

# Annual Report 2020



Placing People at the  
Heart of Change

## Introduction

2020 was dominated by the crises of COVID a worldwide pandemic that has brought phenomenal disruption to all our lives. While it impacted on everyone it amplified the inequalities and broken systems that we have known about for decades. As we reflect on this, we are reminded of the much-quoted Damien Barr who commented “we are not all in the same boat. We are in the same storm. Some are in super yachts and some have just one oar”.

One of the windfalls of the Covid lockdown however was that it was so new that it presented the opportunity to embrace the vast unknowns. One such opportunity come with an invitation for CAN to participate on a global online programme GAIA: Global Activation of Intention and Action. Designed and delivered by the Presencing Institute in Boston. GAIA is framed by Theory U, developed by Otto Scharmer, a perspective and process that aims to change the future by engaging and analysing the current social failures, through deep listening and observation, to look at poverty, hunger, violence, the destruction of community and nature.

Theory U and the dialogic approach to change underpinning GAIA are very much in line with CAN’s change agenda and we were delighted to replicate this experience within an Irish context, linking it to a global movement for societal change.

Despite the limitations of working on line and overcoming our own discomfort we are proud that we succeeded in continuing our work and in some instances developing new work with groups and organisations. In particular

- With minority ethnic communities and organisations who work with them through the Welcome on The Mat initiative
- Hosting a series of Webinars and learning events in relation to building community resilience

- Hosting reflective spaces for many teams, organisations, and communities

In 2020 CAN continued its main areas of work as developed in its Strategic Direction in 2019 – 2021 as follows:

1. Initiatives to tackle issues from a Human Rights Perspective
2. Leadership Development
3. Dialogue
4. Organisational Development
5. Sustaining, maintaining, and promoting CAN and its work

# 1. Initiatives to tackle issues from a Human Rights perspective

## 1.1 The Collective Complaint

CAN has facilitated Local Authority tenant participation in the Collective Complaint (FIDH V Ireland Complaint No. 110/2014), submitted to the Council of Europe which successfully resulted in a decision in October 2018, stating that *“the Committee (of Social Rights) finds that the Government has failed to take sufficient and timely measures to ensure the right to housing of an adequate standard for not an insignificant number of families living in local authority housing and therefore holds that there is a violation of Article 16 of the Revised European Social Charter in this respect.”* In recognizing the rights of the family to social, legal and economic protection, Article 16 imposes obligations on Ireland *“to promote the provision of an adequate supply of housing for families, take the needs of families into account in housing policies and ensure that existing housing be of an adequate standard and include essential services”*. For this situation to be compatible with the treaty, Ireland must

- A. Adopt the necessary legal, financial, and operational means of ensuring steady progress towards achieving the goals laid down by the Charter.
- B. Maintain meaningful statistics on needs, resources, and results.
- C. Undertake regular reviews of the impact of the strategies adopted.
- D. Establish a timetable and not defer indefinitely the deadline for achieving the objectives of each stage.

This is a major rights holder led action that is part of a very effective coalition of community and legal NGOs and human rights academics. This coalition is now involved in the reporting cycle, whereby we submit comments on national reports and continue to monitor the actions required to bring the lived experience of Local Authority tenants into conformity with Article 16.

IN 2020, THE Irish state had to submit a report on how it was addressing the violation of Article 16 and the coalition involved in this Collective Complaint had the opportunity to submit our comments on it to the Council of Europe. We were challenged to outreach to tenants because of COVID restrictions. That said, we summarised the Irish report into an accessible format which we shared with tenants in Zoom meetings We conducted a Survey Monkey questionnaire to establish progress on the ground in relation to our key monitoring points above. The 420 responses from local Authority tenants across different estates and detailed desk top research informed our comments which were submitted to the Council of Europe in July. We await the observations of the Council of Europe on both reports.

This online process encouraged us to continue to facilitate tenant meetings with a view to exploring a rights-based approach to tenant participation. Working in collaboration with the Centre for Housing Law, Rights and Policy, in NUI Galway, we have explored what this might look like, heard inputs from the UK and Flanders on how tenant participation is organised in those countries and compared that to the experience on the ground in Ireland. These initial meetings encouraged the Centre for Housing Law, Rights and Policy to apply for funding from the Housing Agency for us to continue to collaborate and develop a model of tenant participation in Local Authority housing that is informed by best practice in a variety of other countries, and by a series of dialogue meetings between tenants and Local Authorities in Ireland. This successful application will allow us to continue this work in 2021.

## 1.2 Service Users Rights in Action (SURIA)

Service Users Rights in Action is a coalition of drug service users, service user representatives and community activists, facilitated by CAN. This group has been in existence since 2012 and has been one of the pilot Public Sector Duty Projects within Irish Human Rights and equality Commission (IHREC).

During 2020, COVID made meeting almost impossible. We have held a few meetings on ZOOM even though not all members are comfortable with that form of communication.

For the most part meetings covered finalising and compiling the report on the fourth round of peer research (121 interviews) as well as ongoing updates, co-ordination, support and analysis of outreach work, agreeing a workplan, structure and operational approach for the group, negotiating with PILA /FLAC and subsequently with A and L Goodbody's about establishing the group as a separate entity, with company and charitable status

Essentially as a human rights project, we assess impact in terms of the measurable improved quality of life for the people directly affected by the rights violations. Unfortunately, our research, as documented in the report "[Nothing About Us Without Us](#)" shows that the client often lives a life of constant sampling, reward, and sanction. As such, our research suggests that many live a life of restricted choice, little dignity, stigma, and oppression. One worrying feature that continues to emerge is the low expectation of many service users in terms of how they should be treated. This report will inform a new round of engagement with the Drug Service providers, policy makers and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. An infographic, containing key results and recommendations will be used with service users to inform them of their rights.

When COVID hit, the group was left in mid negotiation with the HSE about possible core funding, with no indication of when or if resources and recognition would be forthcoming. This has had a negative impact on morale in the group. Expectations were raised and not fulfilled. It has

spurred us on to establish the group and to be in a better position to seek resources from more independent sources. We are grateful to PILA /FLAC and A and L Goodbody's who have agreed to help us do this on a pro bono basis.

Some group members were interviewed as part of the Pilot Public Sector Duty videos and IHREC gave us the complete footage to use as our own video in time. We have used this material to make a video purely in the voice of group members outlining what the group is about, the issues and why they are important. [Click to Video Link](#)

### 1.3 The Abusive Lending Practices Project

The Abusive Lending Practice (ALP) Project is a joint project including CAN, and the Centre for Housing Law, Rights and Policy, NUI Galway, funded and resourced by the Open Society Justice Initiative, Open Society Foundation for Europe. It seeks to ensure that consumer rights under the Unfair Contract Terms Directive and fundamental rights under the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights are taken into consideration at both EU and domestic levels whenever institutions are drafting or enforcing laws related to abusive lending practices, in particular mortgage distress. ALP uses a variety of tools to accomplish this goal, including empirical research, legal empowerment, education of lawyers, outreach to and empowerment of litigants, advocacy, and strategic litigation.

From the beginning of this project, we have encountered the emotional impact being in mortgage distress has on the people who live with the reality. Shame, stigma, stress, despair, frustration, anger, lack of trust, powerlessness, and a sense of injustice, lie at the heart of the experience and contribute to the silence and isolation of so many people. On the other hand, we have also come to appreciate the resilience, determination, doggedness, solidarity, and power of the people we have met. The initial shock of finding themselves for whatever reason in the courts, and the subsequent horror at how that system operates, with no meaningful supports available in the face of a huge imbalances in power between

themselves and lenders transforms eventually into a determination to seek justice. Breaking the silence of the lived experience and moving from the individual to the collective has been a focus of our work throughout the project.

Funding for this project came to an end in 2020 but CAN continued to support litigants until COVID restrictions brought that to an end as well. Early in the year we offered strategic planning and start up support to a group of litigants from around the country who were endeavouring to set up their own NGO. We also disseminated a revised Guide for People in Mortgage Distress with updated information on changes in relevant legislation.

### **Model Emergency Housing Legislation**

The advent of COVID-19 made more urgent the need to enforce the right to housing. People were directed to stay home while many lost the source of income that enabled them to pay for their home. Individuals and families in precarious living situations, or without housing at all, were particularly susceptible to the fast-spreading and often deadly virus. Some states responded by passing emergency relief measures, but others did nothing. Evictions continued in most parts of the world during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, both in states that did not pass relief measures, and even, to some degree, in those that did. This was largely because relief measures passed by states were incomplete, sometimes forming distinctions that made little objective sense.

Recognizing the need for a comprehensive approach to protect the right to housing, CAN joined a global steering committee to develop a draft model housing Act. Steering committee members included:



European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA)/Housing Rights Watch , the South African Human Rights Commission, Marguerite Angelari, Open Society Justice Initiative , Open Society Initiative for Europe Conseco Empresarial Alianza por Iberoamérica (CEAPI) Leilani Farha, former U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, Global Director of The Shift, and 2020 Open Society Fellow ,Padraic Kenna, the National University of Ireland Galway Centre for Housing Law, Rights and Policy and others.

The steering committee's aim was to provide activists and lawmakers with sample legal provisions that could be used to ensure the right to housing during the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic crisis following it. This draft model Act was based on elements of actual emergency housing legislation, submissions from civil society and community groups to the UN Special Rapporteur on Housing and resulting reports and recommendations, and our individual experiences working with affected communities in various parts of the world. We combined provisions drawn from a range of existing legislative measures, but this draft model Act goes beyond most existing legislation by including provisions to protect those facing homelessness, people with disabilities, and people living in temporary encampments and housing for migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees. It is our hope that this model Act will serve as a catalyst for comprehensive legislation to ensure that the right to housing is protected for all people at this critical time. A series of capacity building seminars will be conducted in Europe, Africa, and the global south to inform advocacy groups of the legislation and how it could be used to protect vulnerable people in this time of COVID.

## 1.4 Community Benefit

This project promotes and seeks to find ways to implement the uses of social clauses in public procurement to benefit members of groups most distant from the labour market.

CAN is involved in two separate programmes under Community Benefit.

### **New Children's Hospital**

We continue to lead the Targeted Training and Recruitment sub-group within the New Children's Hospital. The group has twelve members from local community groups, the Children's Hospital Paediatric Development Board, BAM construction, City of Dublin Education and Training Board, Dublin 8 Regeneration Projects, Department of Social Protection and Dublin South City Partnership

Despite COVID interruptions, the project has met its targets, employing over 80 people who were distant from the labour market including a significant number of apprenticeships, as well as engaging local enterprises through Reserved Contracts - (The first in Ireland) and various additional corporate responsibility initiatives, including a local community grants scheme.

### **Community Benefit Forum**

CAN leads a forum of projects using community benefit nationally including two Dublin City Council builds, Grange Gorman Development, the New Children's Hospital, and the National Development Management Agency projects.

The Forum undertook a significant research project this year, producing a landmark report on the experience of using social clauses in Ireland. The report was launched at a conference - the culmination of a series of workshops on using social clauses and connecting the work to Human

Rights. The conference was opened by Minister of State for public procurement Ossian Smyth and more than 100 people participated in the online events.

## 1.5 Community Safety

The Building Community Resilience Report, launched in late 2019 was the basis of a strategy developed by the four local policing forums in the area – The 4 Forums Network – which is chaired by CAN. The strategy was endorsed by Dublin City Council which agreed to be the lead agency and has funded CAN to coordinate. The BCR project was established in June 2020 and a steering committee chaired by DCC and including Gardaí, CDYSN, Tusla, the JPC and Local Policing Forums was established. It began to implement a five-strand strategy namely:

Supporting and Focusing Local Policing Forums. This work involves us supporting LPFs to be more effective in engaging the public and using the Joint Policing Committee to advance its goals. The LPFs were also trained to use Community Crime Impact Assessments to benchmark the impact of drug-trade related antisocial behaviour and track the progress of any initiatives.

Community Crime Impact Assessments had been piloted in two parts of Dublin under the National Drugs Strategy in work coordinated by CAN. In 2020 the pilots were evaluated and found to be worthwhile. At a launch of the pilots organised by CAN with others, the Garda Commissioner expressed support for the use of CCIAAs as a way of inputting and making central community experience into community safety and policing.

The second Strand of BCR is Restorative Practice. In 2020 we worked with partners in the Dublin 8-12 RP Partnership to move towards south Inchicore becoming a model RP community. We engaged the two local schools and youth services in this work. Training was also organised for youth services directly targeting young people involved in the drug trading network

The third strand focuses on responses to the young people involved in street drug dealing. CAN set up a programme for analysing and addressing this issue in partnership with the University of Limerick. The programme includes youth workers, drug workers, Gardaí, Tusla staff, community workers and others from across Dublin South Central. The programme will continue in 2021

CAN facilitated 9 youth services along the canal/luas corridor to respond collectively to young people moving across their area. We played a central role in supporting and promoting the outreach model exemplified in the TRY programme at Donore Avenue, which we established in partnership with local stakeholders.

The fourth strand is a focus on organisers in the drug trade, who intimidate communities and display unexplained wealth while seeming to avoid sanction by authorities. We are working with An Garda Síochána and others to bring a focus on this challenge, with community concerns in mind.

The fifth strand is participation in the development of policy. CAN participates in engagement with the Policing Authority, the Lifting the Lid national projects led by the University of Limerick and the Government consultative forum on anti-social behaviour

## 1.6 Regeneration

### **Oliver Bond**

CAN led a consultation with residents on a proposed regeneration of Oliver Bond flats complex in 2019. Following the consultation report, we have continued to work on developing effective participation in the process. A core group of ten residents are involved. The work involves training in human rights and in learning the lessons of other regenerations.

### **Dolphin House**

CAN was engaged to work with a subgroup of the Joint Regeneration Board to *agree a holistic master plan for the regeneration of Dolphin House between representatives of Dolphin House community and Dublin City Council following a period of eighteen months of disagreement on a revised plan proposed by DCC.*

Four main areas emerged from preparatory conversations that provided a framework for working together. These were improving communication, understanding constraints, addressing concerns, and identifying creative solutions. The sub-group met for nine sessions, all of which were held on Zoom except for our first one in September which was a challenge for this process of this nature. A revised Master Plan was prepared for presentation to the Regeneration Board for consideration in January 2

## 1.7 Welcome on the Mat

The project aims to generate community, voluntary and statutory ownership for co-creating sustainable communities with a focus on intercultural integration in social housing the North and South Inner City in Dublin.

The WOTM programme actions in 2020 were:

### **The Intercultural Learning Programme**

We designed a learning programme for those with an interest or role in building and sustaining intercultural communities from north and south inner city. CAN believes that the process of learning from each other in such a group is rich and creates an opportunity to build relationships, share practice and work together after the programme ends. It allows people to explore differences in a safe space and together build a shared analysis of complex issues.

Twenty-two people from seventeen organisations joined the programme, representing the mix we wanted to achieve to maximise learning. The group itself - with its mix and willingness to engage - was one of the greatest resources to the learning.

The programme was designed over twelve, three hour long, weekly sessions and started in January 2020. Nine sessions had been completed when it was interrupted by the Covid 19 pandemic and was unable to resume online until September. Unfortunately, some were unable to continue in September, mostly due to COVID- related frontline work commitments.

This has been a valuable opportunity to design and deliver this learning programme. We were able to work with some organisations for the first time and deepen our working relationships with others. We learned more about interculturalism, racism and possibilities for change in communities. We intend to use this experience to develop further programmes and partner with others in their delivery.

### **Approved Housing Body Quality in Our Diversity Project**

At the invitation of Circle Housing, CAN made a presentation on the Welcome on the Mat initiative to the larger approved housing bodies in Ireland. The attendees saw the relevance of the questions being raised about the challenge of building culturally integrated communities. They fixed on the idea of developing a *Quality (Q) Mark* on intercultural communities for Approved Housing Bodies. The organisations, Circle, Cluid, Cooperative Ireland, Oaklee, Respond and Tuath, established a steering group to work out the idea and develop a concrete proposal.

Throughout 2020, the steering group developed a framework for an AHB to attain a Q mark, a framework inspired by the Yellow Flag programme for building positive diversity in schools.

As part of the process, the Steering Group also designed and tested an online survey for residents in AHB estates from many backgrounds. The results demonstrated the need to proactively work on integration.

The Q Mark process will be presented to the AHB umbrella body in 2020 to support its future development.

## Policy areas

In addition, the Welcome on the Mat project explored policy considerations in building integrations. These focused on allocations, data gathering on demographics and addressing racist motivated anti-social behaviour. A workshop was convened with Dublin City Council staff and the Diversity Office in the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to explore these policy considerations.

In late 2020 as the first part of this project drew to a close CAN produced a report to document the experience and tell the story of our exploration of building better integration in social housing communities.

For more information on Welcome on The Mat see attached report

[http://www.canaction.ie/wp-content/plugins/gipublisher/scripts/gipublisher\\_download.php?book\\_seq=50](http://www.canaction.ie/wp-content/plugins/gipublisher/scripts/gipublisher_download.php?book_seq=50)

## 1.8 Contributions to conferences

CAN organised and participated in the following online conferences in 2020. To find out more about these events please click on the links below:

### ***Community Benefit***

A conversation with Social clauses expert Richard McFarlane who worked on clauses in UK and NI.

<https://youtu.be/fAAZM5HvS0I>



### **Social Clauses and Human Rights**

Exploring social clauses from legal frameworks and link to human rights- Jacqueline Healy (Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission), Dee Halloran (NUI Galway)

<https://youtu.be/hpEdDGL1E04>

### **Social Clauses – The Irish Experience**

Launch of our report on social clauses in Ireland so far by Minister Ossian Smyth -

[https://youtu.be/3\\_SuTIFAQG8](https://youtu.be/3_SuTIFAQG8)

### ***Community Safety***

A conference on the role of youthwork in responding to drug trading networks in our communities - Reaching the Hardest to Reach

<https://youtu.be/hxnx37ypFM4>

### **Strength in Numbers**

A conference launching the evaluation of Community Crime Impact Assessments (CCIAs) a tool for benchmarking and monitoring the impact of antisocial behaviour on people in a neighbourhood. The conference was attended by Garda Commissioner Drew Harris

<https://youtu.be/CIWKTXiJyM0>

## 2 Leadership Development

### 2.1 Grassroots Community Leadership

#### **Traveller Leadership Development**

Following a successful leadership development programme with Galway Traveller Movement (GTM) and NUI Galway in 2018/19 CAN was asked to join a consortium in the Midlands, comprising four Traveller Projects based in Offaly, Longford, Westmeath and Laois, Exchange House, the Education and Training Board and the HSE. The consortium set out to build on the learning from the Diploma programme and develop a leadership development programme with accreditation from NUI Galway. There was much enthusiasm for the programme across the four counties with a large attendance at an information session in Tullamore in February 2020. Meetings of the consortium continued thereafter but were difficult to sustain during the year as the restrictions of Covid 19 continued in place. Traveller leaders were fully engaged in their role in local health projects and all outreach programmes were suspended by NUIG. Working online added to the challenge of meeting as many do not have the resources necessary. There remains a group in place and we hope it will be possible to resume later in 2021.

#### **Young Leaders for Active Citizenship in North-East Inner-City Dublin**

Through a process of engagement with youth services in the NEIC Dublin CAN developed a bespoke learning programme for young people aged 17-24 years and was commissioned to deliver the programme in 2020. This programme is a response to the identified priority in the NEIC:

**‘Leadership and Structured Engagement:** Providers will come together to provide a single youth leadership development programme for the community to work with other structures set out in this plan and to represent youth voice and interests locally’ (Mulvey Report, 2016; Page 39).

CAN convened an Action Learning Unit of youth workers to explore the core elements of leadership in this age group of hard to reach young people. It set out to see how a programme could begin to form a group of young citizens who could contribute to change in their community. The outcome is a 4-module programme, suited to recognition through the Gaisce awards. It includes a variety of methods such as group work, project work, residentials, use of digital tools, an international study visit/exchange and mentoring by youth workers in each youth project. With the participation of 9 youth services in its development, the intention for a collaborative approach to facilitating young people’s emergent leadership in the NEIC is knitted into the practice from the start.

The COVID pandemic and related restrictions meant that the recruitment of young people and convening the group was not possible. Zoom as a means of meeting was not suitable for this potential group of young people for many reasons. We adapted to a different approach and worked with the Action Learning Unit to begin work in 2021 with a group of youth workers as mentors who would prepare together to support their young people when possible to meet in the room together again. The mentor support programme became the focus of our work in Q4 2020.

## 2.2 Organisational Leadership

### **Transformative Leadership Programme**

Transformative Leadership Programme (formerly known as Leadership for Equality) is a national leadership programme designed for senior managers and others in leadership roles within voluntary organisations across Ireland. It is accredited at Level 8 by NUI Maynooth and is run in partnership with the Wheel. It comprises four core modules, delivered over three days each, which are.

- Personal Leadership Model Building
- Understanding and Leading Change
- Working creatively with Diversity
- Building successful Collaborations.

In 2020 CAN delivered its seventh programme with sixteen participants who came from the following organisations: Landmark Trust, Catholic Institute for the Deaf, Irish Seed Savers, WALK, The Wheel, Largas, BelonG To, Waterford and South Tipp. Youth Services, Dublin Central Mission, New Communities Partnership, Music Generation and Cluid Housing. It commenced in January and two of its four modules were completed when Covid 19 restrictions were put in place. With reorganisation we were able to recommence online in July, holding weekly sessions in place of the three-day modules. The programme was completed by end of September 2020 with fifteen people successfully graduating.

## **CLUID and CLANN National Residents Advisory Groups**

CAN worked with the CLUID Housing and CLANN Housing newly formed National Residents Advisory Groups to develop both groups purpose, values, and agreements on how to work together as national advisory groups. 4 facilitated online sessions with each group of 17 and 10 residents respectively from different housing developments around Ireland produced Terms of Reference for partnering their Approved Housing Body landlords as resident representative groups.

## **3 Dialogue and Dialogic Leadership**

### **3.1 CAN GAIA Programme**

Theory U and the dialogic approach to change underpinning GAIA; Global Activation of Intention and Action are very much in line with CAN's change agenda. In 2020 we replicated the GAIA experience internally for the whole CAN organisation. We also piloted this programme with a group of front-line workers in the North Inner-City Dublin. In so doing, we learned the power of connecting in a more intentional and conscious way, that pays full attention to the situation that is unfolding in our lives. COVID and its ensuing individual and societal disruption amplified the inequalities and broken systems we have known about for decades. But unlike previous crises, everyone is impacted by COVID, touching us all regardless of who or where we are. This together with the global and local nature of the pandemic has demonstrated how individual behaviour impacts on the collective. We have seen too how the impossible is possible as evidenced by the major changes that have taken place in how we live, work, and interact

This encouraged us to design and facilitate a national safe online space for personal reflection and dialogue with people who experience or work to address inequality, to take place in 2021

### 3.2 Leadership Coaching and Mentoring

CAN continues to offer short and longer-term individual coaching and mentoring for managers and leaders in community, voluntary and statutory organisations. This work is currently conducted on an individual basis. In 2020 we worked with senior leaders from four organisations.

CAN is interested in developing this work on a small group basis also.

### 3.3 Dialogue in Dublin's North Inner City

Dialogue is a relationship change method and as such is a process that is most effective when all participants are present together in a room. In early 2020 we had great hopes to build on and develop the dialogue processes that had begun with community groups in the North Inner-City Dublin. However, COVID 19 meant that we had to postpone a lot of these plans. Prior to the first lockdown in March 2020 we did manage to host the following café conversation,

#### **Intergenerational Conversation for Women about Women**

CAN worked in collaboration with SWAN youth service to design a café event to commemorate International Women's day. Working with an artist young women were mentored and supported to carry out interviews with their mothers, aunts, and grandmothers. The process was designed to help explore issues that women faced in the past and compare them to present day issues. The conversations were recorded in a short film which was used to stimulate a wider inter-generational conversation on the evening. This took place on a very wet and stormy evening just before lockdown. Despite the inclement weather the event was very successful and was attended by 40 local women of all ages. Conversations from the evening were captured and recorded in film. Both films were made available to community projects and organisations and have received positive feedback. We hope to resume this initiative in 2021

### **Policing Dialogue**

CAN continue to work with young people, youth workers and member of An Garda Síochána in the NEIC Policing Dialogue Initiative. This project began in 2018 and continued through 2019. It has generated great enthusiasm and commitment by all involved. This has been further encouraged when the initiative won an award at the National Garda Síochána Youth Awards 2020.

Building on its initial success it was agreed to replicate the model and expand the invitation to more young people, youth workers and Gardai. Due to Covid19 restrictions we had to revise the design of the original programme to be delivered online. This was delivered over 4 two-hour sessions which took place in November 2020. 11 youth workers from 7 local youth projects along with 8 Gardai from Store Street and Mountjoy stations participated on the online programme.

Once again feedback was very positive from participants and it is intended to build on this in 2021

### 3.4 Youth at Risk Network

This is our third year facilitating a Youth at Risk Network in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown. The purpose of the Network is to create a reflective space for those who work with young people to explore common issues of interest and concern. Meetings were held in June, October and November 2020 and staff from twenty-seven organisations participated. There was an average attendance of twenty-five people on each occasion.

This is an initiative of Southside Partnership and the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Drug and Alcohol Task Force. CAN is engaged to work with a planning group and to facilitate and design each workshop. All sessions were conducted online in 2020. The effect of Covid 19 on young people, their families and those working with them was the main focus of the sessions and we addressed issues such as mental health and wellbeing of young people, transitions for them at different times of the pandemic and exchange of ideas between workers on best practice for engagement with young people.

### 3.5 DLRDATF Service User Engagement

CAN Facilitated a sub-group of the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Drugs and Alcohol Task Force to plan a process for engagement of drugs service users with the Task Force which commenced in late 2019. The aim of the process is to progress the findings of the Task Force research into the experience of those on long term methadone maintenance treatment, *Just Maintaining the Status Quo*, which found that issues of stigma, social re-integration, ambivalence towards treatment and health issues were among the most prevalent for this group. A series of café style



conversations with service users, drugs service providers and other service providers were prepared for in 2020 and had to be postponed due to COVID 19 and difficulties of engaging the Service User target group online.

### 3.6 Southside Addressing Violence Effectively (SAVE)

SAVE is an interagency forum established in 1995 with the main aim of developing a comprehensive response to domestic violence in the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown area. It is resourced and supported by Southside Partnership. Following an organisational review with the forum in 2019 it was decided that SAVE would host two large group events annually where all members and those concerned about domestic violence would gather for networking and learning. CAN facilitated these events – a reflective session where those who work with people experiencing domestic violence had the opportunity to reflect on their own experience and the effect of the work on them and later in 2020 the focus was on the effect of domestic violence on children. Both sessions were conducted online and were well attended.

### 3.7 Tusla, Dublin North Child & Family Support Networks (CFSN's)

The purpose of this work was to map services and programmes in three areas across north Dublin, Dublin 15, Coolock/Darndale and Swords/Balbriggan to provide parents and families with better access to information on services and build on the capacity and cohesion of the CFSN members. CAN facilitated three large group events approximately 120 frontline staff and managers participated. The process began in February 2020 in Dublin 15 and continued in the autumn online.

### 3.8 The National Women's Council of Ireland

The focus of this work was to facilitate women leaders at local level to come together online to reflect on and appreciate their leadership during Covid 19. The first event in October focused on their experience of leading during the pandemic. Challenges were identified and a sharing of creative ideas emerged from the process. The second event to mark the end of 2020 focused more on a celebration and capturing of their learning and experience gained from leading in the uncertain times that the pandemic presented.

## 4. Organisational Development

Strong, effective organisations, working in the service of social justice and equality are essential to progressive social change. CAN accompanies organisations on their journey as they build their capacity to redress social injustice and effect positive and sustainable change. Our practice is informed by whole systems thinking, an understanding of the value of leadership, a willingness to engage with change, and by reflective learning and dialogue.

In 2020 we worked with

- Programme team of the F2 Family Resource Centre Social Proscribing Team
- Staff team of the Child and Family Social Proscribing team

- Daughters of Charity Early Years staff team
- East Coast Partnership, Prevention and Family Support Team
- Dublin 12 Local Policing Forum
- Ballymun Local Community Drug and Alcohol Task Force
- Dublin 8 Men's Shed,
- St Michael's Estate Regeneration Team
- Canal Communities Regional Addiction Team

## 5. Sustaining our organisation through good governance, resourcing, and reflection

### **Governance**

CAN governance is in line with the Charities Governance Code, which consists of six principles; behaving with integrity; leading people; exercising control; working effectively; being accountable and transparent.

An integral part of our governance are monthly management meetings with a regular review of work undertaken and review of financial reports. In addition, we convene working groups on specific themes and meet bi-annually for strategic review meetings. These review meetings are facilitated by an external consultant from Dialogix based in UK.

We attend webinars and workshops related to the governance code and regularly check website for updates. We will be reviewing all policies in 2021 to ensure they are in line with the Charities regulatory. We will complete the compliance record forms in line with requirements by the charities regulator governance code.

Funding for our work comes from a variety of sources and securing ongoing funding is core part of our work. Currently funding comes from the Department of Rural and Community Development through Pobal and the Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO), the Open Society Foundation, fees generated by the work and philanthropic donations. CAN is deeply appreciative of our funding and the trust placed in us to do all our work.