed to achieve more learning and innovation at 'local' level. Higher levels of innovation and learning seem to require greater discretion and flexibility at the level of delivery and implementation. They also seem to be associated with an anxiety about how to ensure compliance with legitimate standards and resource constraints. Much discussion of how to balance the requirement for discretion with the need for compliance proceeds from the top down: beginning with high level policy and accountability, moving to organisational structuring and, finally, considering local delivery and learning. For a number of reasons, the NESDO Secretariat proposed that we should work in reverse order: explore first and foremost what local innovation and learning look like in business, society and the public system, only then considering what this might imply for organisational structures and accountability, and touching only lightly on implications for broader policy, participation and democratic legitimacy.

This led the Advisory Panel to discuss the challenge of quality, standards and accountability in systems that might empower local decision making and learning. A recurring theme was how local learning and experimentation might be made accountable to others. For this reason, the Secretariat decided that learning and accountability—and the related sets of routines, arrangements, norms and practices—would be the central focus of inquiry in the third round of the Consultative Panel meetings.

Given these orientations, our approach was to design a set of instruments and a procedure which would gather evidence to throw light on the subject of innovation and learning in the context of ambiguity, which was at the heart of the project. In designing the third day of Consultative Panel work, we were guided by the questions posed by members of the Advisory Panel and recent international thinking and evidence on learning and the settings which support it. Important bodies of research in business, public administration, regulation, law, European integration and economic development draw attention to new approaches in which organisations of diverse kinds handle the limitations of their own knowledge and their need to cooperate with others in contexts of pervasive ambiguity (Gunningham, Grabosky and Sinclair 1998; Sabel 2004; Power 2007; Sabel and Zeitlin 2008).

The aspect of this work that was of most immediate relevance in designing our work with the Consultative Panel was the distinction between 'compliance monitoring' and 'diagnostic monitoring' (see Box 2.3). Professor Charles Sabel, of Columbia Law School, worked closely with the Secretariat to develop the questions and also participated in the four days work during the third round meeting of the Consultative Panel.

Box 2.3 Compliance Monitoring and Diagnostic Monitoring

With compliance monitoring it is assumed, by an individual or an organisation that a good understanding of the process exists and that, if properly executed, it will produce the desired goal. It is also assumed that this goal actually serves the purpose to which it is dedicated. Under those circumstances monitoring occurs by checking what is expected at each step in the process, and ensuring people do what their instructions prescribe. Typically, an incentive system is created that rewards people for fulfilling their instructions and penalises them from deviating from it. Hence the term compliance monitoring.

Diagnostic monitoring is used when there is less certainty about the process by which to achieve outcomes and/or when even the eventual outcomes are not always clear at the beginning of a project. It requires monitoring on an ongoing basis to ensure that review and learning, which can be described and demonstrated, are a constant feature of what people at a local service delivery level do. This form of diagnostic monitoring and review is increasingly prevalent. Business firms have found that they cannot ensure quality and safety purely by writing rules; instead they insert quality and safety in the design of products and processes and monitor closely their achievements and failures in each phase of production and marketing. As a result business makes extensive use of range of tools that support diagnostic monitoring— benchmarking, simultaneous engineering, six sigma and lean manufacturing, back to basics reviews, stage gates. These tools in various ways allow business to probe for the root cause of what works and does not work, both in the context of existing processes and new products, services or process development.

In simultaneous engineering, all parts of a new design are discussed concurrently so that the connections between the parts are adequately understood and changes made to one part are immediately examined for their affect on others. In problem solving a technique called *5 whys* is often employed to understand or diagnose the underlying causes of failure of underperformance. For example:

— *Why* is machine A broken?
  Because no preventative maintenance was performed.

— *Why* was the maintenance crew derelict?
  Because it is always repairing machine B.

— *Why* is machine B always broken?
  Because the part it machines always jams.

— *Why* does the jam recur?
  Because the part warps from heat stress.

— *Why* does the part overheat?
  There is a design flaw in this part.

To fix the broken machine it is necessary to redesign the part in another part of the factory, so that the repair people will be able to allocate their time in a way that allows them to perform the preventive maintenance necessary to keep the system going. It would have been impossible to have anticipated this, even with considerable engineering expertise. It is likely that more than one person would be necessary to solve this problem— to get to the root cause. It might, for example, require a team that searches through the possible explanations.

The members of the Consultative Panel were asked to describe approaches to review, monitoring, diagnosis and learning that they had used or seen in the course of their work. We asked whether existing systems of review and evaluation were sometimes used as a means to avoid or delay action. Finally, we posed a number of questions about the capabilities, roles and responsibilities involved in their approach to review, distinguishing between organisational, inter-personal and intra-personal levels. The evidence gathered in the three rounds of work with the Consultative Panel is reported and discussed in Chapter 3.

2.5 Mapping and Discussing the Evidence

As noted above, a key way in which the FuturesIreland project sought to add value was by exploring ways in which three spheres—public governance, wealth creation and society—interact, since this is identified as critical in existing futures studies. The work with the members of the Consultative Panel highlighted a second dimension, namely the interplay between personal experience and identity, inter-personal relations and institutions in creating the context for innovation and learning.

In order to explore these two dimensions we adopted a framework, represented in Figure 2.1. This provided a useful way to catalogue, discuss and analyse the stories told by the participants.

Figure 2.1 Framework for Mapping and Discussing the Evidence

	Social Integration and Creation	Public Governance	Business/ Wealth Creation
Institutional			
Inter-personal			
Intra-personal			

Although the visual presentation of the analytical framework distinguishes between societal factors, public governance and wealth creation, we do not think of them as separate spheres. There is a significant sense in which markets and parts of public governance and are embedded in society (Granovetter, 1985). As the project proceeded we became increasingly interested in the nature of the interaction between the three spheres—a form of interaction that we labelled cross-fertilisation. The lines between the spheres are deliberately broken in order to focus attention on what flows between them. In the diagram public governance is placed in the centre of framework, reflecting our interest, noted above, in exploring whether changes in society and business can help us rethink the challenges facing public governance.

On the vertical scale the identification of three levels—institutional, inter-personal and intra-personal—reflects the content of the stories told within the Consultative Panel. Almost invariably, the stories of innovation included reference to personal factors (e.g. passion, self belief and self-understanding), inter-personal factors (e.g. relationships and contacts) and institutional factors (e.g. willingness to challenge accepted routines, norms or practices). Indeed, in many of the stories the dynamic combination of capabilities at these three levels—and between social patterns, public governance and value creation—was cited as critical in achieving innovation and learning. In addition, where these connections are absent, or ineffective, this often emerged as a key factor inhibiting innovation and learning.

3

Innovation and Learning in Economy, Society and Public Governance

3.1   Introduction

We asserted in Chapter 1 that new forms of engagement, innovation, problem solving, learning and accountability are possible in Ireland in the coming years. We base this on three of our findings:

FINDING 1
New forms of cross-fertilisation between the economy, society and public governance are increasingly evident, enhancing the ability to learn and innovate;

FINDING 2
Innovation and learning are systematic, almost always combining initiative, disciplined review and a willingness to confront challenges at three levels—institutional, inter-personal and personal; and

FINDING 3
Systematic review provides the basis for both innovation and accountability, which is particularly relevant in a period when we seek more stability and accountability and yet face radical change.

This chapter presents supporting evidence for these three findings. We begin by sketching the relationship between these three findings in Figure 3.1. In summary, increasing cross-fertilisation is the context in which much innovation and learning is occurring. It was evident to some degree in a high proportion of the narratives we heard. It seems to be a spur to, or at least a factor in, innovation and learning—hence the arrow to our second finding. That finding is the central one: in almost every one of the 183 accounts of innovation a fairly systematic approach was described—involving disciplined review and a willingness to confront the challenges thrown up in review. As shown in Figure 3.1, our third finding flows from our second. In a proportion of the cases, systematic incremental learning leads to innovation but also accountability. This is, in some respects, the most surprising finding. For it has traditionally been presumed that innovation and accountability, while both desirable, are essentially at odds with one another and we must choose which to prioritise.

Figure 2.3 First Three Findings from the FuturesIreland Project

FINDING 1

New forms of cross-fertilisation between the economy, society and public
governance are increasingly evident, enhancing the ability to learn and innovate;

↓

FINDING 2

Innovation and learning are systematic, almost always combining initiative,
disciplined review and a willingness to confront challenges at three levels—
institutional, inter-personal and personal;

↓

FINDING 3

Systematic review provides the basis for both:

↙   ↘

Innovation   **Accountability**

The chapter uses evidence from a sample of the 183 people who participated
in the Consultative Panel. The twenty stories used in this chapter provide an
insight into how learning and innovation is occurring across public governance,
society and economy.

Chapter 4 focuses on the fourth finding. It draws on the evidence to suggest that
organisational systems, particularly our systems of control and accountability
in the public sector, need to change if this kind of innovation, learning and
accountability are to flourish in Ireland.

3.2 Innovation and Learning: Evidence

This section presents a sample of the evidence collected during the project. This
is drawn from a much larger number of cases documented and discussed in the
course of our work. Beyond the 20-plus stories summarised here, many other
cases could have been used to demonstrate the arguments advanced in Chapter
1. Appendix 1 provides the full list of individuals who contributed to the project.

The evidence shows that innovation and learning almost always involve three
basic stages: getting started on a troublesome problem, reviewing experience in
a disciplined way and confronting challenges at three levels.

First, when faced with a problem or a new opportunity people took action. In telling the story of their innovations, the members of the Consultative Panel rarely spoke about grand designs or plans. They spoke about feeling their way along, gaining insights and how this allowed them to take the next steps. One participant described it as 'starting in the middle'—being willing to make a start even if the precise steps and the outcome are not totally clear. They often took important steps before they had a sure answer to the problem at hand. In fact, the stories suggest that being aware that they did not have a sure answer, and the consequent focus on learning from first steps, is one of the reasons they have been able to achieve such remarkable things.

The second characteristic which defined the practices reported at our Consultative Panel was the willingness to undertake intensive review of practice, successes and failures. It was this that ensured that the behaviour was not just innovative, but also experimental. By innovative we mean that people tried something new; by experimental we mean that they tried something new but also worked in a disciplined way to understand why it worked or failed to work. The members of the Consultative Panel were asked to discuss their successes and how these came about. It emerged that most participants were actively and relentlessly questioning what they were doing and assessing this against their targets and the performance of others.

The third phase involves confronting the challenges revealed in the process of review. Having undertaken detailed review, the innovators we heard from confront organisational problems, inter-personal patterns that are preventing success and their own personal roles, capabilities and professional identities.

Our presentation of the evidence is structured around these three basic stages:

- getting started on a troublesome problem;

- reviewing experience in a disciplined way; and

- confronting challenges at three levels.

3.2.1   Getting Started on a Troublesome Problem

Here we report five examples:

- KARE — A Service Provider for People with Intellectual Disabilities

- Qumas — A Multinational Company

- Waterford County Council — A Re-cycling Initiative

- Northside Partnership — A Workplace Training Programme

- Louth County Council — An Animal Welfare Initiative

KARE — A Service Provider for People with Intellectual Disabilities

The first example concerns a large voluntary organisation providing individualised service to adults with intellectual disabilities. The CEO of the organisation discussed how the organisation came through a period of significant change. This involved considerable reflection about the mission of the organisation. He explained how the organisation has had to think about what its core business is, and about how to prioritise the needs of service users and their parents and guardians. This brought about a realisation that the organisation has to be willing to continuously change and that everyone has a part to play.

The story started with reflections within the organisation about the gap between their mission statement and the reality of the services they provided and the lives of the service users. This meant thinking about how the individual with disability experiences the service each day when they come into the programme, or if they live in their residential units, how their parents and guardians can trust that appropriate care is being received.

The change was iterative rather than based on a grand plan and the CEO emphasised that everyone is learning as they work things through. He underlined the importance of trying things out, evaluating, learning and moving to the next step.

The key to making this work was the commitment of staff. People working in the disability area are highly committed and wish to be as good as they can be. However, the CEO believed that some structure was required. They examined various quality management frameworks and in the end chose to work with the European Framework for Quality Management. While the framework is commonly used in business contexts, the organisation was the first voluntary health care provider in Ireland to work with it. The organisation won a National Award for Excellence and Quality in 2008.

This approach and quality framework allowed individuals within the organisation to think less about a perfect model and more about incremental adaptation to people's changing needs. The CEO believed that it met their needs more than any other approach because it was less prescriptive and it has a strong emphasis on continuous improvement.

A fascinating aspect of the story was their realisation that the creation of the right service is always under review and the consequent willingness to state explicitly that it will never be fully achieved. In the CEO's words, the work with the quality framework 'didn't get us quite to where we were hoping to go to, but what we did learn from it was what's the next step?' For him the most significant achievement was creating a willingness among all his staff to try things. They identified 50 different areas —from HR right through to how they plan for individual services— that they, as a group, felt needed to be improved. They then focused on 12 of those and put together project teams. All staff —from senior management to frontline staff— participated in the project teams.

> Getting staff, all of us including the management team, to realise if we're dealing with 400 individuals and their families, whose needs constantly change, we're never going to get there and we never should get there.

> We always should be looking at how we respond to people's needs today, which are different to how they were five years ago. And that was a seismic shift for all of us, because we were trying to find the right model, this is what the Day Centre should look like, this is the kind of Residential Service we should provide, and moving to that way of thinking, saying 'well that may work at the moment but it might not be what we need and we'll probably need to adjust as we go.
>
> CEO KARE

The example helps to illustrate the cross-fertilisation and learning that can take place between business and the provision of social services. It also demonstrates the role of deep engagement at an intra-personal level with both those receiving care and those providing care. This involved focusing on what services users/ parents and guardians require and how might this be provided, and what the carers are passionate about and how these passions can be used to transform the services provided.

Qumas plc — A Multinational Company

There were several business participants who provided stories that reflect the phenomenon of having a belief or a vision and then just starting to work to acheive this.

This section focuses on the experiences of one business entrepreneur who participated in the FuturesIreland project. The business was created in 1993 and has since become the one of the leading providers of business services that enable pharmaceutical companies to comply with regulatory requirements. The example illustrates the importance of institutional links and provides a particular insight into the need to understand the competencies that underpin useful networks.

The company started in the Irish market but remained very small. The entrepreneur decided he wanted to create a global brand and to be the leader in supplying a range of regulatory services to life sciences companies. The story helps to illustrate that there was no grand design, simply an intent and a commitment to follow through and learn.

> So you must have a strategic intent, which is not a plan, it's just a vision of where you want to be. So my vision, honestly, was to be a global leader within a niche base, which is life sciences, for delivering compliant solutions, and everything we did had to meet that objective.
>
> CEO Qumas

He carried out market research on the size of the market and on competitors. However, they also visited quality assurance managers in the manufacturing plants of life sciences companies and regulatory authorities. This provided insight on what companies do in order to comply with the regulations in a good manufacturing environment. Consultants were hired to help develop contacts within the industry. In doing so, they learned to distinguish between those with real industry insight and those who were simply passing information from one contact to another.

An interesting feature of the story was the way in which the person persuaded Enterprise Ireland to support the venture. Having been refused funding, he asked that an EI representative accompany him to one of his clients —a multinational in Galway. At this meeting, the client informed the EI staff about just what this start-up company did and what they could achieve. This relationship between client, entrepreneur and the funding agency was key in securing funding.

Finally, the example also helps to illustrate the cross-fertilisation opportunities that exist between the areas of wealth creation and society. This enterprise became an expert in helping firms achieve compliance with regulatory standards. During the FuturesIreland project, the role of similar compliance models in social settings was discussed. In particular, drawing on the practice of the business people present, participants discussed the way in which risk is managed in various social care settings and the potential to adapt the technologies developed by this company to how these risks are managed.

Waterford County Council — Re-cycling Initiative

The third example in this section concerns a local authority that was running out of land for dealing with waste. Cross-fertilisation is important in the account. The idea for how to deal with this originated in the public sector, but depended on achieving scale and operating efficiencies such that a large variety of waste could be economically re-cycled. It also highlights the importance of understanding the inclinations of relevant actors and taking action that displayed an affinity with these concerns.

In 2001, the county council reviewed different approaches to re-cycling. A surprisingly simple approach was chosen: a recycling system that promised 'if it's recyclable we take it'. It thereby embraced re-cycling in one go rather than introducing it gradually. The system was an immediate success. Within three weeks of starting, 20 per cent of total refuse was being re-cycled. The key was their willingness to collect any material for re-cycling. The idea underpinning this was a belief that if they collected sufficient volume of any given material they could then search for commercially viable ways of re-using or re-cycling it. They continuously reviewed their approach; identifying new products and new outlets on an ongoing basis. By 2006, 54 per cent of the waste in the county was being recycled. Because of this growth, the council found itself locked into a virtuous circle whereby products, such as plastic yoghurt cartons, that might have been deemed non-recyclable, can be reclaimed if made available in sufficient volume.

One of the most important messages was that the level of knowledge among people is much larger than officials were inclined to think. People were quick to pick up on recycling because they already understood it in an intuitive way from a variety of different sources such as television documentaries. The difficulty lay not in getting "buy-in" to the concept, but in attuning the service to people's needs and circumstances, especially those who are coping with a variety of issues already.

It is worthwhile noting that this kind of innovation required the dissolution of a network of small-time contractors and the establishment of the council's own recycling facilities. Taking on this responsibility was fueled by a belief in the public's capacity to understand and respond to recycling demands. The greatest difficulty was in discovering how the local authority could get its message across to communities that were primarily focused on other social problems; officials decided that the best way was to enlist the help of community groups already operative in these areas. Thanks to growing level of support for recycling, the local authority was able to expand the market for such services and related products.

Northside Partnership — A Workplace Training Programme

The fourth example is a Local Partnership which is deeply embedded in the creation of wealth in the community. Northside Partnership plays a significant role in helping people to engage in employment and training, and has helped over 1,600 people set up their own business in the last eight years.

The CEO of the partnership reported how their approach to training changed in recent years. The overall approach was to simulate a real-life workspace for people who have never worked, helping them to learn the rhythm and routines of work in a company. The idea was to bring people through a six month induction and then into the open labour market. This was generally successful. With increasing success and falling unemployment, the partnership's client group was increasingly composed of people more 'distanced from the labour market'. Reflecting on this, the partnership realised its initial approach was no longer appropriate. It was taking longer to get people through, up to 2 years, and the placement rate was lower. This prompted the organisation to look more closely at its training process and how it impacts on participants. It created a new set of measures that would capture the 'distance travelled' by an individual.

> **So for example, somebody who comes in the door and they cannot lift their head on day one. But four weeks later they are able to sit in the canteen with others... and they are able to engage in a conversation, and it is a huge leap for them. This is what you try to chart.**
>
> CEO Northside Partnership

From there, the partnership staff work to identify where they can make a difference and where they cannot. Their work then focuses on 'how to wrap supports around the individual based on where they are in the lifecycle'. In further evidence of the importance of cross-fertilisation, this case illustrates the value added when both a social and an economic perspective are used to inform the development of labour market supports.

The story also provides a strong insight into the nature of review and the ability of people working on local problems to develop metrics that really enabled them to improve their service. The review led to innovation— i.e. new services—but it also produced a new system of measurement, 'distance travelled'. This metric means that the local partnership can assess and monitor its work, Because a set of detailed customised metrics exist at the heart of the work there is no conflict between radical changes in services and the ability to maintain order and stability in the overall work of the partnership as a contributor to local development.

Louth County Council — An Animal Welfare Initiative

The final example in this section is from a Local Authority. It illustrates the way in which its work on animal welfare spawned a series of innovative measures. The example reveals a creative approach to funding public services, an ability to get society to respond positively to improved services and the powerful results which can flow when those working on the ground, in this case vets in meat plants are willing to change how they work with each other and redefine their role within an organisation.

The order in which this story was told within our Consultative Panel was important in our analysis of its significance. When asked to describe an innovative achievement, a vet working in a local authority began by describing a remarkable transformation of the county dog pound. Intense discussion of the nature and origin of this innovation then prompted him to recount earlier work in the inspection of meat plants and the way in which this provided the basis for the approach to transforming the dog pound.

On taking over responsibility for the local authority's veterinary services, he became concerned about the number of dogs who were put down each year. His investigation revealed that only 1 per cent of dogs were re-homed. He decided that the ''percentage of dogs re-homed'' would become the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for the facility. An intriguing feature of the story is that beyond setting this metric—in a facility that had never even had KPIs—the vet had no clear idea about how to bring about a step change in the attitude and approach to dealing with stray dogs across the county.

The existing dog pound had no links with the community. The facility was sub-standard and ill-suited to the task of grooming and caring for dogs in a way that would allow them to be re-homed. However, solutions began to be uncovered. The vet discovered that the whole area of animal welfare was largely unexplored, including the fact that the Local Authority had the right to collect revenue from dog licences. These revenues were then collected and used to upgrade the facility and enhance organisational and technological capabilities. This included development of a website through which the members of the public could view dogs or notify others about stray dogs. As a result of these improvements, the proportion of stray dogs homed rose to over 80 per cent.

An important feature of this case study is that the vet's use of KPIs was based on his experience of using similar techniques in other areas. In response to questioning about why he had approached improvement of the dog pound in that way, the participant reported to the Consultative Panel that it was because he had worked in this way in his earlier role as veterinary inspector of meat plants. There he had used detailed data, generated by the HACCP system, to identify those plants which required most supervision[1].

This is important and strongly underlines the core findings that emerge from the FuturesIreland project. The transformation of the dog pound—which includes great initiative, a remarkable rate of re-homing dogs, a number of other services for animal lovers and the animation of a local community—is both imaginative

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1. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points — HACCP is a system used to identify and control critical points in relation to food safety standards.

and inspiring. Yet below the surface of this heart-warming story there lies several highly-disciplined procedures. Prime among these is the collection of detailed data to enable deep review of performance and comparison between a number of similar service providers (meat plants). In this context, even the bold stroke of declaring a new KPI for the dog pound without a detailed plan for improvement, can be seen as the start of an experiment, as much as inspiring leadership. Likewise, applying what is known from one sphere (meat plants) to another domain (the dog pound) can be seen as a discipline as much as entrepreneurship: the discipline of cross-fertilisation.

Finally, the mobilisation of community engagement with the dog pound can be seen as an example of 'smart governance', as well as social capital, and further evidence of cross-fertilisation in action. Indeed, the same vet turned out to be applying these disciplines to a number of other areas: the re-habilitation of horses, a systematic approach to dealing with complaints and a number of environmental projects. This centrality of review and learning demonstrates that innovation is systemic not idiosyncratic. Finally, it can hardly be seen as the story of a public sector body which from time to time gets lucky or creative but, in the main, is not innovative.

3.2.2 Reviewing experience in a disciplined way

This section looks at six examples:

- The Bealtaine Arts Festival — The Organising Body

- St. Aidan's Community School, Men's Health Network and Social Entrepreneurs Ireland

- The Digital Hub — Technology and Education

- The Industrial Development Authority

- St. James Hospital — Geriatric Services

- SAOL Project— Services Provider for Women with Addiction Problems

The Bealtaine Arts Festival — The Organising Body

Each year a large number, 363 in 2008, of partners from various areas—libraries, healthcare settings, national culture institutions, individual art organisations, arts offices and active retirement groups— come together to co-produce a major festival as part of a national advocacy project supporting creativity in older people. This case study is about the overarching organisation called Bealtaine which coordinates this artistic project. The example illustrates how networks in society draw on organisational practices associated with business and also how the coordinator's process of performance improvement created an incentive for diverse contributors to review and improve their own contribution to the overall festival.

The principal organiser told how the central organisation seeks to ensure that the festival improves each year. Given that it is an arts festival, it is not easy to define in advance what makes a good performance and attempts at measurement can quite easily stifle the very creativity that is required to make a good performance. He argued that individual artistic projects often involve people exploring a question that they cannot yet articulate. Against this background and sense of uncertainty, an evaluation system was created to ensure that the festival would continue to feel fresh and new each year.

The festival organisers—a small unit with just 3 part-time staff—were encouraged to step back from the day to day activities and to reflect on the achievements of the festival. This had three parts. First, at the end of each festival a review is carried out of what worked and how and why. Second, a longer-term review was commissioned from an external economic consultant to assess progress over the 13 years since the festival began. This helped the organisers to see the progress achieved in stark terms. For example, the number of partners to the festival had almost doubled in the three year period leading up to the review. This outside review also helped build confidence among funders and was instrumental in securing additional funding.

The third part of the review focused on how the organisers could build confidence among the many partners who provide artistic content. The outside review helped the organisers to assess the capacities they needed co-ordinate this network more effectively. They realised they needed to improve their ability to articulate their goals and determine how these might be achieved. However, they also recognised that the organising unit could never hope to define what they would like to see from each partner in every year. The only way to ensure that each year was better than the last was to support those partners themselves in carrying out regular review and coming up with new ideas.

What the partners needed from the organisers was strategic direction to help them assess how useful their contribution was to the overall aims of the project. They needed to know what projects had been particularly useful and why. Measures were needed on several dimensions. This would indicate to the partners how they might support the aims of the festival. This brought the team back to the question of how they articulate and communicate their goals. In response, the team is examining the possibility of creating, at the centre of this network, the ability to analyse what is meant by success. This would make the central organisers brokers of information, a unit which could 'join the dots' and see how one partner or organisation might connect better with others. They would ricochet back and forth between what was achieved and the aims of the project. They aim to develop better ways to articulate what the overall project is seeking to achieve.

St. Aidan's Community School, Men's Health Network and Social Entrepreneurs

There were a number of projects in the education sector which demonstrated the creativity that exists within Irish schools and the efforts underway to foster and promote new ideas. Here we draw on stories from three contributors to the Consultative Panel to illustrate the importance of cross-fertilisation and looking widely to find solutions.

St. Aidan's Community School is a highly innovative and progressive school which despite its adoption of several innovative programmes—virtual learning, laptops for students, breakfast clubs, and book clubs—is still experiencing very significant difficulties. The principal is deeply concerned with reviewing why change is so difficult to achieve and to address the attendant frustrations. These include the following: the number of children perceived to be left behind, the inability to provide sufficient choice to students, and the perception of some children that school is the safest place they have. One of the issues to emerge from this review was the difficulties encountered with fathers.

At the same meeting, another participant in the FuturesIreland project discussed the efforts of the Mens Health Network—an independent organisation funded by the HSE and government departments. The key focus in the network is getting marginalised men thinking about themselves. The network seeks to empower them to take control of factors and behaviours that have a major impact on their lives, such as issues like violence, health, alcohol and domestic violence.

The school principal discussed the threats sometimes made by the fathers of difficult pupils, and the efforts of mothers to apologise subsequently. This led to a clearer understanding of the problem. It suggested that one further course of action might be to look at ways that the school could work with the Men's Health Network.

Throughout the account provided by the school principal the question of resources was a dominant theme. The school has less resources available than other schools. Also present at the meeting was the CEO of Social Entrepreneurs Ireland. He told a number of stories about the work carried out by social entrepreneurs. For example, one social entrepreneur had created a music resource for schools in a dis-advantaged area. He started a scheme in which professional musicians came into classes for 40 minutes. This was paid for by fund raising. Every primary school in the area now has music lesson every week of the year. They also put in place an instrument rental scheme for parents. On days when music lessons were available attendance rates at the school went up from 75 per cent to 93 per cent.

This led the school principal, the co-coordinator of the Mens Health Network and the CEO of the Social Entrepreneurs Ireland to discuss various ways that men might be encouraged and helped to be more involved and supportive of the school's work and ways of funding such an initiative. These connections have continued since the initial FuturesIreland meeting.

Digital Hub— Technology and Education

During our work with the Consultative Panel we also heard about the work of the Digital Hub in introducing new technology into classrooms. Its work resulted in parents, who had previously shown little interest in the education of their children, becoming more involved with their children's school and home educational work. The example also shows the effort to link this work to broader changes in the practices and norms that guide the education system.

A senior manager from the Digital Hub, described the introduction of new information and communications technology into schools in parts of inner-city Dublin. It was difficult for the project team to set targets since the members of the team were ensure about how one would recognise or define in advance what the effects of introducing new digital technologies into such a classroom might be and, therefore, what to measure. Rather than agonise over this, they simply went ahead and introduced the new technologies. They could have used uncertainty about possible effects as a pretext to ignore review, relying on a general belief that new technologies would be of help to the educational process. But, given their commitment to assessing their work—and their involvement in a business and technology sector where review is increasingly standard—they sought to explore the impact on various dimensions: curricular development, retention rates, parental interest, to name a few.

It would have been pointless to ask whether the Digital Hub's original policy had been 'implemented', since this didn't go beyond the introduction of new technologies into the classroom. Such a method of accountability or evaluation would simply have been to measure whether an input, for example new electronic whiteboards, had been introduced in particular schools. This would not be a measure of an outcome, but of an input. Instead the senior manager noted that evaluation proceeded in a relatively unstructured way. Initially it began looking for clues about the effects new technology was having. This brought to light an increased interest among parents in what was happening in the school. It seemed that students were going home and discussing and showing parents technologies. The parents were much more interested in these technologies than they were in books and traditional forms of homework.

> we started by simply interviewing selections of teachers and students and writing down stories, anecdotes and from there discovered that a teacher made a comment about parents turning up...From there we've got a little a research project now engaging with academics, more social scientists to get in a little bit more detail and try to formulate more sophisticated means of measuring effect
>
> Senior Manager, Digital Hub

The work in the Digital Hub has continued to develop its approach to measurement and metrics to appropriately assess digital learning. An interesting challenge identified is how this work can be incorporated or situated within the mainstream approach to education and learning. The participant from the Digital Hub argued that a key to affecting change at the institutional level —in terms of our approach to education— is the availability of detailed metrics gathered from the ongoing experimental work in schools working with high levels of information and communication technologies.

This work is potentially of wider significance, since it shows the possibility of valuable review of performance and outcomes, even in the kind of schools where the social context and pupil intake are often assumed to make progress virtually impossible.

The Industrial Development Authority

The third example in this section is the IDA, an organisation which has been pivotal in Ireland's economic development. It demonstrates an institution transforming its public sector role from one of grant giving to being a partner in the process of wealth creation. A key component in this is the staff's ability, at a personal level, to 'gain traction' with the needs of its clients and to share their experience with colleagues.

The story told by one of its senior managers shows that at the heart of its flexibility is a deeply introspective organisation with a strong ability to learn quickly from its achievements and challenges. There is a relentless focus on the next opportunity and way to identify and remove a particular constraint. The approach is one of continuous discussion about improvement. This relies on people's judgements and the relationships they have nurtured. The IDA has developed the ability to learn from the experiences of people working in diverse sectors and in different countries. Once successes are identified the people responsible are often used as a learning or mentoring resource for others.

At a general level, this is evident in how the IDA has responded to the declining importance of grants as a factor in explaining foreign investment decisions by multinationals. The operating context has changed from one in which grants were the key focus, towards what is termed a more consultative selling approach: meaning that staff must have expertise and specific solutions that they can bring to the company. The challenge for staff is to 'gain traction' with a company. This means the institution has had to change fundamentally. There is now more emphasis on communicating understanding within the organisation; the ability to learn from successful practice is now a critical competence. Staff who find themselves in key positions with clients are asked to write out what they have learned about that company and its sector and to communicate this with other staff. This allows their colleagues sell that idea to other companies. One of the most interesting facets of the IDA story, is how people are asked to change their roles—for example by becoming mentors—and to work very differently with others in the organisation.

The nature of review and monitoring has had to change — from simple metrics on grants awarded to reporting and reviewing the process and depth of engagement with client companies. This statement provides a sense of the change:

> it also creates huge issues around review and monitoring. In the past it was the case of, how many grants did you give out? Now it's a case of, how did you engage with that company? Did you get traction? A whole load of other issues come in to play which brings a whole new level of complexity to the model. And our biggest challenge is, how do we change the structure, the systems, the processes to enable us to do that. And it's meant that you're bringing a lot of, kind of, disruptive mechanisms on board
>
> Senior Manager, IDA

Accountability arises from a process of negotiation amongst relevant stakeholders; this, in turn, gives rise to a tentative settlement as staff agree to strive for certain goals but it is left to the ground-level executives to decide on the best means of achieving them. People who achieve success are quizzed on how

they achieved it. Reflecting a strong interest at Board level, considerable time is devoted to dissecting the process, analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of a particular approach and diagnosing underlying constraints and potential new solutions. Personnel whose approach has withstood scrutiny are expected to pass on the main features of the process they used to their colleagues. This transmission of learning could not take place without a commitment to transparency. Review and reporting has become frequent with quarterly reviews, and continuous feedback is sought from companies with whom staff are working. There is a real sense in which this organisation is actively learning from its successes and challenges.

The example also helps to show that the effective use of networks, and working flexibly with other agencies, demands greater self-scrutiny within organisations. To actively participate in external networks with client companies the staff at IDA have had to change in profound ways and continuously. This requires changes in the way that staff work and support each other. To support this senior management had to re-cast the wider institutional structures.

St. James Hospital — Geriatric Services

The fourth example in this section helps to illustrate the way in which the public sector can utilise business experience. A professor of Geriatric Medicine described to the Consultative Panel how devolving management within the hospital to individual directors changed the way his department worked. The clinical director and staff now plan and develop a business case for changes proposed. Patient outcomes have improved and scarce resources are used more efficiently.

Managerial freedom enabled the department to be more flexible and innovative. Review, diagnosis and learning are critical to make this work. The clinical director and his staff develop and evaluate new approaches. They can make decisions, such as the appointment of staff, with much greater autonomy. They show that something works, put together a case and go to management and demonstrate an impact— for example the reduction in the length of stay of stroke patients from 45 to 28 days. They will then argue the case for funding. They document everything—for both immediate clinical and longer-term developmental reasons. He argued that this was critical as support for projects depended on this ability to show what works.

The example highlights the role of review. Review and analysis of clinical successes and failures is used to develop new directions or strategies. It also provides a means of grasping new opportunities as it offers a concrete way to make the case to funding bodies. The same review that underpins discussions among clinicians about new approaches to treatment is also used to win support for their ideas from health service authorities and funding bodies.

> You win support for your ventures by the quality of your work; you convince people, not through argument but through showing them what you actually do, can do.

Professor of Geriatric Medicine, TCD

The work of this geriatric unit also helps to illustrate the power of diagnostic work which seeks to uncover the root–cause of problems and use these to frame new solutions. This was illustrated in their work on patient falls among the elderly. Falls are one of the most common causes of hospitalisation of older people. The challenge for the team was to find out whether there was a more effective way for the patient, the A&E unit and the overall hospital to deal with these cases. Based on detailed data collected on older people, the Geriatric Medicine Unit argued for and received external funding for a new approach. They established a falls and black-out unit to diagnose the cause of falls and black-outs among the elderly. Thereafter, patients presenting did not attend A&E but were instead dealt with in this new unit. The unit was able to carry out the necessary tests and this has resulted in a significant reduction in the proportion of older people admitted to the hospital as well as reducing the pressure on A&E units.

SAOL Project — Services Provision for Women with Addiction Problems

The final story in this section is the SAOL project, which provides education and other services to women with drug addiction problems in inner city Dublin. A rapid switch in the drugs market and patterns of drug use, from heroine to crack-cocaine, meant that many of the existing services were rendered ineffective. A conscious process of assessment—including horizontal benchmarking with a network partner in the Netherlands's— led SAOL to re-focus its services. This account included interesting observations on the difficulty of the statutory funding agency had in recasting its funding of the programme at a similar pace.

A change in market conditions led to a switch to cocaine as the drug of choice. This had serious implications for the addicts, their community and families; and for those providing rehabilitation services. Cocaine is associated with more aggressive behaviour and there are no medications that can be used to help reduce the usage, as for example methadone may for heroin addicts. This undermined the effectiveness of SAOL's existing education projects. There was little time for analysis or investigation. There was a real sense of the seriousness of the problem. They were clear that they could not re-invent the wheel. They decided to talk to colleagues —known to them through joint work on European projects— in drug treatment services who had already dealt with this problem. Working with them, they designed a self-control course called Reduce the Use. Interestingly, in a link to the use of technology, this is a web-based product which is available free on the website and is now used by other community groups dealing with addiction. It has been piloted, tested and reviewed with women in the rehabilitation project.

SAOL found it difficult to get this approach accepted by the statutory funding body. The project has switched the focus of its work and this has been difficult for staff. To a large degree, the difference between the staff delivering the service and the people in the funding body centred on the willingness, ability and familiarity with data and methods of review.

Within the project, there was extensive data. This included personal plans for every participant. These showed the impact of the new approaches — for example, plans which recorded the individual's level of drug usage and any changes in their overall health or family circumstances. They also included feedback reviews from other service providers using the new approach. However, the statutory funding body did not respond to this data and preferred instead on to contract two external consultancy reports on the changing patterns of drugs usage and possible policy responses. Each report took over 12 months to produce.

Interestingly, on hearing the Chair of the SAOL project recount her experience, others in the Consultative Panel described the difficulties that arise with the system when service providers start to change their approach in response to changes on the ground. One participant told of shuffling between the HSE and FAS, as the focus of his efforts moved from providing sheltered employment to providing real jobs. The charge leveled at the system was that it does not have the same level of flexibility and personal sense of responsibility.

> You talk to them and they say 'we don't fund employment', you go to FAS and they say 'yes, we do special CE skills but not for those kinds of people'. It's never 'how can we meet this need now?
>
> Chair Community Drugs Project

The key in SAOL the story was not that the person believed that they had found a solution for cocaine addiction. What they had found was *a better way of working out a better way of doing things*. What they were asking of the system, and people in the system, is to support this. The Chair of SAOL was not suggesting that all drug addiction services be re-configured in this way.

3.2.3   Confronting Challenges at Three Levels

The section looks at seven examples:

- Donegal County Council — Integrated Services

- St. Paul's— Special School Cork

- Environmental Protection Agency— Illegal Dumping

- Batchelors — Indigenous Food Company

- SpunOut.ie — On-line Youth Services Organisation

- Headstrong — Services for Organisations working with Young People

- TimeBank — Community Project

Donegal County Council — Integrated Services

Donegal County Council (DCC) is widely recognised for its commitment to continuous improvements and service quality. The example highlights that in moving organisations to provide more integrated and tailored services it is vital to also engage with inter-personal and individual-level issues.

Since 2000, DCC has de-centralised its services and operates a 'one-stop-shop' at each of five regional offices spread across a large county. A full range of planning and other services is available at each office. This results in significantly improved services for citizens and for business. The Council has also attempted to integrate wider public services in Donegal. It has built facilities which other agencies — such as FAS, HSE, Comhairle and the Department of Social and Family Affairs— can use. This has led to better coordination between the service providers. It has confronted many of the problems involved in getting staff from different departments to work more closely. Among the measures taken, for example, was getting staff to share the same canteen, which helped build relationships and establish trust across agencies.

Underpinning the approach to work with DCC is a very radical review system. The review system has been created in an effort to understand in greater detail the intricacies involved in managing work. This process —which is referred to as the 'whole system of work'— provides a coherent basis upon which to examine and explain what is taking place. Managers discuss work with those at the front line. The manager looks in detail at what people do, who they have to work with and how this happens. This account is then converted into a narrative for each individual. This narrative is then 'marked up', meaning staff observations are colour coded to signal whether the issue is about a role, a working relationship, a work activity or one of several other aspects of the work system. In this way the intra-personal and inter-personal dimensions are identified and confronted. The approach to change is built upon a concrete account of what it is really like to work in a public sector organisation providing a particular set of services. It has brought issues—such as the role of local councilors and their right to contact staff about specific issues—to the fore.

However, barriers remain at an institutional level. In many instances, these difficulties cannot be dealt with satisfactorily at County Council. In some, the need for action at a higher level or in some other organisation elsewhere might have seemed relatively straight forward. One example cited was the need to change the recruitment terms, used by the National Public Appointments Commission, for a particular type of post. Another was ensuring that the organisations providing services in a shared building work with common opening and closing times. In yet others, the actions needed would seem more complex —for example, changing budgeting and investment approaches to support joint investment; changing rules governing the sharing of computerised information and allowing those working locally to have greater authority over spending. However, in all cases there is considerable frustration that these changes do not actually occur. In fact, to a degree the biggest frustration is often the fact that nothing happens and hen there is no response from the parent department in question.

This enabled teachers to share their know-how in a supportive way, to the benefit of the children and the teachers themselves. Each highlighted what was working best for them and this was shared among groups of teachers.

The process was potentially difficult for some teachers, particularly those who had problems in developing and implementing plans. This was overcome by designing the process so that the focus was on how people had successfully approached issues and not on how they had been unsuccessful. Putting good practice under the spotlight provided teachers with ideas and resources they could draw on. The teachers who had achieved more success were cast in a mentoring role. This was novel and empowering.

The process also respected the fact that, in many cases, the difficulties teachers faced were rooted in the training they had received. The solution was not to present those teachers with an outline of best practice or to showcase a teacher from which others should learn. The solution was both more simple and more sophisticated, as it sought to get all teachers working together to develop an approach that all could work with. It created an environment where people could feel safe to ask questions or raise problems they faced. It also motivated teachers to help each other to answer those questions.

The results for the children are tangible as there is now an increased ability to plan for their needs. The culture in the school has also changed, becoming more collaborative. Teachers share more information about their targets and ambitions for different groups of pupils. There is greater awareness about how teachers might work together and this is leading to more opportunities for children with different needs to learn together.

> ... one of the advantages is that it has broken down the perception that was there of the difference between the teachers teaching the different groups of children and they all realise that when they start seeing targets that one teacher's setting, actually that's very similar to a target I have, let's break it down together ... it also became an integration opportunity for the classes ... we mixed them with pupils they wouldn't normally mix with ...
>
> School Principal

The key thing in this example is that 'the teachers started helping each other, or if somebody had a problem, they'd put it out for discussion'. The result was that the school implemented a formal peer learning process among teachers. This enabled them to share ideas and solve problems in a collaborative way. This produced positive outcomes for the children, as there is an increased ability among the teachers to analyse and plan for the needs of students with mixed levels of disability.

Environmental Protection Agency — Illegal Dumping

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is a statutory body with responsibility for the balanced and sustainable protection and management of the environment. The EPA has responsibilities for a wide range of licensing, enforcement, monitoring and assessment activities in environmental protection. It works with other many government agencies. The example illustrates how the agency built effective networks with other agencies and with business to address a serious and intractable problem.

A senior manager told of the EPAs experience in dealing with illegal dumping. To solve this problem the EPA brought together a network of organisations including the HSE, Local Authorities, FÁS and the police on both sides of the border. These organisations had a common interest in the problem.

The EPA recognised the limits of its own reach and information. It confronted its, de facto, dependence on other organisations. Confronting this was critical in finding ways to fulfill their broader goals. The first step in the process was to establish networks of interested parties. The next step was to ensure that the network would function: that it would not become a 'talking shop'. To do this, the EPA challenged those in the network to find solutions to real and pressing problems. To illustrate this, the manager focused on illegal dumping. He reported that the EPA does not just convene networks, it works with others to broker real solutions. The EPA acted as broker in the network formed to deal with illegal dumping. It identified the participants and established a basis for collaboration on this specific project. It helped the group to identify what it needed to do its work. For example, when the network was set up it was clear that capacity was an issue in certain areas: among these was how to do waste inspections in a consistent way, and that training was required. The EPA with FAS organised to provide the necessary training.

The EPA has built up capabilities in communication, networking, monitoring and diagnosis that support its role as broker of these network solutions. It has a written procedure or terms of reference that guides the creation and animation of networks. The lessons learned in networks are applied to other areas such as water treatment. The training course on inspection, developed within the illegal dumping network, is now used to provide foundation training for any new staff in the environmental protection system. They work with organisations such as IBEC to develop similar training for industry. In this way, monitoring and diagnostic capabilities are being transferred to people and organisations beyond the EPA. This is important since the most relevant local knowledge, which is critical in understanding and diagnosing environmental problems, is often held in organisations beyond the EPA.

The EPA is an example of a networked and flexible centre. The overall approach to problem solving combines a traditional authority role with the brokerage role described here. Its enforcement powers give it leverage with the various stakeholders. A lack of co-operation can be met with more traditional methods of enforcement and sanction.

Batchelors— Indigenous Food Company

The fourth case reported this section is a medium sized indigenous food company. The company is a market leader in a number of consumer food sectors. The example illustrates how the company use quite common-place routines to help manage and share risk within the organisation. In doing so, the company challenges its own working arrangements, its intuitions and assumptions and those of their customers.

A senior manager at the company outlined the various processes and procedures in place. She noted that most of these are standard in the industry. For example, they use HACCP to identify points that are critical for control and this helps to minimise risk and is a key resource in helping to diagnose production/ quality problems.

The focus of the evidence provided to our Consultative Panel was a management and monitoring system for new product development. The system was created in order to minimise the risks associated with new product development. The costs of successfully developing and marketing a new product can be very significant, and product launches which do not succeed can seriously undermine the long term viability of the company. The process in place is called a 'modified stage gate procedure'. A particularly interesting feature of the process is the way influential stakeholders within the company become involved and discuss progress. At each 'stage gate' they consider whether the project should proceed to the next stage or should be stopped. The process forces them to confront their personal beliefs and assumptions. It deliberately subjects emotional influences to scrutiny and helps dissolve fixed emotions and supports a focus on the facts and data available at each stage. It brings new research and external evaluations into the process.

> Some system has to be there to take that emotion out of us and say, okay, is this the right thing to do or are you just making this decision because you've spent so much time on it and you're so attached to it
>
> Senior Manager, Food Company

The manager and team look at how the underlying assumptions and projections are changing. The manager with responsibility for the new product is charged with ensuring that the rest of the senior management team have sufficient information to make an informed and reasoned judgement. However, the whole team have to take active steps to understand not just consumer data but actual consumers. For example, during one piece of research each of the senior managers accompanied researchers in spending a whole day with an individual consumer.

In this way, the process is driven by data and analysis, but not at the expense of the intuition, instincts and experiences of those working in the company. It allows people to brainstorm and to take risks but in an incremental way. At each stage key stakeholders have an opportunity to consider if they wish to proceed to the next stage and only the next stage. At a subsequent stage they will be again asked to consider if they believe that the project should continue. In this way, the stages create an opportunity for taking acceptable levels of risk but also protect against excessive risk. The process is open to scrutiny along the way. For these reasons it is an innovative and accountable process.

48

SpunOut.ie — An On-line Youth Services Organisation

The FuturesIreland project engaged intensively with young people. Thirty two people between the age of 17 and 25 participated in the National Consultative Panel. One of the most striking features of the accounts provided by younger people was the priority they attached to understanding themselves and the role of open networks and discussion in supporting their ability to become more self-aware and more active in their communities, in their relationship to the environment, the economy, and in society.

The first account focuses on SpunOut.ie an independent national charity working to empower young people to create personal and social change. SpunOut.ie is an interactive online community providing health and lifestyle information, signposting to support services, a youth media space, moderated discussion forums, and a platform for youth engagement, civic engagement, participation and advocacy. The website is endorsed and supported by all major youth agencies in Ireland.

An interesting feature of the organisation is its close association with the Health Service Executive. It is part-funded by the HSE but remains independent of it. It has its own Board on which young people have a very active role. A previous fully-funded government initiative, called *Cool Choices*, had failed to ignite significant interest among young people. In contrast, SpunOut.ie is, in its own words, 'powered by young people'. Young people provide most of the content. They set the themes for discussion and moderate the various discussion fora. The topics under review range from health and well-being, to education and the environment. It provides a way for young people to ask questions that they might be afraid to ask elsewhere. Through the project young people are challenging existing norms and traditions.

By way of a partial qualification to this account, it is useful to consider the experiences of one university lecturer who participated in the FuturesIreland project. His college confronted a dual problem in the first year courses: insufficient lecture halls to accommodate the large number of students and high rates of plagiarism. He reported his experiences introducing new forms of self-learning and group/peer learning to replace aspects of the traditional lecture. The idea was that every student in a semester would have to take three courses on, for example, the novel, poetry and drama. In each course, two-thirds of the students would go to the lecture and the remaining third would do the work themselves. The latter group studied from readings provided by the lecturer and carried out task-based research. All students then came together for a tutorial session. Those who worked independently presented their work to the students who had attended the lectures and this was followed by a discussion.

This change in format improved their ability to think and work independently. In the new format there was less emphasis on the idea of one correct answer and much more focus on people's own ideas and how these were expressed and argued. The system of marking and assessment, which included peer review, recognised this. In most academic years the lecturer noted that the university expect around 50 cases of plagiarism: in the first year of the programme there were no cases. This suggested that the programme was encouraging people to think more for themselves.

However, there were problems and the course reverted to its traditional lecture-only based format after the first year. The lecturer reported that there was very significant and understandable insecurity on the part of students —both young and mature. In his view people are 'poorly educated about education and this will take a long time to break down'.

> **The expectation that education is something that you consume and that you sit in a lecture theatre, possibly taking notes and that you get the good notes and that this is what people are paying for, or this is what people are entitled to and the idea that you might have to do the stuff yourself a lot of people saw as bad value for money, which was very interesting.**
>
> University Lecturer

This is not meant as a critique of younger people. It reflects the fact that people, of all ages, are usually only partially aware of what they want and they may have conflicting needs. This is one reason why tailoring services to personal inclinations and circumstances can be so difficult. Tapping into people's wants is only the first step in achieving beneficial outcomes. Building up the associated capabilities takes time and requires their engagement to succeed.

Headstrong: Services for Organisations Working with Young People

A second story involving young people was provided by the Director of an initiative called Headstrong. This seeks to build capacity by engaging with young people and others in their community. The Headstrong project is focused on helping young people to 'get their lives back regardless of where they had been, regardless of what level of mental illness they had suffered'. It is pioneering an approach to mental illness focused on recovery. It does this by looking not just at the individual but also their community and the influences in their lives. Working from this perspective, Headstrong examined the institutional constraints and in particular, the tendency of statutory and institutional system to 'lock individuals into self-perpetuating narratives, for example, as someone who has a history of depression, from which they cannot escape'.

Headstrong does not work directly with young people. Instead, it works with those who do, acting as an expert partner to the Health Services Executive and other people and services concerned with providing mental health and well-being supports to young people in Ireland. The Director of Headstrong was convinced of the need to 'get to young adults in crisis' where there was a dearth of services. He described an initiative which created space to think creatively about how to engage with young people. They established a representative Youth Advisory Panel. They created a stakeholder group of 20 people including health professionals, youth leaders, educators, researchers and academics.

Those involved in Headstrong had a vision — give people a way back into living in the community — and personal commitment, but no clear pathway. This was constructed along the way — dialogue helped, international research helped, but they also had to be 'willing to step out and do things sometimes when you don't quite know what you are doing'. Working in this way and with initial resources,

a 3-year plan was developed, piloting an approach called Jigsaw in five sites throughout the country. In essence, this builds systems of care for young people right across the community, ensuring easy access to intervention including, but not focusing exclusively on, specialist intervention. The project did meet with quite a lot of institutional resistance. The Director argued that this, in part, reflected the novelty of the approach. People, including in this case in the HSE and a philanthropic body, supported the project because they empathised with its vision. However, because there was no clearly-worked-out methodology to make it happen there was resistance within the mainstream system.

> ....but actually this was really radical and it met with a lot of resistance. And what I realised was that it was a great idea but there was no methodology to make it happen, we had no real sense of how to nurture or intervene, new structures, new ways of thinking, new values around the individual
>
> Director, Headstrong

However, work commenced, in particular with the Jigsaw pilot project. It is now possible to show how the recovery vision works in practice. After three years there are also concrete improvements in the delivery of services and much less fragmentation among those providing services to young people.

TimeBank — Community Project

The final example in this section demonstrates how people can, by forging new inter-personal connections, create innovative solutions tailored to their own needs and the needs of their communities. In both cases networks have been re-defined, enabled by technology, in ways that have created new opportunities.

TimeBank is a very successful social networking web-enabled community in County Cork. In this example, a local community has re-defined key relationships and networks and this is changing the communities' relationship with the state and business. The organisers carried out a door-to-door survey to collect information, peoples contact details and interests, hobbies and areas of expertise of people in the community. Businesses were registered and for this they pay a fee. A website provides information on possible services available to people in the community. For example a person who had an accident and was no longer able to drive was able to find someone with a shared interest who offered to provide transport to events. The services provided to business include sourcing people to fill short term vacancies at very short notice.

Interestingly, TimeBank is also helping to connect business and people in the community with parts of the public sector. For example, following a theft at a factory TimeBank were contacted by the police and asked to web-text the 460 businesses in the community alerting them that aluminum had been stolen. If a child goes missing, the Guards can formulate a message which TimeBank can send out to specific areas or groups within the community. It is actively looking at ways of ensuring that when people in the community have needs, for example to learn a new skill—rather than solely looking to the County Council, HSE or other state body —they can search in the community to find the help

they need. The TimeBank project is working to create a new collective confidence, new forms of engagement between people and, indeed with state bodies as the following quote illustrates:

> It [TimeBank] connects people who want to do activities together or if people have concerns about traffic planning issues or traffic speed, for example they want to campaign. I call it a collective confidence. If they want to campaign together to put in a set of traffic lights because they are worried about the kids crossing the road, if there are ten people together in a room and they all have the same concern, then they have a collective confidence to go to the County Council.
>
> <div align="right">Director, TimeBank</div>

As a result of its success, TimeBank has been asked to bring its model of networking, review and development to other circumstances. Having begun in a rural area, the organisation is now working with communities and local authorities in disadvantaged urban areas, such as Ballymun, to create similar projects.

A very personal story told by another participant also illustrates how individuals are using technology to find new solutions—including solutions that combine capabilities at organisational, interpersonal and intra-personal levels. A senior manager in a multinational company told how he sourced medical treatment for his son who had an unusual disability. He searched globally for a solution. He connected to international discussions in medial communities. He was able to do so because medical practitioners, particularly in the US, are becoming more open about what they do, their successes and failures. His background and training in business and computing technology was also important in enabling him to access and analyse this information. He revealed the importance of a business-like risk assessment and the use of planning methods, combined with passion and emotional skills to source financial support for the venture. Technology was critical on the medical side, but it was also used to arrange a house swap and to stay in contact, through Skype, with his extended family. Working in this way, the family re-defined what was possible in terms of health care solutions.

3.3   Conclusion

This chapter has shown what is possible. It demonstrates that a capacity to learn, innovate and solve problems exists across the public sector, society and economy. This capacity depends upon cross-fertilisation but also drives cross-fertilisation. It is a capacity that produces innovation and radical change but also stability. At the heart of this capacity is an acceptance of the need for disciplined review.

However, the fourth finding in the FuturesIreland project is that the kind of innovation and learning we have found, and demonstrated in this chapter, cannot flourish, and cannot yield its full harvest, without profound change to our public system, particularly our systems of control and accountability. Chapter 4 looks at the evidence underpinning this finding.

4 Enabling Innovation and Learning to Flourish

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the fourth finding from the FuturesIreland project, namely that the kind of innovation and learning we have found cannot flourish, and cannot yield their full harvest, without profound change to our organisational systems, particularly our systems of control and accountability in the public sector.

This finding is based on the experiences of people from the Consultative Panel and is reinforced by discussions with the Advisory Panel. The latter are people drawn from senior positions in society, business and state organisations.

The chapter considers how these forms of learning might be supported and allowed to flourish in an Irish context. Section 4.2 draws on our evidence to imagine a flourishing system of innovation, learning and accountability. Such a system might be called experimental, since it involves both trying new things and a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating what works and what fails. Section 4.3 comes back to reality—since the evidence shows that at present we have only a very partial system of innovation, learning and accountability. In particular, freedom to innovate and a duty to undertake systematic review are not generally part of our existing systems of control and accountability.

Section 4.4 reports the Advisory Panel's discussion of this evidence—positive and negative—and, in particular, the ideas of high-level actors on the characteristics of a modified system capable of supporting the types of learning and innovation documented in this report. They supported the view that the present administrative arrangements are not capitalising on Irish people's capacity for learning, innovation and problem-solving. They voiced their worries about the present system but also sketched some of the characteristics of an alternative system. Their vision for a system that was able to capitalise on success and extend it outward, while dealing productively with shortcomings, is ambitious but also grounded in current practice and experience.

Section 4.5 concludes by summarising how Irish organisational systems, and in particular public systems of control and accountability, might become more supportive of learning and innovation.

4.2 Imagining a Flourishing System of Innovation, Learning and Accountability

This section draws on the evidence presented in Chapter 3 to sketch a flourishing system of innovation, learning and accountability. At the start of Chapter 3, we described the relationship between our main findings in schematic form. Here we discuss these relationships in greater detail. To assist this discussion, Figure 4.1 provides a further graphical statement, to highlight two main points:

1. Systematic review is the core feature of learning, innovation and accountability

2. The relationships between systematic review, cross fertilisation, innovation and accountability could be two-way in, but only if there are profound changes in our system.

Figure 4.1 highlights systematic review as the critical component. In the accounts taken from the innovators this drives cross-fertilisation, innovation and accountability. In the positive examples it works at three levels —intra-personal, inter-personal and institutional—and engages the individual and challenges the organisation. Continuous review offers greater clarity about the service or product individuals are delivering and their role within it; it also offers a challenge for an organisation to rethink its purpose and the relations with other bodies necessary to achieve its goals.

In a general system of innovation there would be a two way relation between systematic review and cross-fertilisation. Arrow A reflects the evidence that the increasing prevalence of cross-fertilisation can be a positive influence on the innovation and learning process. Cross-fertilisation makes ideas, practices, technologies and, indeed, people that are effective in one sphere available to those struggling for new solutions in other spheres. For example, the school, described in Section 3.2.2, working with the Men's Health Network to improve relations with parents. However, the process of review can also be a driver of cross-fertilisation (arrow B). A disciplined approach to review and problem solving predisposes innovators to search beyond their own domains to find ideas or experiences relevant to the problem under consideration. The account of innovation in Louth County Council in Section 3.2.1 illustrates this effect. Hence there can be a two way arrow at the top of Figure 4.1.

Consider next the two-way relation between systematic review and innovation. We have seen in Chapter 3 that systematic review is an important source of innovation and learning (arrow C). An example is the Bealtaine Arts Festival in in Section 3.2.2. But in a flourishing system, innovation could also be an important catalyst to systematic review. New experiments and surprising outcomes could prompt further review and analysis. The work at the Digital Hub and the SAOL Community Drugs project, both reported in Section 3.2.2, provide an illustration.

Finally, there could be a strong two-way relation review and accountability. We have noted that in a number of the narratives of innovation the detailed review and metrics devised to improve day-to-day performance were also used to achieve accountability to over-arching authorities and other stakeholders (arrow E). The work at the Geriatic Unit in St. James Hosptial demonstrates this possibility (Section 3.2.2). Indeed, in the modern context it is hard to conceive of a plausible system of accountability that does not include systematic review of both practices and outcomes. This, of course, implies that the process of accountability in a flourishing learning system would make systematic review mandatory (arrow F). In return for greater freedom to innovate and tailor solutions to diverse contexts and problems, local actors would have to provide rich information and participate in processes of benchmarking, reflection, learning and improvement. The example from the IDA provides an illustration (Section 3.2.2).

Figure 4.1 Innovation and Learning: A Flourishing System
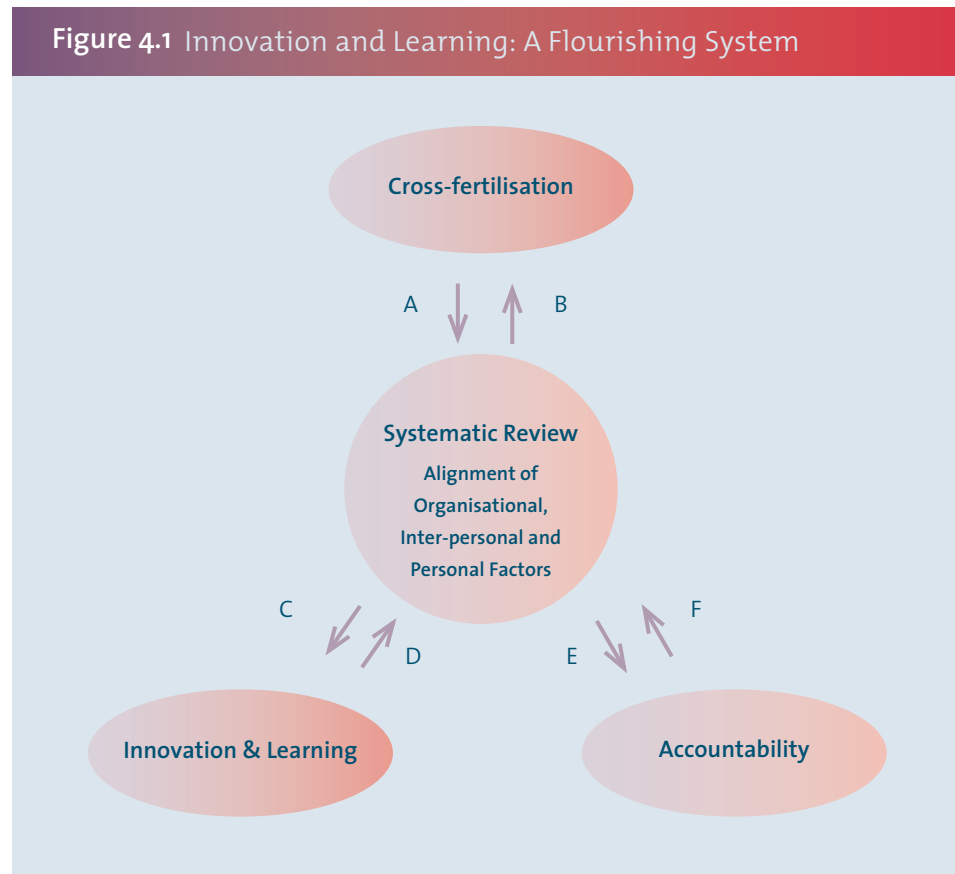
What Would Organisations Be Like in a Flourishing System of Learning?

Documentation and analysis of this approach to innovation and learning prompted us to reconsider how we understand the achievements of one of Ireland's most consistently successful organisation, the IDA. It is commonly assumed that the heart of the IDA's success is a clear mission, to attract FDI, and sufficient autonomy to achieve this. Having heard a fascinating account from an IDA staff member in the FuturesIreland Consultative Panel—reported

above—we looked again at earlier descriptions of that organisation. Table 4.1 summarises the characteristics of the IDA, based on an account from its former CEO, Padraic White in *The Making of the Celtic Tiger*. In a chapter entitled 'How the IDA Operates', he suggests that success involves a strong sense of autonomy, flexibility, networking, responsibility, a can-do mentality, probing analysis, perseverance and an ability to work with actors at different levels. White noted that the challenge for the IDA was to have the ability 'to make quality judgments based on experience'. The IDA participant at the FuturesIreland project discussed what she called 'a relentless focus on the next opportunity or way to remove a particular constraint'.

Table 4.1 Characteristics of the IDA

- A degree of autonomy

- Operating to a clearly-defined mandate

- But a mandate that evolves as understanding of task changes

- Delegated responsibility

- Using regional offices

- With an element of rivalry between them

- Working in a can-do culture

- Creates task forces to explore and progress projects

- Identify and address bottlenecks, from the basic to the systemic

- Continuous monitoring

- Regularly assess progress against quantified targets

- Continually searching and scanning for new possibilities

- Never give up on a client or potential client

- Meet the needs of every client

- By acquiring a deep understanding of client needs

- Painstaking examination of problems

- Provides a tailored service

- Able to reconfigure in response to a budget cut

- Work through networks of other agencies

- Create incentives that are simple and easily understood

- Sometimes mediate between client and other actors

- Orchestrate action at many levels: ministerial, agency, local

SOURCE:
Derived from MacSharry and White (2000)

In this sense, the IDA success is more profoundly based on systematic review, cross-fertilisation, innovation and accountability than on the factors usually cited—a clear mission and autonomy from the Civil Service. The IDA—and the Bealtaine Arts Festival, EPA, Headstrong and others documented in Chapter 3 —have built organisations that are customised at three levels (institutional, inter-personal and intra-personally) for the problems they seeks to solve. A key challenge is how this type of capability might be fashioned in other parts of the Irish system to support the emergence of new forms of prosperity and social cohesion.

4.3   Back to Reality: The Evidence Shows a Partial System of Learning at Present

Having imagined a flourishing, fully experimental, system of innovation, learning and accountability we must return to reality. Despite the extensive achievements and innovations documented in the Chapter 3, many of the innovative people who participated in our Consultative Panel believed that their potential was stunted by the range of institutions surrounding them. Often it was difficult to gain sanction to solve problems in an innovative way. Mainstreaming, extending-out or scaling-up promising solutions was achieved in relatively few cases.

If Figure 4.1 sketched a flourishing system, the current reality might be represented by Figure 4.2. Here most of the arrows are broken and some are almost non existent. In explaining this we demonstrate our fourth finding: the innovation and learning we have found cannot flourish, and cannot yield their full harvest, without profound change to our organisational systems, particularly our systems of control and accountability in the public sector. Consequently, the broken red lines, in Figure 4.2, highlight areas where changes are most required if we are to garner the full harvest associated with learning and innovation.

Figure 4.2 Innovation and Learning: A Partial System
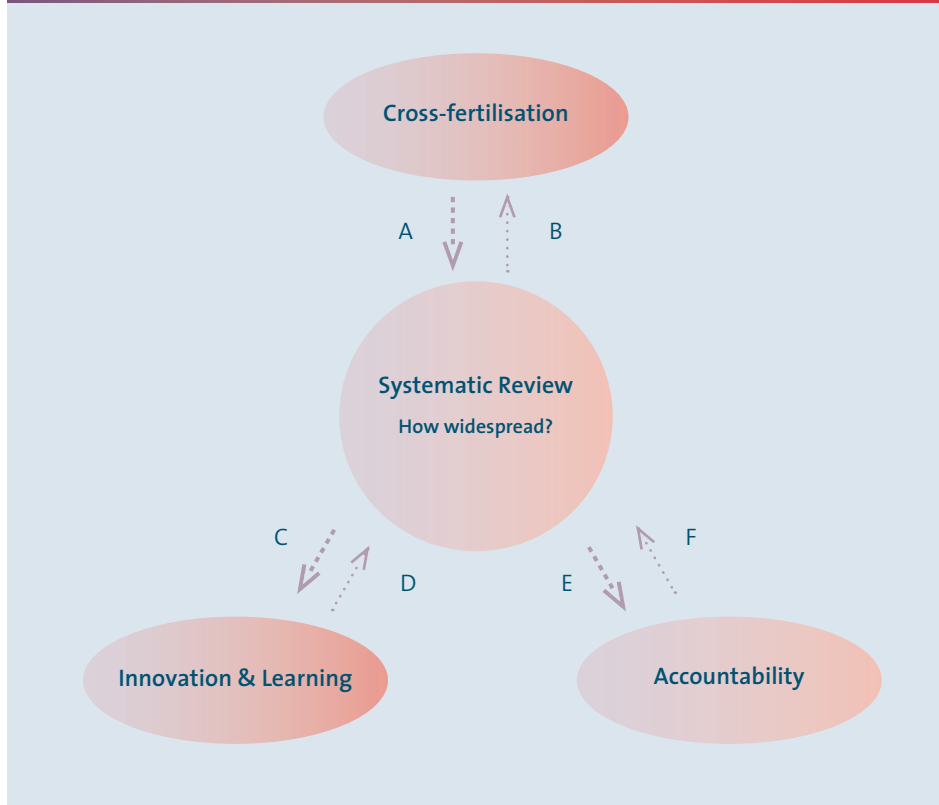
At the top of the figure both arrows, A and B, are broken. It is not clear to us that cross-fertilisation is well developed across public governance, society or economy. Neither is it clear that alignment of capabilities at three levels— institutional, inter-personal and intra-personal— is generally well developed. In the most positive stories of learning, the linkages between the three levels were indeed interactive. The organisational systems and routines supported discussion about inter-personal relations and individual capabilities, roles and commitments. Conversely, in stories of failure and frustration, lack of a productive relation between capabilities at these three levels was commonly described. In some such cases, organisational change was driven from the top, with little attention to inter-personal relations or individual capabilities or roles. In other cases, attempts to enhance overall organisational capability ran into obstacles created by identities (professional or otherwise) which resisted new kinds of inter-personal relations.

We turn next to the relationship between systematic review and innovation and learning. It is not evident to us that a dynamic and iterative relationship, between these, exists widely across society, economy and public governance. Hence arrows, C and D are both broken lines. In general innovation is most commonly discussed as an outcome derived principally from investment in research and development. Innovation policy does not include the type of capacities the accounts illustrated are necessary for innovation. It fails to capture innovation and learning that is more incremental and more tightly bound with the capacity for review. Therefore, the link from innovation back to review is represented by a broken line (Arrow D).

Finally, we focus on the existing link between systematic review and accountability. In Figure 4.2 the link from systematic review to accountability is represented by a broken line (Arrow E). The link from accountability back to review is represented by a broken faint line (Arrow F). It does not seem that current systems of accountability and control are designed to support ongoing processes of systematic review. Many of those who reported achievements in innovation and learning also described constraints that hindered them in extending their success. In a high proportion of those cases, these constraints derived from existing systems of public sector control, organisation and accountability. In particular, it is evident that there is rarely a link between review and the approach to accountability required by outside and parent bodies. In many cases the data that people collect or use on a daily basis to assess their own performance and drive continuous improvement is not accepted as a basis for compliance or formal accountability by parent departments or funding bodies. A notable exception was the geriatric unit at St. James Hospital discussed in Chapter 3. This unit carried out detailed diagnosis of the reasons for falls and black-outs among elderly. The same data that they used to review their own performance was used to make a business case for further re-organisation and funding.

The existence of a weak link between review and accountability is not simply a problem of miscommunication. It reflects deeper difficulties of working with uncertainty and the challenges of achieving order in those circumstances. These challenges are particularly acute for overarching bodies given their concern with achieving order and stability.   Consequently, the most we can enter, on Figure 4.2, is a faint line representing the link between accountability systems and internal processes of systematic review (Arrow F). In general, systems of public sector accountability, do not require that delivery agencies —or indeed policy and administrative units— to undertake systematic review. Furthermore, it is relatively rare for public service organisations to create discussion on how to align organisational, inter-personal and intra-personal capabilities, roles and responsibilities. However, some important developments which support systematic review and more tailored services are discussed in Section 5.3.3.

4.4   National Advisory Panel: Reflections on the Evidence

The evidence, summarised above, and our discussion of this with the members of the Advisory Panel yielded our fourth finding: that the innovation and learning we found cannot flourish, and cannot yield its full harvest, without profound change to our organisational systems, particularly our systems of control and accountability.

The evidence collected in the project revealed a disjuncture between a widespread disposition to be flexible and to learn from experience, on the one hand, and the near despair about the limits of learning in our collective endeavours. Indeed, this disjuncture is the thread that runs through much of the evidence heard in the Consultative Panel and much of the discussion with the high-level Advisory Panel. Working closely with the members of the Advisory Panel, we explored this paradox concerning search, innovation and learning. They considered capabilities at institutional, inter-personal and intra-personal levels and the way these are combined in policy, administration, service delivery and our democratic life.

The Advisory Panel were virtually unanimous regarding the system's current inability to generalise on the kind of problem-solving and learning described by contributors to the Consultative Panel. The discussion highlighted the need to reconfigure relations between the policy centre and local delivery and learning. This could yield more tailoring of solutions to problems, more learning and more real accountability. However, while they discussed and helped to analyse the initiative and endeavour displayed in the cases reported, many members of the Advisory Panel doubted that these practices could be extended without systemic reform.

4.4.1 Beyond Command and Control

One member of the Advisory Panel spoke of 'our failure by and large to have institutional arrangements that reflect our innate capacities' for innovation and learning. Many ascribed this failure to an inappropriate level of centralisation, whereby those at the centre 'release things but feel the need to pull them back'. One participant reflected that 'it would absolutely, really petrify the public sector organisations to really let go'. Another remarked that this system is ineffective even on its own terms: it only gives the illusion of control since it is often swamped by information and requests from operational areas:

> we don't actually control what is happening around the country in all sorts of delivery units and in fact what is coming up to us is the inappropriate stuff. It is not being delegated and we are not getting people to accept their responsibilities.
>
> **Member of the National Advisory Panel**

The existing system of governance and administration is supported by what the OECD terms a compliance model of accountability (2008: 31; 170). This is oriented around the control of inputs and deference to procedures. As a result there is 'limited ability to capture and replicate innovation' since it is geared to calculating compliance with defined procedures (ibid: 25). In a system where a compliance model of accountability dominates there is little attention given to 'relating the personal and the interpersonal in institutional settings', according to a member of the Advisory Panel. Where innovations arise and persist, this is often through an individual being skilled at navigating the system (what one participant termed 'ducking and diving'). But most of this kind of problem solving occurs under the official radar of accountability and, therefore, is rarely recognised, adopted or generalised.

Aware of the inadequacies of a centralised command-and-control model, the Advisory Panel discussed a move toward a system that involved 'strong leadership at the centre, but considerable autonomy'. As this was explored, it became clear that it would rely on neither centralised command nor local participatory networks. They believed that the first model is unable to deal adequately with complexity and uncertainty and relies on a compliance model of accountability. A purely bottom-up system of local networks would also be unsatisfactory. It would be difficult to judge which innovations should be expanded or curtailed, since useful benchmarks would not be produced.

This monitoring role would have to be adopted by some central body. Left alone, it is likely that most local networks will pass a positive judgement on themselves (McKeown and Haase 2003). Without some form of externally-generated comparisons that encourage learning between local networks, it is difficult to see how dynamic improvements can be made.

Members of the Advisory Panel were pressed on what might be the features of an alternative system to command and control. They identified a number of important interlinked characteristics. Achieving fundamental reform hinged on the following:

- **Commitment to experimentation**
- **Commitment to learn from others**
- **New Forms of Accountability**
- **Leadership**

Commitment to experimentation: They argued that there has to be a commitment to experiment. In their view, successful problem-solving rests upon a commitment to develop a new way of dealing with a difficult issue. One member of the Advisory Panel remarked that 'most innovation happens because of trial and error and failure and that is actually a critical part of any innovation process'.

They agreed that the most successful problem-solving and learning occurs where local, successful, innovation is queried by the relevant oversight authority and this information is used to adjust general routines. In many cases, this will require refashioning how performance is judged, replacing a compliance-based approach with one based on review and dialogue. Then, discussion of reasons for success or failure can be the start of a drive for further improvements.

> It is important that the Centre's ability to read the ambitions of the local and then attempt to fit it into the framework is supported and developed.
>
> The only way I think we are going to survive is to actually define what it is we want and initially help people locally to decide how they will deliver it and ultimately require them to do it. Help them by saying: this is what we need of you. This is the information we have for you. This is how others have achieved it. We will give you all the help we can. So you get the early innovators and we have examples of that. We can put you in touch with them and you can check whether that works for you, but ultimately you can't shirk your responsibility to do this.
>
> **Members of the National Advisory Panel**

Commitment to learn from others: Experimentation and innovation needs to be linked to some means of disseminating and discussing the results, be they positive, negative or neutral. If this does not happen, or if it only happens in cases of a positive experience, then it is likely that little learning will take place. The members of the Advisory Panel did not advocate that organisations would be given a license to do as they wish; their choices over innovation have to be justified, so that the tentative search for solutions is part of an accountability process.

This would require a centre that nominates the broad goals of policy, delegates sufficient powers to enable people to achieve these goals in a manner that is appropriate to diverse circumstances and helps build the capacity to review and report. One member articulated how this might work:

> you don't actually design the top down solution from the centre; what you do specify is what you want delivered locally and then you help people locally by saying, well, they did it that way in Cork, it may not work that way in Donegal, but it's your responsibility to find the Donegal way of delivering this. And to put the incentives and the disincentives in place to help, if you like, and the pressure, because without the pressure I don't think this will work, without some sort of imperative to change.
>
> Member of the National Advisory Panel

New Forms of Accountability: They suggested that the commitment to experiment and learn suggests that a new model of accountability has to be developed which endorses experimentation, embraces learning and steers away from a blame culture. They emphasised that accountability should not be just about compliance with defined procedure. It needs to be extended to outcomes and may, first and foremost, be about responsibility. They agreed that the current idea about accountability may be the root cause of the observed disappointment about the limits of learning. Learning and local empowerment will always only get so far if the issue of accountability is left unresolved or implicit.

A necessary commitment to dialogue should mean that lack of initial success is not a 'hanging offence', as one member of the Advisory Panel put it. Rather than accountability being seen as some kind of external imposition, it should be generated by information arising from an organisation's daily routines.

> There has to be within a framework of governance the ability to test and conditions which support experimentation.......... But the key point in all this is that when that when something happens it is brought to peers and discussed and there is an acceptance of the importance of this...
>
> Accountability is not compliance. We talked about accountability and responsibility and in most private sector organisations we were talking, or just mentioned, successful teams, every member of the team takes personal responsibility, even if individuals are accountable for a certain thing........
>
> And where it's not happening you've got to change the demands, so kind of opening the system for upward information from those that are [problem-solving] demanding something different downwards where it isn't quite happening. As people have said that does require the use of authority
>
> Member of the National Advisory Panel

Discussions within the Advisory Panel suggested that widespread practical innovation requires a strong authoritative centre, but they distinguished this from of a centre that 'micro-manages'. Instead, they argued that it requires a centre that ensures accountability is not divorced from learning and that policy is configured around people and their understandings of the issues at hand.

They acknowledged that this will produce strenuous demands upon front-line practitioners and those in an oversight role. For both, accountability has usually been about establishing that that they have discharged their activities without major errors, rather than proving success or examining failure.

Leadership: The members also argued that leadership is required when units or individuals under-perform. In these circumstances, leaders must be willing to take corrective action and be supported in doing it. They argued that this should include detailed attempts to understand the causes and solutions. They also believed that where structural problems arise, it must be the responsibility of leaders in the public service, working with local actors and political authorities where appropriate, to bring forward new solutions, including legislative changes if necessary.

The onus is then thrown on building capabilities—at either the personal or institutional level, or both—to see if some success can be then achieved.

> There has to be leadership, not only at one political level but right through the system and in a way what we are looking for I think is a framework that forces and encourages that leadership at different levels.
>
> **Member of the National Advisory Panel**

This suggested a dynamic process of leadership tightly linked to monitoring and review. The members of the Advisory Panel discussed their role in terms of setting goals, reviewing and analysing performance and adjusting goals in light of all this — a rolling process as it were.

The Advisory Panel also discussed the fact that in many existing systems there is little alignment between the organisation-levels and the intra-personal and the inter-personal levels. This disjuncture, generates resistance to change, impedes problem-solving and inhibits its extension. They suggested that truly innovative organisations would be better able to link the three levels. They would develop an understanding of the concerns and circumstances of individual staff members; they would foster appropriate networks of people to develop suitable responses; and, in drawing lessons from these exploratory efforts, they would reconfigure the organisation.

Finally, the members of the National Advisory Panel were clear that supporting new forms of learning and innovation, may at the outset require a form of leadership that is quite prescriptive. Demands may have to be made on all relevant organisations to establish a transparent work process that allows for continuous monitoring and improvement. They argued that this will be quite disruptive of existing routines, which is why some degree of central authority is necessary. As we will discuss in chapter 5, peoples' normal way of working can become institutionalised or congeal into a shell that is used as a shelter from any possible disruptions; to produce change and innovation, it may be necessary to shatter this shell.

4.5   Towards a System of Innovation and Learning

The members of the Advisory Panel discussed a changed relationship between central policy and local delivery, including new kinds of leadership. The Secretariat probed members on whether the combination of local innovation and learning, a changed role of central organisations, and the way in which the local and the centre interact and learn from each other could be described as a system. The response was unequivocal: where this works, they argued it is a system, and in seeking to create or describe it we should seek systematic norms, roles and responsibilities.

Figure 4.1 provided a graphic account of the links between cross fertilisation, systematic review, innovation and accountability. The evidence presented above suggested that there were indeed connections between these, but they were partial, incomplete and, in the case of accountability, rare and quite at odds with existing systems of public sector control and accountability.

The Advisory Panel's discussion of the evidence—and what it would take to generalise the kind of learning displayed in the evidence—can be seen as probing what would be required to more from the 'partial' version, shown in Figure 4.2, to a complete version shown in Figure 4.1. That is, what would be required to ensure that the arrows run in both directions.

5 Ireland at Another Turning Point

5.1   Introduction

This chapter reflects on the implications of our findings for the acute challenges currently facing Ireland.

Section 5.2 discusses the idea that Ireland is at a turning point, from a context that yielded twenty years of progress, to a more uncertain and less benign one. We outline an alternative view of the turning point and the future context for economic and social development. We then indicate reasons why the findings listed above lend support to the more positive view of the turning point. Section 5.3 argues that we can learn from the way in which Ireland dealt with earlier crises and turning points in the 1950s and 1980s. Section 5.4 points to the importance of these findings both to the current crisis and to Ireland's long term technological, economic, social and environmental future.

5.2   A Turning Point: Two Views

Ireland is undoubtedly experiencing very significant change in the three spheres explored in the FuturesIreland project—economy, society and public governance. Indeed, the degree of change means that we can no longer have confidence that what worked for Ireland in the past 20 years will work now or in the future. There is a real sense that we are at a turning point, between a familiar context and one that is different and, perhaps, not yet understood.

One view of this turning point draws attention to profoundly worrying underlying possibilities for the Irish economy, Irish society and Irish public governance. On the economy, it raises the possibility that on top of our acute current fiscal and banking problems, the very basis of Ireland's prosperity may be in jeopardy. This could be so because Ireland's leading position in the competition for foreign direct investment may be passing, with the emergence of attractive new countries in which multinational firms can invest, Ireland's reduced cost competitiveness and loss of our special status as one of the EU's 'cohesion' countries. On society, it can be argued that Ireland's success over the past two decades was based, more than we recognised, on social capital and values built up over earlier decades; that the very process of growth and commercialisation depleted social capital and shared values; and that these resources will, consequently, not be there to underpin future development. On public policy and governance it can be argued that the positive combination of political decision making and social

partnership, which yielded consistent policy and strategic direction for twenty years, may have been a transitory phenomenon or historical accident, with policy and political issues now more conflictual, more media-dominated, and less likely to produce stable strategic directions that command support across the political spectrum and the social partners. Together these possibilities suggest that we are moving from a benign twenty-year constellation of economic, social and policy factors to a much more malign combination.

There is, however, an alternative, way of understanding the idea that Ireland is at a turning point. Without denying the economic, social and policy changes noted above, we can also see economic, social and policy possibilities that could be much more positive. We outline this alternative view on the turning point and then discuss reasons why the findings of the FuturesIreland project lend some support to it.

While there are undoubtedly new competitors for inward investment, there are reasons to believe that Ireland can do well in the next wave of economic and technological development. Two of the international experts we engaged in the FuturesIreland project outline perspectives on the future development of technology and the economy that suggests greatly increased opportunities for a country such as Ireland. As we explain in more detail below, these perspectives see the current global crisis as a prelude to a much wider deployment of the information and communications technologies (ICT). This will give rise to enormous opportunities for wealth creation and enhanced quality of life if the right institutional and policy changes are made, and can sustain several decades of more socially-balanced progress world-wide. On society, a more positive view of the turning point is that, although some of the old social capital has probably been depleted, there are inter-personal and intra-personal capabilities that we are not putting to full use, but which could support much greater flourishing— in organisations, in Irish society and in the lives of individuals. Finally, in the public sphere it can be argued that Ireland's policy processes and public governance systems could be changed—in both incremental and radical ways— to yield a much better combination of stakeholder involvement, policy making and implementation, one which supports learning from local practice and real accountability to a much greater degree.

5.2.1   Economy: Technology as an Enabler of New Opportunities

A broadly positive view of Ireland's future ability to generate prosperity emerges from our work with a number of international experts and, indeed, from other analyses by Irish agencies and economists.

Professor Carlota Perez, who worked with the FuturesIreland project, suggested that the current turmoil is one stage in the long-run development of any technology. Perez, an analyst of long-term economic and technological change, argues that we are at a turning point in the information and communication technological revolution. Her work has identified that in each surge of economic development there is a turning point in which there is a major financial crisis. The crisis brings to the fore the need for institutional reform in facilitating the long run trajectory of any given technology. In the current era she argues that the full deployment of the ICT techno-economic paradigm is likely to create

many technology-enabled business opportunities. Capturing these requires that Ireland have a high level of entrepreneurship, widely diffused and diverse skills and institutions that achieve synergy between economic, technology and social policy.

Our work with Perez leads us to believe that technology, once a window of opportunity for Ireland, can become an enabler of diverse, segmented, business and social opportunities. The use of ICT on a global basis has made it possible to create global 'value chains'. In these the creation of value is spread around the world to what firms consider to be the best locations. Perez distinguishes recent foreign direct investment (FDI) and associated global value chains, from an earlier phase of FDI in the age of mass of production. Earlier FDI involved the transfer of technologically mature processes and rarely required local innovation capacity. By contrast the current global networks are characterised by continuous improvement. With the emergence of global value chains, international trade becomes increasingly the trading of tasks rather than of more or less complete products. Rather than one country specialising in exporting, for example, clothing, a range of countries are involved in the different tasks such as design, marketing and production that are involved in creating an item of clothing.

The possibility that the changes in economy and technology could have positive potential was further supported by our work with Professor Yochai Benkler, Professor of Entrepreneurial Legal Studies at Harvard Law School and author of the influential book, The Wealth of Networks. Benkler argues that most advanced economies are now part of a 'networked information economy' rather than an 'industrial information economy'. This means that economy is centerd on information (financial services, accounting, software and science), cultural production (films and music) and the manipulation of symbols (design and branding). It also means that the economy depends increasingly on a communications environment built on cheap processors and high computational capabilities inter-connected in a pervasive network (ie. the Internet).

In the networked information economy the means of producing economic value are vastly more accessible to a huge number of people. The primary scarce resource is the ability to take existing information and turn it into symbols, designs, brands, or other representations meaningful to others. This communicative capacity—linked to creativity, experience and cultural awareness—rather than the ability to aggregate financial capital becomes the economic core of production. The capacity required for production is, therefore, broadly distributed through-out society. This view of the emerging economy holds out the promise that radically decentralised individual action will become the defining characteristic of modern systems of production. His basic claim is that the resulting diversity in the ways in which information production and use is organised opens up a range of possibilities for pursuing the core political values of liberal societies — individual freedom, a more genuinely participatory political system, a critical culture, and social justice.

There can, of course, be no automatic assumption that Ireland will share in the possibilities sketched by Perez and Benkler. Nevertheless, in a general sense, the increased technological, communicative and organisational capabilities of the Irish population suggest that Ireland can be a location for a significant share of the emerging global networked information economy. In a more specific sense, there are certainly policy and organisational actions necessary to ensure that this materialises and we need to focus on them urgently in the years ahead. We discuss this developmental challenge towards the end of this chapter.

5.2.2   Society: From Latent Capabilities to Full Flourishing

It is certainly valid to say that Ireland's progress over recent decades was probably dependent on values, bonds and societal resources nurtured in earlier decades. It may be valid to say that some aspects of this social capital was weakened during two decades of economic growth and increased commercialisation—although the evidence for this is not compelling. But the evidence we have reported—on cross-fertilisation, problem solving, innovation, systematic review and the confrontation of challenges at three levels—lends support to a more positive reading of Ireland's social resources at this turning point.

For a start, recognition that interaction between wealth creation, society and the public system increasingly takes the form of cross-fertilisation has implications for how we think about Ireland being at a turning point. At a general level, it suggests that the traditional division of labour between business, society and the state will not work. For example, key social resources, such as individual character and social integration, can no longer be delivered in society, and good public governance can no longer be fully secured by national strategy and policy agreement between high-level actors. Each requires the development and use of capabilities across the spheres of business, society and the public system, and at three levels—institutional, inter-personal and personal. Have we reason to be hopeful that this can happen? We certainly have evidence that ideas, practices and technologies developed in business, social organisations and public bodies often propagate from one sphere to another. We have seen that, confronted with difficult problems innovative people in each of these spheres search outside their immediate context for approaches and partners that can help them.

If this cross fertilisation is increasingly common, how positive is it likely to be? What will be cross fertilised between business, society and the public system? We cannot entirely dismiss the possibility that debased values, weak bonds and dysfunctional organisational models and behaviours will propagate— and this fear is one reason for a pessimistic view of Ireland's turning point. The experiences reported here, and other evidence, provide reasons to believe that through much of Irish society values have been retained—and, indeed, deepened—and that tremendous new capabilities have been developed. Problem solving and learning are more widespread than many imagine and are found in all three spheres—business, society and public governance. Even this might provide limited grounds for wider hope if such innovation and learning were dependent on the charismatic abilities of unusually enterprising individuals. But the evidence strongly supports the view that innovation and learning are

systematic not idiosyncratic. We have seen that they almost always combine initiative, disciplined review and a willingness to confront challenges at three levels. Indeed, it seems that disciplined review and learning, and the associated capabilities, is one of the main things that is increasingly cross fertilised from one sphere to another.

Sometimes it occurs when specific models of review and networking, developed in cutting-edge companies, are adopted by social organisations and public servants. Other times it occurs when the need to reflect on inter-personal relations and personal contributions—increasingly common in social and cultural organisations, families and in the wider culture—are imported into business practice and public services. Increasingly, it must occur when a regard for the common good and adherence to legitimate procedure—core values of the public system—are adopted (willingly and, where necessary, compulsorily) in those business sectors and firms that displayed low standards in the past decade. All of this is hugely supported by, and dependent on, the greatly increased capabilities enabled by wider access to education and new information and communications technologies.

Overall, many days of intensive exploration with both local and high-level actors suggest that it is neither values nor basic orientations that are in short supply. What is relatively scarce is institutional contexts that allow people to fully live by their values, enable them to develop and use their capabilities and mandate that they review their work and demonstrate their contribution to shared goals. In this context productive inter-personal relations and intra-personel reflection remain under-developed. This, in itself, constitutes a constraint for development and growth.

Ironically, it is this combination of positive and negative evidence that most supports an optimistic view of Ireland's turning point. On the one hand, there are signs of more widespread innovation and learning than we expected, and evidence that this is systematic and disciplined, not dependent on idiosyncratic genius or relevant only in particular kinds of organisation. On the other hand, there is firm evidence that the capabilities and practices and potentials involved are not being used nearly as much as they might be and, in some contexts, are bypassed, ignored or entirely suppressed. This combination of existing achievement and latent possibilities allows us to be hopeful that, if the economic, technological and social possibilities are there—as, for example, Perez and Benkler suggest they will be—then Irish society is well placed to seize them. Provided, of course, that the turning point in our public governance and democratic life does not nullify these economic and social possibilities—a fear we now discuss.

5.2.3 Public Policy: from Innovation to Experimentation and from Book-Keeping to Accountability

As regards public policy, the pessimistic view of the turning point is that the benign combination of government stability and social partnership, which yielded strategic direction and consistent policy for twenty years, was a fortunate conjuncture that is now giving way to more difficult problems and a more divisive political context. While there is clearly some truth in this view, it does

not preclude the possibility that Ireland's policy process and public governance could now be changed in ways that actually yield an even better combination of stakeholder involvement, policy making and implementation than were achieved in the past twenty years.

Once again, the more optimistic view of the turning point derives from a combination of positive and negative evidence. The positive evidence shows that remarkable innovation is happening—not only in business and society, but also in the public system—reflecting a disposition to be flexible. The negative evidence suggest that, to date, this is constrained and frustrated by features of our systems of control and accountability, that the lessons from innovation are not generalised and, as a result, systematic learning has yet to flourish and yield its full harvest.

Our first finding—that interaction between the economy, society and public governance increasingly takes the form of cross-fertilisation—provides general support for belief in a positive future for Ireland's democratic life and public system. The belief that, for all the achievements of twenty years of strategic direction and high-level agreement, greater performance is possible in the public sector is definitely supported by our second finding. For a start, it is encouraging to discover that there is remarkable similarity in the way innovative people work in the private, social and public sectors. In addition, the finding that innovation and learning are systematic—rather than the idiosyncratic product of off-beat geniuses, or relevant only in new technology-led sectors— is reassuring. It implies that innovation and learning, based on systematic in-depth review, are possible across the public sector. They are possible even in the many public organisations whose proper role is to stabilise volatile situations (in markets, firms, public order, health etc). The further finding, that learning involves use of in-depth review to confront challenges at organisational, inter-personal and intra-personal levels, has, perhaps, a more ambiguous impact on our hopes. On the one hand, as the observations of our Advisory Panel shows, that form of indepth systematic review and related discussion will pose a challenge to public sector organisations in which a very different culture prevails. On the other hand, as noted in Chapter 4, we heard from many public servants—front line professionals, programme managers, agency heads and top-level policy makers—who were keenly aware of the need to align organisational, inter-personal and intra-personal capabilities. It seems that an enormous harvest of improved services, work satisfaction and professional development is waiting to be garnered if greater devolution, disciplined review and organisational discussion are part of our crisis-driven turning point in the public service.

From the point of view of the turning point in the public system, perhaps the most significant and hopeful finding is our third, that systematic incremental learning provides the basis for both innovation and accountability. Not only in the public system, but also in business, it was long held that innovation and accountability, although both desirable, are unavoidably in conflict with one another. Hence we had to choose which we valued most and structure organisations accordingly. This was evident in the hierarchical way corporations were structured and, indeed, this was suitable for innovation in mass-produced goods. In any case, the choice favouring accountability and stability could never

fully eclipse the importance of innovation, as waves of 'creative destruction' periodically re-shaped technologies, sectors and enterprises. However, in Ireland and elsewhere this view of the trade-off between innovation and accountability had a powerful and long-lasting effect on the way public systems were structured and run. The finding that the same disciplined review and learning that supports innovation in current conditions can also be a basis for accountability—in our evidence and in a growing body of international research—is potentially of great significance for the reform of the public sector. It provides reassurance on the main, understandable, anxiety that can inhibit change: the fear that giving greater freedom to front-line staff and agencies to innovate and tailor solutions to diverse needs will inevitably imply a reduction in accountability and order and, in consequence, reduce the ability of the policy centre to ensure that the executive is acting in accord with the wishes of the legislature.

5.2.4   The Turning Point: A Fall From Grace or Another Chance at Development?

If our sketch of the possible future of technology and the economy, fully-used social and individual capabilities and better public policy is valid then it suggests an optimistic view of the turning point. As we discuss further below, the pessimistic and more optimistic view of Ireland's turning point differ not only on the prospects for the future, but also on how good the recent past was. The pessimistic view anticipates a fall from grace—when lucky success in the economy, society and public policy reinforced one another. The more optimistic view sees significant limitations in what Ireland achieved—economically, socially and in public policy and partnership in the past decade. Indeed, as we argue now, long before the boom of the past decade, Ireland had found a way of turning a crisis into a turning point in national development.

5.3   Dealing with Crises and Turning Points: Developmentalism, Institutions and Authority

5.3.1   Developmentalism, Institutional Reform and Authority

Ireland undoubtedly faces a profound crisis and we sense that this is another turning point in national economic and social development. In this context, it is worth reflecting on Ireland's past experience of crisis and our earlier approach to managing major turning points.

In the late 1950s Ireland faced the limits of the protectionist model of economic development adopted in the early 1930s. The failure of protectionism made itself manifest in a series of balance of payments crisis and the pressure to restrict public spending despite widespread unmet social and infrastructural needs. The radical and courageous change of strategy—led by Taoiseach Sean Lemass and Secretary of the Department of Finance, T.K Whitaker—has been well-documented and justly praised. For our purposes, three aspects of this response to crisis and management of a turning point are particularly worthy of note.

74

First, the solution to the crisis was focused on development, both economic and social. At its core was a new analysis of what was necessary for the economic development of a small, peripheral, historically agricultural country: involvement in the international economy and, specifically, participation in European integration. To achieve this required both the creation of export-oriented businesses and a major enhancement of capabilities through investment in education. While the new strategy did not ignore the fiscal constraints— and consciously allocated resources to investments that would enhance the country's ability to generate wealth—it approached the fiscal, economic, social and psychological challenges from a developmental, rather than book-keeping, perspective.

Second, the decision to make the crisis a turning point was marked by the reform of existing institutions and the creation of new ones. The institutions of economic protection and doctrinal instruction were reoriented to export promotion and skill development. New institutions—such as the IDA, the state companies and educational bodies—were created and supported by the policy centre to disentrench incumbent routines and interests where these blocked development. The reformed and new institutions were given the mandate to progressively identify and address the constraints which limited Ireland's development. To picture the kind of institution that searches for solutions and removes one constraint after another, recall our discussion of the IDA in Chapter 4.

The third aspect of the response was a combination of the first two. To the degree that the crisis-induced turning point involved a concentration of authority, this was done in order to liberate talent rather than increase control. The reformers used their authority and concentrated power in order to break restrictive national structures and thereby enhance and emancipate capabilities in the wider society that could not find an outlet in the old protectionist and closed regime.

In the 1980s Ireland was also in a profound economic, social and political crisis. The orthodox view was that excessive spending, borrowing and wage growth had damaged inward investment and indigenous business. While there was truth in this view, it failed, from the late 1970s to the mid 1980s, to provide the basis for a response to the crisis. A way out of and beyond the crisis only emerged when recognition of the hard fiscal reality was combined with a revived and revised developmental approach, institutional adaptation and some concentration of authority. An important feature of the influential 1986 NESC report, A Strategy for Development, was the analysis which showed that the problems of stabilisation, distribution and development were connected. NESC acknowledged that business and economic performance had been damaged by fiscal policy errors, but also suggested that the fiscal crisis had a developmental element. Looking at causes, the fiscal problem reflected Ireland's failure to address the constraints of peripherality, a small home market and a weak national system of innovation, making it impossible to meet rising social expectations and infrastructural deficits. Looking at cures, economic growth and development were the surest long-term routes to reducing the debt/GNP ratio. Indeed, NESC's work pointed out that macroeconomic pressures and debates tended to crowd out examination of supply-side issues, yet these were critical in development.

Second, as in the 1950s and 1960s, a range of institutions—in industrial development, education, training and other areas—were reformed in order pursue developmental goals more vigorously. New institutions—for financial sector development, social partnership, local development and regulation—were created and given the job of framing new approaches and the authority to innovate.

Thirdly, as in the 1950s, achieving a significant turning point involved some concentration of power and authority; but, given the developmental focus, this was again done in a way that then liberated talent—in business, in local communities and in public bodies. It was the combination of developmentalism, institutional adaptation and newly emancipated capabilities that underpinned Ireland's remarkable economic breakthrough and social progress from the early 1990s to the early years of the new century.

There are many reasons to believe that this Irish experience of dealing with crises and turning points in the late 1950s and late 1980s is relevant in current circumstances. If this is so, we need to ask and answer three general questions:

- In addition to acute fiscal constraints, what is the developmental challenge that Ireland now faces?

- What institutional reform and creation is necessary to identify and address ongoing constraints on development and limit of accountability?

- What concentration of authority is necessary to achieve reform and how do we ensure it is undertaken not to increase control, but to break the shell that constrains experimentation, learning, continuous improvement and real accountability?

It is not the role of the NESDO's FuturesIreland project to propose specific policy measures. Much of the current economic and policy analysis—by government and both Irish and international advisory bodies—provides important elements of the answers to these questions. But the evidence and analysis undertaken in the FuturesIreland project does suggest factors that should be taken into account in answering each of them.

5.3.2   What is the Developmental Challenge that Ireland Now Faces?

As in the 1950s and 1980s the crisis should make us confront not only the fiscal constraints but also developmental requirements that existed even before the crisis struck. As noted above, the developmental perspective always saw a connection between national development and individual opportunities and capabilities. Our analysis suggests that, in the early 21st century, national development is more thoroughly dependent on a widespread capability for self-development. Unlike the 1950s and 1980s, the developmental needs were, in part, cloaked by a long period of strong growth from the early 1990s. Although the crisis has shattered some existing structures and thrown up acute new problems, it does not render redundant the capabilities, practices and nascent institutions emerging in recent years. Indeed, in many respects, the crisis has arisen because we did not take these developmental capabilities and changes far enough.

Turning to economic development, and innovation policy as conventionally defined, the FuturesIreland analysis yields a number of observations. It suggests that, in addition to the important investments outlined in the NDP and Building Ireland's Smart Economy, the next developmental steps must include a re-framing of economic innovation policy to include capacity for review, reflection and resource allocation. We can see the relevance of this at several levels: science and technology policy, business innovation policy, policy for a learning society, and the design of institutions for economic development. In the following section we consider each briefly in turn.

First, as regards science and technology policy, we know that innovation and learning in any given context requires systematic review. Review and monitoring focused on incremental improvement are not the enemy of radical innovation and change, and may even prompt it. If core science and technology policies—focused on software, bio-, nano- and green technologies—are to contribute to national development the current move to more intense monitoring and review will need to be taken further.

Second, focussing on business innovation, we know that in any given context systematic review, innovation and learning benefit from cross-fertilisation. This, and a number of other considerations, suggests that Irish innovation policy may need to be wider. It may need to be open to supporting what Sabel calls 'the pursuit of multiple possible ideas and technological opportunities in diverse and often unrelated domains' (Sabel 2009:p.112). At the very least, cross-fertilisation needs to become an embedded feature of current science and technology-led innovation. The TRIL project—in which researchers in a number of institutes and disciplines, from engineering to ethnography, are working closely with Intel on the physical, cognitive and social consequences of ageing—illustrates that parts of the Irish innovation system are aware of the advantages of cross-fertilisation. This approach may need to be taken further and its implications, for public as well as private organisations, explored.

Third, beyond science, business and innovation policy, the goal is to create a *learning society*. Our findings suggest that this requires that systemic review and cross-fertilisation are prevalent in sectors beyond science, technology and leading firms—including the public service. To achieve this we need a nation-wide focus on enhancing and aligning the organisational, inter-personal and personal capabilities that lie at the heart of both innovation and accountability in conditions of uncertainty and ambiguity. We may need to consider how our systems of second and third level education support the development of these capabilities and organisational know-how.

Fourth, as regards the institutions of economic development, among economic and business analysts and senior policy makers there is increasing awareness of the need to move Ireland's innovation policies and economic development agencies towards a genuine national innovation system. To date, most discussion of this focuses on how the the top-level agencies and programmes might be re-organised or better coordinated; this approach commonly begins by comparing Ireland with the national innovation institutions of comparable countries, such as Finland, Denmark or Singapore. The information on innovation and learning generated in the FuturesIreland project suggest that thought might be given to a different, less top-down, approach. It suggests that, in general, local review and

learning, involving higher-level oversight, can help recast over-arching policy and programmes. It may be possible that this recasting of over-arching policies and programmes for innovation can, in turn, help us to reshape the national agencies. In other words, building the national innovation system itself may be a job of incremental innovation and learning.

5.3.3   What Institutional Reform and Creation is Now Necessary to Identify and Address Constraints on Development and Limits of Accountability?

A general answer to this question comes from our fourth finding: that the kind of systematic incremental innovation and learning we have found cannot flourish, and cannot yield their full harvest, without profound change to our public system, particularly our systems of control and accountability.

In a context of ambiguity and uncertainty, the critical developmental requirements are institutions capable of searching out problems and solutions, in the manner of the IDA. There is overwhelming evidence that those involved in the application of rules and standards, in local delivery and in implementation of policy and partnership need to have sufficient freedom to respond to differences in context and to innovate. The fact that, for example, many policies and activities addressing complex problems—such as literacy, home-care packages and innovation—can only be determined in the process of doing them, suggests the need for widespread experimentation. For this to work, they must be able to show that they can use this increased freedom to improve outcomes and comply with legitimate norms.

This implies that they must be able to assure themselves, the people they serve and the authorities to which they are accountable that they meet or surpass agreed standards, they are providing tailored services and that, working with the policy 'centre', they are capable of changing programmes and policy in the light of this learning. This would seem to require widespread development of routines for evaluation of outcomes, description of practice, peer review and benchmarking, learning, programme revision and institutional adaptation.

Many aspects of Irish public policy are moving in directions which are potentially supportive of this kind of contextualised standards, tailored services and new accountability. These include emerging HIQA systems of accreditation and clinical protocols in medicine, the Whole School Evaluation system, the HIQA standards for eldercare and disability services, much of the work of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Food Safety Authority, the pilot Children's Services Committees being established within City/County Development Boards, others aspects of local authority service delivery, the HSE's move towards more elaborate service agreements with voluntary and private providers, its creation of home care packages, the EU Open Method of Coordination on employment and social inclusion, the NDP 'Programme for Activation and Participation of Groups outside the Workforce', the Planet network created by the Area-based Partnerships, and many others. The evidence and analysis in this project suggests that these initiatives can be taken much further, in order to ensure that they deliver to their potential.

In the public sphere, more developed and generalised systems of self-evaluation and dynamic accountability now seem critical in making a success of:

- Publicly-delivered services, in a context of funding constraints;

- State-mandated regulations and standards; and

- Ireland's long-standing preference for involving voluntary organisations and private providers in the design and delivery of 'public' services.

The evidence suggests that structural and organisational change of public bodies should be conducted so as to support contexutalised regulation and tailored services. In undertaking structural and organisational change it is always necessary to work at three levels: institutional, inter-personal and intra-personal.

This round of institutional reform and creation can be characterised as designed to move Ireland's public system from innovation to experimentation. The Irish public system is clearly innovative, in establishing new agencies, drafting over-arching national strategies and programmes, starting numerous pilots and engaging stakeholders. But, outside of a few areas, it could not be called an experimental system; the learning from these innovations is seldom captured and reflected in the redesign of services at local level, the recasting of programmes at national level and, least of all, in the restructuring of organisations and relations between the centre and the local.

Ireland is, of course, not alone in confronting the problem of institutional reform and design in a context of volatility, uncertainty and ambiguity. Institutions, by their very nature, assume some degree of continuity. Douglas North, a leading social scientific analyst of the role of institutions in development, has considered the challenge of institutional design in a context in which we face real uncertainty about the cause of many problems and the likely effect of policy action intended to cure them. He concludes that in a world of such uncertainty institutions—public, private and voluntary—must now be designed to have 'built-in flexibility so that they can adjust to the tensions, strains and unanticipated circumstances of tomorrow' (North, 1999, p. 12).

5.3.4 What Concentration of Authority is Necessary to Achieve Reform and Liberate Capabilities?

As in the 1950s and 1980s some concentration of authority is required to make the response to the crisis a turning point in Ireland's development as well as a correction of the fiscal imbalance. If our evidence and analysis is persuasive, then this requires the kind of developmental measures and institutional reforms discussed by the Advisory Panel (see Chapter 4) and sketched further above. Indeed, a similar agenda is outlined in the Government's response to the OECD report on the Irish public service, Transforming Public Services: Citizen Centred-Performance Focused (Government of Ireland, 2008). It announced the government's intention to 'move central government and parent organisations away from an over-emphasis on compliance and input control and refocus them on output controls' (p. 11). It says that 'more detailed performance reporting

by organisations, in terms of outputs and outcomes, to ensure accountability and underpin the focus on delivery is the corollary of increased delegation and operational autonomy' (p. 11). It also notes the importance of 'Connecting the efforts of individuals, units, teams and public servants to the achievement of societal goals will be a crucial part of this new narrative' (p. 27). Consequently, a central element of this important government statement is the need for some concentration of authority to achieve both greater devolution to front line staff and greater responsibility for outcomes.

There seems little doubt that this reform programme will require the exercise of authority. This is especially so if—as suggested by one member of the Advisory Panel—a range of public sector practices have, over two decades, congealed into a 'shell' that is used as a shelter from any possible disruptions. One senior civil servant in the Advisory Panel stated it thus:

> we've tended, I think, to believe that the roots of success lay in policies and institutions and they did, up to a point, but I think only because they reflected ways of doing things and behaviours that were actually the heart of the positive transformation. They gave rise to a shared 'Shell' and we've tended to believe that it was the 'Shell' that mattered.
>
> But we may need to re-centralise some aspects of life to liberate again and that's one of the challenges, one of the lessons — in order to free up the people who are trapped in 'Shells' that are no longer seen as relevant it has to be broken and recreated....and that can only be done in the Centre.
>
> **Member of the National Advisory Panel**

The National Economic and Social Council would seem to endorse a similar view when, endorsing Transforming Public Services: Citizen Centred-Performance Focused, it proposed that 'there should be no delay in moving towards output and outcome indicators':

> Many public sector organisations at the delivery end, and even more of the voluntary organisations that are contracted by statutory bodies, are already undertaking in-depth review and monitoring of their own practice, achievements and failures. Where this is happening, it is the central department or agency that needs to change to become capable of receiving the rich information generated in such diagnostic monitoring and capable of resisting the urge to demand compliance information. Where this is not happening, the centre should impose the obligation that it begins rights away
>
> NESC, 2009, p. 96

As in the 1950s and 1980s, the concentration of authority necessary to achieve reform and revive developmentalism must be done in a way that liberates talent and capabilities in the wider society, rather than increase control. Indeed, the findings of the project validate a core intuition that informed our approach: the idea of looking at actual and potential changes in public governance in the

context of the emergent social trends and patterns of business and wealth creation. Our intuition was that the challenges facing public governance—and maybe even the way they are analysed, understood and described—might be refreshed and reframed by looking first at what is happening in business and society. The evidence gathered confirms that societal change has important implications for how public governance is being, and might be, undertaken.

It seems likely to us that the context for future decision making will be one in which there will be even greater cross-fertilisation between society, wealth-creation and public governance. While these 'cross-fertilisations' suggest that the boundary between public governance, societal processes and business are becoming more porous, there will always remain an irreducible 'public' or political dimension to public government and governance. But the importance of authority actually has wider and deeper foundations as explained by Dunn in his account of modern politics.

> The pertinence of the concept of authority to understanding what states really are has nothing to do with its role within their own preferred self-understanding or public self-advertisements. It is not principally because authority is an internal idealogical property of states that it bears decisively on the question of what they are. Rather, it is because authority is, however precariously, an internal psychological and evaluative property of individual human beings, and because it alone can serve to bridge the gap between how they themselves see and feel what possible arrangements of their social, economic and political surroundings, they have good reason to welcome or to seek to secure.
>
> Dunn, 2000, p. 77

The question of legitimate authority in deploying public power and resources is of course ever-present in this sphere. Consequently, while some concentration of authority at national government level is undoubtedly necessary to deal with the current turning point, that will only succeed if it animates authority and responsibility throughout Irish society. Indeed, that requirement brings back into view the three levels—organisational,inter-personal and intra-personal—that are a central focus of our evidence and analysis. This prespective underlines the fact that, in the world we now inhabit, a concentration of public authority can only work if it liberates capabilities and individuals' internal sense of authority. Only by this means can they link their own experience to wider social, economic and political goals.

5.4   Is the Work of FuturesIreland Relevant in the Crisis?

In the evidence we have uncovered, and the future we have sketched, disciplined review, incremental improvement and the quality of inter-personal and personal life have played a central role. This will naturally prompt the reader to ask whether our findings and arguments have relevance in the context of crisis, uncertainty, disjuncture and radical change. This is a good question. We close by outlining two reasons why the evidence and analysis in this report can be of value in current circumstances.

5.4.1   Incremental But Unlimited Change

When we look at it closely we see that improvement based on continuous review is not confined to periods of stability and certainty and is not the enemy of radical change. In a number of cases reported in this study, this approach was prompted by crisis. In many of the cases, the learning generated in disciplined review was critical in finding a response to crisis or adversity. Recognition of real uncertainty—about the nature of the problem, the reason why things are not working, the best solution—was often the starting point. Such learning is generally wary of superficial explanations and, through its search for the root cause of failure, seeks out the change that will work, be it minor or radical. Indeed, it is striking that many of those who used disciplined review to achieve incremental improvement set no limits on how far improvement and change might go. In this sense, diagnostic monitoring and incremental learning are more radical than compliance monitoring and existing systems of accountability; it is these which assume that the problem is known, the solution available on a familiar menu and possible change must be within existing policy and organisational parameters. Indeed, we saw cases where recognition of uncertainty extended beyond the factors listed above to include even the attributes of the organisation, relationships and individual capabilities involved. It was this that led people to confront and align the institutional, inter-personal and personal capabilities and responsibilities. Unlimited change on an unlimited range of factors—is there anything more radical?

5.4.2   The Crisis is Hurting Not Only Institutions, But Also Relationships and Individual Worth

In asking what developmental challenge Ireland now faces, we argued national development is now more thoroughly dependent on widespread capability for self-development. But right now the crisis is not only challenging institutions, both public and private, it is also damaging relationships and hurting individuals. Indeed, possibly more than earlier national crises, it is relationships and self-worth that are taking the strain. Looking at many cases of relatively successful innovation and change, our analysis has, at least, drawn attention to the critical importance of inter-personal and intra-personal growth and learning. Beyond that, it has gone a small distance towards describing the nature of the organisations, relationships and individual capabilities that seem to enable a response to difficult problems in a context of uncertainty and ambiguity; and, conversely, some of the features of organisations, work relations and individual identities that block problem solving and innovation. Much more work, by those with greater experience and expertise than ourselves, will be necessary to flesh out this aspect of the evidence and analysis. If these three levels, and their alignment, are critical in the upward story of innovation and progress, we can surely infer that they are no less important in a time of adversity, uncertainty and fear. Looking to the future, we argued that existing systems of control and accountability set limits to the full flourishing of innovation and learning. Looking to the present, our analysis suggests that responses to the crisis run the risk of overlooking the fact that the crisis is straining relationships and crushing confidence and self-worth. Approaching problems with an eye on the organisational, inter-personal and personal dimension—is there anything more suited to a time of crisis, uncertainty, pain and fear?

Appendix 1 – Project Participants

National Advisory Panel

Peter Cassells, Chair FuturesIreland Project and Chairperson, National Centre
for Partnership and Performance

Dr. Maureen Gaffney, Chair International Advisory Group, FuturesIreland Project
and Chairperson, National Economic and Social Forum

Dermot McCarthy, Secretary General, Department of An Taoiseach

John Herlihy, European Director, Online Sales and Operations, Google

Rev. Dr. Eamonn Conway, Mary Immaculate College,
Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Limerick

Sean Dorgan, former CEO Industrial Development Authority

Philip Flynn, CEO, Digital Hub

Prof. Declan Kiberd, Head of Anglo-Irish Literature, University College Dublin

Fiach MacConghail, Director, The Abbey Theatre

Helena Acheson, Head of Science & Technology,
Innovation Policy Division, Forfas

Dr. Ruth Barrington, Chief Executive, Molecular Medicine Ireland

Seamus Boland, Chief Executive, Irish Rural Link

Prof. Tom Collins, Professor of Education, NUI Maynooth

Maurice Healy, Chief Executive Officer, The Healy Group

Anne Heraty, Chief Executive Officer, CPL Resources, PLC

Dr. Mary Kelly, Director General, Environmental Protection Agency

Peter McLoone, General Secretary, IMPACT Union

Michael McLoone, County Manager, Donegal County Council

Brigid McManus, Secretary General, Department of Education and Science

Michael Scanlon, Secretary-General, Department of Health and Children

Paddy Teahon, Director, Treasury Holdings

John Treacy, Chief Executive, Irish Sports Council

Marian Vickers, Manager, Northside Partnership

Prof. Gerry Whyte, Head of Law School, Trinity College Dublin

Dr. Rory O'Donnell, Chief Executive Officer, National Economic and Social Development Office,
and Director, National Economic and Social Council

National Consultative Panel[2]

Arts and Culture	
Dominic Campbell	Artistic Director, Bealtaine
Philip King	Musician, Radio and Television presenter
Eugene Downes	Chief Executive, Culture Ireland
Madeleine Boughton	Director Irish Times Theatre Awards and former arts advisor to the British Arts Council
Tanya Kiang	Gallery of Photography
Dr. Patrick Lonergan	Lecturer, NUI Galway
Dr. Fintan Vallely	Music writer and traditional Irish musician
Sarah Tuck	Director, National Development Agency for Collaborative Arts
Aisling Prior	Artistic Director, Breaking Ground, Ballymun Theatre
Dennis McNulty	Musician and artist
Colin Murphy	Journalist and Cultural Commentator
Mark O'Halloran	Actor and scriptwriter (including Garage)
Catriona Crowe	Senior Archivist, National Archives
Willie White	Artistic Director of the Project Arts Theatre
Orlaith McBride	National Association of Youth Drama
Julia Kelly	Author of With my Lazy Eye
Emma Kelly	Information Officer, Arts Council
Helen Carey	Director, Mockingbird Arts
Brian Duggan	Pallas Heights, Contemporary Arts
Aideen Barry	Performance Artist

Business and Technology	
Paul Hands	CEO, Qumas
Dr. Chris Coughlan	Senior Executive, Hewlett Packard
Dr. Bernard Hensey	CEO PHive Technologies
Andrew O'Shaughnessy	CEO, Newsweaver
Dr. Stephen Brennan	Senior Manager, Digital Hub Development Agency
Dr. Grainne O'Halloran	Head of Product Development, Batchelors

2 Participants were drawn from six categories — arts and culture; business and technology; community and family; education and learning; environment; health and well-being; and young people. They participated in cross-sectoral working groups. Those groups usually had 12 members and so just 2 two people from each of these sectors would be in any working group.

Sean Coughlan	Director, Social Entrepreneurs Ireland
Jean Doyle	Head of CSR, Diageo Ireland
Dr. Gary McDarby	CEO, Camara
Ruairi McKiernan	Director, SPUNOUT.IE
Jenny Winter	Senior Manager, Astra Zeneca
Caroline Curtis	Senior Executive, YAHOO UK and Ireland
Nicholas McNulty	Founder, Lightwave Technology
Fergal Marrinan	SONASI
Conal McFeely	Development Executive, Creggan Enterprise Limited
Donald McDonald	Programme Coordinator, Border Action
Maeve McConnon	Projects Manager, IDA Ireland
Dr. Michelle Cullen	Senior Manager, Accenture
Toby Scott	Director, Centre for Design and Innovation Programme
Andrew O'Regan	Director, TCD Centre for Nonprofit Management
Dr. Mary Hogan	Management Specialist, Cultural Diversity Bizlab – IMI
Deirdre Murtagh	Owner, Causey Farm Experience
Brendan Dowling	Founder, Spirited Voices
Issah Husseini	Director, New Communities Partnership
John Bourke	Pepsi Cola Trading Ireland
Bill Kearney	Senior Manager, IBM
Stuart McLaughlin	Chief Executive, Business2Arts
Dr. Deiric O'Broin	CEO, NorDubCo
Dr. Coleman Farrell	CEO SUAS.IE
Tony Garahy	Organic Farmer
Petra Costigan	ToBE

Community and Family

Catherine Drea	Parent and Artist
Alan O'Neill	Parent and founder of Men's Health Network
Hugh Linehan	Irish Times Journalist, Active member of National Parents Council
Irene Cassidy	Parent and active member of National Parents Council
Kieran Leddy	Organisational Development Manager, GAA

Eveline Saduikyte	Journalist, Lithuanian Association
Frances Byrne	CEO of OPEN
Yemisi Ojo	ICAI-Network
Salome Mbugua	African Women's Network
Elaine Bradley	CEO, Volunteering Ireland
Louise Opperman	Director, Community Timebank
Michael Crowley	Local Sports Partnership Co-Ordinator (Cork)
Philip Browne	CEO, Irish Rugby Football Union
Noel Kelly	Co-Ordinator Northside Partnership
Colin Daly	Managing Solicitor, Coolock Law Centre
Edwin Mernagh	Consultant to the Northside Partnership
Ann Kavanagh	CEO, Paul Partnership, Limerick
Philip O'Connor	CEO, Dublin Employment Pact
Donal Toolan	Actor and DisabilityActivist
Marian Flannery	Women of the West
Catherine Corcoran	Lecturer, Tipperary Institute
Aidan Matthews	Broadcaster and Author
Juliette Amamure	African Women's Network
Emilia Zak	Polish Centre
Mindaugas Viduguiris	Lithuanian Information Trade Hub
Janis Kargins	Latvian Association
Kazik Anhalt	Polish Community / SIPTU
Eliska Schneiderova	Kildare Partnership
Dier Tong	Co-ordinator, Africa Centre
Vinny Murphy	Parent and Activist on National Parent's Council
David Connolly	CEO, Dublin Inner City Partnership
Eric Yao	Co-ordinator, Africa Centre

Environment

Prof. Patrick Wall	UCD School of Public Health and President EU Food Safety Committee
Dr. John Sweeney	Department of Geography, Maynooth and Head of ICARUS project
Oisin Coughlan	Director, Friends of the Earth
Susan Cogan	Architect, Dublin Docklands Development Authority
Ciaran Tracey	Senior Planner Leitrim County Council
Mary Henchy	Senior Planner, Rathdown, DunLaoghaire Council

Kieran Rose	Senior Planner, South Dublin
Sheena McCambley	Senior Planner – Ballymun Regeneration,
Paul Hogan	Senior Planner – Adamstown
Dr. Matt Crowe	Senior Manager, EPA
Laura Burke	Director, EPA
Birgit O'Driscoll	Local Area Co-Ordinator Cork Green Schools
Garrett Shine	Veterinary Inspector with Louth County Council
Paul Daly	Waterford County Council
Duncan Stewart	Earth Horizon Productions and Public Spokesperson
Dr. Hendrik Van der Kemp	Head of School of Spatial Planning at DIT and President of Irish Planning Institute
John Jopling	Sustainable Village
Tom De Paor	Architect

Education and Learning

Dr. Heino Schonfield	Director, Centre for Early Childhood Development Education
Prof. Liam Downey	Emeritus Professor NUI, Maynooth and UCD
Declan Kelleher	President Irish National Teachers Organisation
Helen Guinan	Principal, St. Paul's Special School, Cork
Blaithnaid Colhoun	Principal, Loreto College
Majella Dempsey	Network Manager, National Council Curriculum Assessment
Frank Moran	Principal St. Aidan's Community School
Patricia McDonagh	Principal Malahide Community School and President NAPD
Jacinta Stewart	CEO, CDVEC
Dr. Seamus Cannon	Director Blackrock Education Centre
Dr. Richard Thorn	Director of the Institute of Technology, Sligo
Professor Rob Kitchen	Department of Geography, NUI, Maynooth
Dr. Jarlath Killeen	Lecturer, Dept of English TCD
Fergus Hogan	Centre for Social and Family Research, Waterford Institute of Technology
Rev. Prof. Enda McDonagh	Professor of Moral Theology in St Patrick's College, Maynooth
Patricia Curtin	Assistant Director General FÁS
Roger Fox	Director, Manpower Planning, FÁS
Fionnuala Kilfeather	Chairperson of Special Education Appeals Board and former CEO of National Parents Council

Dr. Senan Cooke	Lecturer, School of Education Studies, Dublin City University
Dr Jim Deegan	Head of Post-Graduate Studies in Education, Mary Immaculate College
Dr. Michael Kenny	Department of Community and Adult Education NUI Maynooth
Dr. Noreen Doody	Lecturer, St. Patrick's College, Department of English
Dr. Mary Fitzpatrick	Regional Teaching and Learning Advocate, UL
Ena Morley	Principal, St. Ultan's National School
Dr. M.J. Gorman	Director, Science Gallery, TCD
Diarmuid Hegarty	Director, Griffith College
Jerome Morrissey	Director, NCTE
Michael Hallissy	Director of Learning, Liberties Initiative, Digital Hub

Health and Well-Being

Prof. Davis Coakley	Professor of Geriatric Medicine, Trinity College Dublin and St. James's Hospital
Richard Dooley	HSE, Network Manager
Dr. Diarmuid O'Donovan	Director of Public Health, HSE Western Region
Dr. Jane Wilde	Director, Institute of Public Health
Dr. Donal O'Shea	Director, Obesity Clinic Loughlinstown
Dr. Michael Boland	Irish College of General Practitioners
Jim Breslin	Assistant National Director, Primary and Community Care, Dublin/Mid Leinster
Caoimhe Gleeson	HSE, North West
Tadhg O'Brien	Assistant National Director, PCCC, HSE
Dr. Mary Fitzsimons	Principal Neuro-Physicist, Department of Neurology, Beaumont Hospital
Maire O'Leary	Social Inclusion Manager, HSE North West
Elizabeth Canavan	Assistant Director Office of the Minister for Children
Mary Moloney	Limerick City Childcare Committee
Dr. Tony Bates	Principal Psychologist, St. James's Hospital & Founding Member of Headstrong
Cecelia Forestal	Community Action Network
Audry Deane	Consultant, Social Policy
Christy Lynch	Chief Executive Officer KARE
Christina Whyte	Chairperson, Europe Donna
Dr John McCormack	Advocate and Spokesperson- Irish Cancer Society
Dr. Zurena Desai	REHAB – Oncologist

Young People (Age 18 – 25)

Aoife McCarthy	Dan Hayden	Sarah Murphy
Sean Collumn	Clare Herbert	Hazel Nolan
David McNamee	James Hourihan	Jonathan O'Rourke
Katie Allen	Patrick Kirwan	Kathryn O'Shea
Oliver Carey	Emily Lindemuth	Darren Ryan
Louise Marie Byrne	Nollaig Lineen	Gabriel Schorderet
Mira Dabit	Kiara Lynch	Derek Shiel
Vivienne Dick	Roisin McGrogan	Arber Sula
Patrick Duffy	Jo McNamara	Lorraine Tansey
Andrew Gibbons	Paul McNamee	Sheila O'Donnell
Kevin Gormley	Ciara McPhillips	
Eamonn Hall	Declan Meehan	

Support Team

	Organisation	Role
Paula Carey	Learning Networks	Research, Coordination, Design and Analysis
Ger Murphy	Edgeworth Consulting	Design, Facilitation and Evaluation
Gary Joyce	Genesis	Design and Facilitation
Willy Roe	William Roe Associates	Facilitation
Dr. Maria Maguire	Independent Researcher	Analysis
Dr. Barry Vaughan	Institute of Public Administration	Analysis
Roddy Rowan	Genesis	Facilitation (Phase 1)
Una Ryder	Genesis	Facilitation (Phase 2)
Julie Whiriskey	Genesis	Facilitation (Phase 3)
Ciara Quinlan	PA Consulting	Research
Ruairi McKiernan	Spunout.ie	Research and Coordination (Youth Panel)
Janet Gaynor	HSE	Facilitation (Youth Panel)
Shane O'Connor	Independent Facilitator	Facilitation (Youth Panel)
Louise McBride	Independent Facilitator	Facilitation (Youth Panel)

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