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Working Paper

Capabilities and marginalised communities: The case of the indigenous ethnic minority traveller community and housing in Ireland

Open Discussion Papers in Economics, No. 80

Provided in Cooperation with:

Department of Economics, Faculty of Social Sciences, The Open University

Suggested Citation: Coates, Dermot; Anand, Paul; Norris, Michelle (2015) : Capabilities and marginalised communities: The case of the indigenous ethnic minority traveller community and housing in Ireland, Open Discussion Papers in Economics, No. 80, The Open University, Economics Department, Milton Keynes

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/147531>

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Capabilities and Marginalised Communities: The Case of the Indigenous Ethnic Minority Traveller Community and Housing in Ireland

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April 2015

NUMBER 80

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This series is registered under

ISSN 1753-2590 (Print)

ISSN 1753-2604 (Online)

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Capabilities and Marginalised Communities: The Case of the Indigenous Ethnic Minority Traveller Community and Housing in Ireland

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Capabilities and Marginalised Communities: The Case of the Indigenous Ethnic Minority Traveller Community and Housing in Ireland

The Pavee people (or Irish Traveller community) is a small, indigenous ethnic minority group and has been a part of Irish society for many centuries. This community holds to its own values, language, traditions and customs as part of a distinctive lifestyle and culture but they are widely regarded as one of the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups in Irish society. The experience of racism and discrimination is common to Irish Travellers, the Roma/Gypsy and other nomadic peoples and a number of international bodies have drawn explicit links between these groups. The authors utilise the capabilities approach as a multidimensional framework for analysing capability deprivation amongst Irish Travellers and as a tool for evaluating the success of public policy towards the community. Specifically, we emphasize the importance of a cluster of key themes including Traveller values, autonomy, self-sufficiency and choice and we explore the manner in which the housing experience of Irish Travellers contributes to capability deprivation amongst this community. We conclude that this goes beyond poor housing quality alone. This is also expressed through culturally-inappropriate service provision and the denial of opportunities to exercise choice and control over their own housing in addition to other spillover effects which can negatively impinge upon the freedom of this community to enjoy a life that they have reason to value. The paper concludes with a consideration of the usefulness of a consultative process to enable Irish Travellers to define their own list of capabilities and priorities with regard to housing and offers a Tool Kit to develop improved accommodation consultations as a potential resource for all stakeholders.

Keywords: Travellers, housing, quality of life, capabilities approach, agency, choice

1. Introduction

The Pavee community in Ireland – often colloquially referred to as Irish Travellers – is a small, indigenous ethnic minority group and has been a part of Irish society for many centuries. There are approximately 30-40,000 Irish Travellers living on the island of Ireland at present, including 30,000 plus individuals living in the Republic of Ireland in 2010 (Department of Health and Children, 2010; CSO, 2012). A further 2,000 or so Irish Travellers reside in Northern Ireland and many more reside in Great Britain. This community holds to its own values, language, traditions and customs as part of a distinctive lifestyle and culture, centred on a nomadic (or itinerant) tradition, which is separate from those of the majority population in Ireland (Department of Health and Children, 2010). The Traveller population in Ireland have endeavoured to maintain a sense of uniqueness and identity as a separate ethnic group over time in the face of pressures to conform and external opposition (Ní Shuinéar, 1994).

The Traveller community in Ireland regard themselves as a distinct ethnic group and this is a claim that is increasingly gaining traction with public policymakers in Ireland and further afield. This minority community is extremely small accounting for just over half of one per cent of the total population of the Republic of Ireland at the last count, albeit that these numbers do vary by source. Census 2011 enumerated almost 30,000 members of the Traveller community in the Republic of Ireland (CSO, 2012). These figures indicate that there has been a significant increase in the number of Travellers living in the Republic of Ireland over the inter-censal period 2006 to 2011 (up 32 per cent), a substantially faster rate of population growth than that recorded for the rest of the population (referred to as the ‘settled’

community below). However, the All-Ireland Traveller Health Study (Department of Health and Children, 2010) estimated the total population of Irish Travellers in the Republic of Ireland at more than 36,000 persons with more than 9,000 families. Over the same period, an annual count exercise undertaken by local authorities throughout the State enumerated more than 9,500 families in 2011 (Department of the Environment, various years). Consequently, it must be accepted that any published population estimates can only ever be a count of ascertained Travellers (Kobayashi, 2005).

Irish Travellers are widely regarded as one of the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups in Irish society and their exclusion from society is often compounded by misconceptions and hostility (Helleiner, 2000). It is clear that the Traveller community in Ireland has tended to underperform relative to the general population and is affected by high levels of multiple disadvantage. The marked inequality between this subculture and other groups within Irish society – an inequality which is not derived from any inherent differences between Travellers and settled persons – is often referred to as horizontal inequality in the literature around sociology and economics. In this sense, at least, the plight of the Irish Traveller community is reminiscent of that of many other indigenous ethnic minorities around the globe with membership of the community carrying significant disadvantages and with members of the community encountering exclusion and limited economic and social opportunities (Ramírez, 2005; Flores-Crespo and Nebel, 2005). Irish Travellers fare poorly across every commonly-used indicator of poverty and disadvantage from unemployment and health status through access to education and training, political representation, gender inequality and beyond. There is a substantial body of research evidence available to indicate that the Travelling community in Ireland is significantly more likely to experience poor outcomes across all of these headings than the general population in Ireland (Coates et al, 2009). However, such outcomes are not a recent phenomenon and are not a function of the current fiscal crisis. These have been documented by a number of statutory bodies and NGOs over many decades. Indeed, one such report characterised the living conditions of this community as intolerable (Rottman et al., 1986):

‘A uniquely disadvantaged group, impoverished, under-educated, often despised and ostracised, they live on the margins of Irish society...’

Housing is not the cause of the problems facing the Irish Traveller community but inadequate, inappropriate or poor-quality housing is a symptom of a deeper malaise. Current housing outcomes are a consequence of marginalisation, the erosion of community assets over many decades and the attendant prospect of cultural disintegration facing Irish Travellers (see Figure 1): a *‘fragmented, marginalised and intensely vulnerable community...a people that have slowly been ground down’* (Traveller Interview Sessions #1, 2 & 3, 2013). This is a community that feels disempowered by a State apparatus which it perceives to be imposing settled persons norms and views and by direct provisioning. This is also a community with a high level of dependence on forces and persons outside of itself (see Section 2). Housing is, however, a key issue for Irish Travellers. The provision of housing (including culturally-appropriate housing) and related facilities and services is uniquely important for the maintenance and flourishing of a way of life valued by this community. It is intimately linked with many aspects of their way of life from nomadism to maintaining close family networks and from Traveller-trade and enterprise to their horse-economy: *‘housing goes to the heart of Traveller culture and lifestyle and their values are deeply connected with their housing...housing is key to unlocking other solutions’* (Traveller Interview Sessions #1 & 2, 2013). From the perspective of the Traveller community, culturally-appropriate housing is key to their well-being: *‘housing is fundamental...it is the basis on which other rights can be built’* (Holland, 2013).

Figure 1 here.

It is the view of the authors that using the thinking which informs the capabilities approach as a framework to explore the housing experience of the Irish Traveller community can shed more light on

the problems encountered by that group for a number of reasons. Firstly, many of the problems of poverty and deprivation facing the Irish Traveller community have previously only been studied in isolation. The capabilities approach, with its consideration of the multidimensionality of poverty, provides scope to assess these many issues in a more holistic manner and in so doing, to draw out the overlap and linkages between the different aspects of poverty in the Traveller community. Secondly, the centrality of freedom, potential and choice within the capabilities approach means that this approach encourages us to see and explore some key themes. In the case of the Traveller community, the authors have focussed upon a cluster of five points: (1) the freedom of Travellers to live a life they have reason to value and to assert their own culture and identity, including its modern distillation viz living in extended family networks and travelling periodically; (2) the availability of opportunities for Travellers to access services and amenities and the restrictions they face in terms of spatial factors; (3) the nature and impact of stigma and discrimination in limiting the freedoms of Travellers; (4) Traveller autonomy and choice, including the nature of dependency within the community and the factors undermining sustainable Traveller economy and the emergence of a self-sustaining community; and (5) the importance of process, including those factors which have served to narrow extant consultative and deliberative mechanisms and the scope to enhance Traveller participation and engagement.

Thirdly, our exploration of these issues through the capabilities approach presents us with the opportunity to use this framework as an evaluative tool to assess the success, or otherwise, of official public policy towards the Traveller community in Ireland: integration. It is not our contention that the above themes and ideas are unique to the capabilities approach but rather, we believe that this approach provides a useful framework for bringing these together in one place and provides the context for us to do so. To this end, it is our contention that we can re-examine some of the horizontal inequalities confronting the Irish Traveller community through the prism of the capabilities approach and more particularly, that by considering the capacity of this community to exercise substantive choice and agency when it comes to housing and the consequences of their housing for other important spheres of life, that we can draw out some new and interesting themes for policymakers.

1.1 Sen's Capability Approach and the Importance of Choice

How we consider, judge and measure human welfare and its attainment is central to both economic thought and to public policy-making but increasingly economists have come to understand the shortcomings of traditional welfare economics and to recognise the need to better incorporate ideas around behaviour and social choice (Anand et al, 2009). These developments are reflected in the capabilities approach to human economic welfare which recognises the centrality of what a person could do or be to each individual's welfare. The capabilities approach developed by Sen and others recognises the 'multidimensionality of social disadvantage' (Sen, 2003). This approach broadens the scope of poverty assessment to include measures such as education, employment, housing and health and this is increasingly seen in an interdisciplinary literature around the 'human development' paradigm. This is reflected in a more holistic approach to the evaluation of outcomes than traditional welfare economics which has tended to focus upon measures of material well-being (such as income and/or wealth). Rather, the capabilities approach emphasises the importance of the freedom to achieve well-being through what people are able to do within the constraints of the resources at their disposal; in other words, a person's real opportunities to 'do' and to 'be'. Sen's capabilities approach examines human welfare from the perspective of a person's functionings and capabilities (or actual and potential activities or states of being, respectively) where poverty is defined as a deprivation of capabilities and the absence of the freedoms that people value and have reason to value (Kuklys and Robeyns, 2004; Alkire, 2007).

Sen's (1985, 1992) capabilities approach to the economics of welfare holds that functionings - what a person does or is - can range from the elementary (i.e. to be housed) to the complex (i.e. to participate

fully in society) and depend on the resources at their command. According to this approach, capability is the freedom to achieve valuable functionings and a person's total opportunities depend on the set of all functionings they could choose from, given the resources at their command, where these inter-relationships, in turn, imply that a person's opportunity to choose is an important determinant of their own well-being. Indeed, the importance of freedom for well-being is a central tenet of the capabilities approach and informs the distinction between what people are free to do (their capabilities or 'beings') and what they do (their functionings or 'doings') where a person's capabilities are a set of vectors of functionings from which one could be chosen and where freedom references the ability to be an agent of change in one's own life alongside the ability to achieve and to choose (Alkire, 2004; Anand and van Hees, 2005; Anand and Clarke, 2006). This emphasis upon freedom, opportunity and social choice is an important feature of the capabilities approach and as such, the capabilities approach recognises the intrinsic value of choice and affords to choice a 'central position...making its place in well-being and social justice evaluations more explicit' (Robeyns, 2003, Lelkes, 2005;).

1.2 Social Exclusion, Functionings and the Irish Traveller Community

The Irish Traveller community is regularly identified as one of the most socially-excluded groups in Irish society. In past research, Sen developed a series of basic functionings for the purposes of ranking countries and assessing the veracity of country rankings based solely on GNP per capita where such functionings included age and gender-specific mortality rates. Many such functionings have come to be incorporated in the United Nations annual Human Development Reports since 1990 as that body adopted some of the central tenets of the capabilities approach (Kuklys and Robeyns, 2004). In the case of the Irish Traveller community, such basic functionings can also be used as an interesting and informative starting point: life expectancy at birth for Irish Traveller males and females is 15 years and 12 years lower than for the general Irish population, respectively. This asymmetry can also be clearly observed across a range of other examples of the outcomes Irish Travellers actually achieve in their day-to-day living with this community under-performing relative to the general populace in many ways, both big and small. For instance, Irish Travellers are more likely have a disability; to be unemployed; to leave school early; to be without access to a car, a home computer or the Internet (CSO, 2012). These themes are explored in greater detail in Section 2.3 below. However, the gaps between the quality of life available to the Irish Traveller community and the general population in Ireland are not new and have given rise to much hard-hitting criticisms in the past (Rottman et al., 1986):

'the circumstances of the Irish Travelling people are intolerable. No humane and decent society, once made aware of such circumstances, could permit them to exist.'

This consistent gap in actual outcomes achieved between Irish Travellers and the majority population also extends into the housing sphere. Housing itself – in the form of 'being able to access to adequate shelter' – is recognised as a capability that is essential to human welfare in the capabilities literature (Nussbaum, 2000) and such is the centrality of our housing to our day-to-day life that sub-standard or inadequate housing can have negative effects upon the health and well-being for all persons and can undermine the most important capability of all: survival. Moreover, housing (or more particularly, poor-quality housing) can have a direct influence on a range of other outcomes including education, employment and social participation. The examples of social exclusion and horizontal inequality summarised above, however, are also replicated when it comes to housing the Irish Traveller community and in some ways are more pronounced, as we shall see in later sections of this paper. Irish Travellers are more likely to live in smaller homes, more likely to live without basic services such as sewerage, refuse collection and piped water and many hundreds of Irish Traveller families still live in temporary, informal roadside encampments.

Even leaving aside housing quality considerations, the unique lifestyle and culture of this community adds a further under-current when it comes to interpreting the meaning of 'being able to access to adequate shelter' in this context: the cultural-appropriateness of such accommodation and whether such accommodation is valued by the community. For instance, a significant proportion of Irish Traveller families have been allocated to standard social housing. This can lead to a sense of isolation and can present challenges to maintaining those immediate family networks most valued by the community or their own sense of separateness. Furthermore, even where such families have access to Traveller-specific accommodationⁱ such as Halting Sites (Caravan Parks) or Group Housing Schemes it can often be the case that such housing still does not provide facilities to support the lifestyle sought by the community for itself including traditional Traveller economic activities and/or a nomadic way of life (i.e. transient bays, etc.).

The rest of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 provides an outline of the import of concepts such as agency, agency goals and choice in terms of the capabilities approach in addition to exploring the importance of human rights and ethnicity in this regard and mapping metadata on Traveller social outcomes against a generally-accepted theoretical account of the capability set that is essential to human flourishing. Section 3 outlines the evolution of public policy frameworks for the provision of Irish Traveller accommodation over time and considers the importance of the shift away from viewing this issue as a 'problem' to be resolved. A detailed description of housing outcomes, and related housing satisfaction considerations, for the Irish Traveller community are presented in Section 4 alongside an analysis of the role of capability deprivation in this regard and a set of potential Traveller-specific housing capabilities. Summary and concluding comments are presented in Section 5.

2. Ethnicity, Agency and Capabilities

Sen (1993) has stressed the role of agency and the freedom of all people to make their own choices. The importance of the effective and meaningful participation of people is thus a central tenet of the capabilities approach with the implied need for the full involvement of people in their own development (Gigler, 2005). In this sense, the capabilities approach emphasises an individual's agency (or capacity to act or chose) with regard to exploiting their capabilities, where the latter encompass their real or effective opportunities to achieve any set of valued functionings, in order to obtain a life that he or she values. Agency in this context also relates to the exercising of value judgements regarding an individual's own wants and priorities. However, the importance of choice within the capabilities approach also embraces concepts intertwined with ethnicity, identity and affiliation. According to Flores-Crespo and Nebel (2005), personal identity and the singularity of each individual is one of the more complex questions confronting the pluralism of modern societies. Whilst identity and culture is something essential to each person, such themes are compatible with the capabilities approach and the heterogeneity of individual preferences given Sen's (1999) recognition of identity as an object of choice with individual's free to scrutinise cultural values and personal identity.

This assertion that the individual can exercise choice over their identity, albeit that some constructs of self-identity are necessarily assimilated rather than chosen, does not imply that the capacity to choose who we are is unlimited: 'the freedom in choosing our identity in the eyes of others can be extraordinarily limited' (Sen, 2005). Nonetheless, to fulfil and achieve a life one has reason to value a person must be able to choose his (or her) identities and affiliations (Sen, 1999). However, as we shall see below many Irish Travellers feel that such a choice is not open to them. They must, at times, conceal their own cultural identity and find that their identity is not sufficiently validated and respected: *'there's always been a view of us that's false, particularly in the media...we're always presented as being the bad guys and to blame'* (Traveller Interview Sessions #3, 2013).

2.1 Ethnicity, Law and Human Rights

Travellers are a traditionally nomadic people of ethnic Irish origin and have been indigenous to Ireland for up to a millennium. The historical origins of the emergence of this separate ethnic group have been subject to much debate within academic circles and are unclear as Irish Travellers have left no documentary evidence of their own (Helleiner, 2000; Equality Authority, 2006). Recent genetic analysis concluded that whilst Irish Travellers are of Irish ancestry, they are a distinct ethnic minority many of whom separated from the majority 'settled' Irish population, perhaps 1,000 years ago or more. The issue of ethnicity remains complicated as Gmelch (2005) has found that some Irish Traveller families may have adopted the customs of this community in more recent centuries rather than being traceable directly to the founders of this sub-population. Some theories suggest that Travellers are descendants of ancestors made homeless during a British military campaign in the 17th Century or by the Great Irish Famine in the 18th Century or that their nomadism dates back to the Late Middle Ages.

In parallel to this ethnic distinctiveness, Irish Travellers hold to their own values, languageⁱⁱ, traditions and customs as part of a unique lifestyle and culture, centred on a nomadic tradition and most Travellers self-identify, the latter being key to identifying those belonging to distinct communities according to the ILO and the UN. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) holds that the identification of an individual as a member of a particular ethnic group is based upon self-identification by the individual involved (save for the presentation of justifiable evidence to the contrary).

2.1.1 Traveller Ethnicity

A number of international bodies, including the UN, various bodies of the EU and the Council of Europe, have issued recommendations and conventions which draw explicit linkages between Irish Travellers and the Roma and Gypsy communities in Europe. The view that Irish Travellers are a distinct ethnic minority is supported by a number of Irish government agencies and Irish Traveller advocacy groups. Indeed, more than two decades ago a report by the European Parliament characterised Irish Travellers as the most discriminated against ethnic minority in Irish society (European Parliament, 1991). However, the Irish government continues to explicitly assert that Irish Travellers do not constitute an ethnic minority and has argued that it has 'not concluded that Travellers are ethnically different from the majority of Irish people' (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2006). The Irish Human Rights Commission has cautioned that this unwillingness to recognise Travellers as an ethnic minority may place the community outside the ambit of international human rights treaties and exclude them from a range of legal and administrative protections (IHRC, 2008).

The Irish government contends that Irish Travellers actually receive greater protection under extant anti-discrimination legislation and that no change is merited. This has led to ongoing tensions between the latter and the aforementioned international bodies (Coates et al, 2008). CERD (2005) has previously expressed concern over Ireland's continuing unwillingness to accept Travellers, under law, as a distinct ethnic minority. The stance of the Irish government is not new and has been reflected in many past public reports into the issue of accommodating the Irish Traveller community. For instance, Norris and Winston (2004) have previously noted that many of the policy statements on Traveller accommodation imply that Traveller differences relate not to ethnic factors and that these are merely choices. At the time of writing, there have been ongoing campaigns and petitions in Ireland around these issues and a proposal had been mooted with regard to legislating for the recognition of Traveller ethnicity.

This gives rise to the anomalous situation that although Irish Travellers are not recognised as an ethnic group in Ireland, they are recognised as such in Northern Ireland and Great Britain. In 2000, Irish Travellers received this recognition in the UK after a court ruling which found it was merited by virtue of

certain distinct characteristics (other than being Irish) including: a long, shared history; a distinct cultural traditionⁱⁱⁱ; a common language; a common oral tradition; and a long history of discrimination and prejudice due to their identity. This ‘denial of ethnicity’ does have practical consequences. For instance, as a recognised ethnic minority Irish Travellers would arguably have an entitlement to special measures to tackle entrenched inequalities – such as those aimed at caste-based discrimination in India – including reservations in public representation, employment and education (albeit that such measures do not exist in the Irish system at present).

2.1.2 Nomadism and Cultural Rights

Nomadism (or semi-nomadism) is the single most distinctive aspect of the cultural traditions maintained by Irish Travellers. For many Travellers, the freedom to travel – even if it is only done irregularly – is central to their identity and goes to the heart of what it means to be a Traveller. Some Travellers still travel regularly and for economic reasons whilst others may only do so irregularly and for social or recreational reasons: ‘...*some don’t travel regularly in the traditional sense but modes of travel can change...they’re still travelling and they haven’t let go of their right to do so*’ (Traveller Interview Sessions #2, 2013). In practice, however, travelling can now be very difficult, if not impossible, for a variety of reasons. Some of these reasons are directly related to Traveller housing provision, including a shortage of culturally-appropriate housing and/or deficiencies in this housing, where it is provided (see Section 4).

Access to culturally-appropriate housing is a basic human right under the terms of the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Moreover, nomadic identity is protected under the Council of Europe system as part of the general obligation to promote conditions that allow for cultural expression. A recommendation by the Council of Ministers (2004) set out an obligation to facilitate nomadism and included an express commitment to promote Traveller nomadism and Traveller-specific accommodation¹:

‘...those among the Roma/Gypsy and Traveller communities who wish to continue to lead a traditional nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle should have the opportunity, in law and in practice, to do so, by virtue of the freedom of movement and settlement guaranteed to all citizens of members states and the right to preserve and develop specific cultural identities’.

2.1.3 Implications of Ethnicity Denial

Many Travellers themselves recognise that ethnicity has long-term consequences not just in terms of cultural survival, health and opportunities but that this is also key to public policy and service provision (Department of Health, 2010). Coates et al (2008) have previously found that the stance of the Irish government can and does have implications for housing policy, and service delivery more generally, and that international perspectives on equality are predicated upon the assumption that ethnicity should be afforded first priority in determining service delivery approaches. Indeed, factors such as culture and identity shape the needs of a group and any public assistance programmes must take these into account in order to be effective (Equality Authority, 2006). During the course of the authors’ fieldwork, the importance of recognition of Traveller ethnicity was identified as a precursor to progress on other fronts: *‘first, we need to be accepted for who we are and know that we’re valued the same as everybody else’...‘to be accepted as valued members of society, that would have meaning to the community’...‘this can really boost the community and give them a sense of value they don’t always feel’* (Traveller Interview Sessions #3, 2013).

¹ In late-2013, the European Roma Rights Centre, with the Irish Traveller Movement, filed a collective action with the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe against the Irish State alleging breaches of the European Social Charter (i.e. that the defendant has persistently failed to provide adequate accommodation for the Traveller community in the Republic of Ireland and that actions and omissions by the State had violated the rights of Travellers).

From the perspective of the capabilities approach, ethnic diversity, and the affording of recognition to ethnic distinctiveness, is an important consideration. The ongoing failure of the Irish government to recognise and validate the cultural and ethnic distinctiveness of this community, or to support their right to self-identification, undermines the freedom of individual Travellers to choose his (or her) own identity and affiliations. The freedom to make that choice is invariably intertwined with *Affiliation* (Nussbaum, 2000) and its practical offshoots: the ability to be treated as a dignified being and to have the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation. To this end, the freedom to choose one's own identity and affiliations is the touchstone of the capacity to be one's self and to freely engage in group identification and social interaction. However, for many Irish Travellers that such a choice is not open to them and they feel the need to 'pass-off' (or deny their identity) in order to access services and/or to avoid harassment (Department of Health, 2010). This conception of the choice around identity as an inherently negative one, and the concomitant need to refuse and conceal their own identity, is not unique to Irish Travellers but has been documented for many other indigenous groups and ethnic minorities, including the native Mexican people (Flores-Crespo and Nebel, 2005). Indeed, there is sometimes an understandable desire amongst Travellers not to risk further stigmatization by identifying themselves as discreet from the settled community on the basis of ethnicity (Keane, 2010).

2.2 Agency, Adaptation and the Capabilities Approach

The capabilities approach emphasises what a person could do or be as opposed to what they actually do. This approach emphasises the importance of opportunity or freedom for human welfare. An individual's capabilities set represent those functionings that it is feasible for them to achieve and these feasible functions are dependent upon a person's own features (including resources and their freedom to choose how those resources are converted) (Anand et al, 2009). The importance of agency for human well-being has been highlighted in the growing literature around the capabilities approach (Doyal and Gough, 1991; Nussbaum, 2000). Recent research has found that themes relating to agency (or autonomy) are consistently significant across population groups when analysing which capabilities are covariates for life satisfaction. These findings, then, suggest that agency is, perhaps, a 'universal, master value' (Anand et al, 2009). Moreover, freedom itself has an intrinsic value. The act of making a choice and having the freedom to choose those courses of action that an individual has reason to value is itself valuable and valued and thus, we need to take account of those opportunities and substantive freedoms from which a given suite of functionings are chosen (Burchardt, 2009). From the perspective of the capabilities approach then, the freedom to choose goes to the heart of an individual's capacity to optimise their utility (or happiness) and to live a life that they have reason to value as the capability set encompasses their real, or effective, opportunities to do and be.

2.2.1 Agency Goals and Adaptation

Such is the importance of agency, Burchardt (2009) has argued that the 'definition of agency freedom in particular, and capability in general, needs to be expanded' in order to reflect the conditions under which agency goals and preferences are formed and she has put forward the concept of 'capability as autonomy'. The importance of being free to make a choice and the centrality of that freedom to human well-being is not limited to the individual. In other words, individuals can have agency goals. These agency goals are derived from 'the breadth of interests, values and commitments that human beings have'. The concept of agency goals implies that choices are not solely directed towards the well-being of an individual. People can care about things other than their own happiness or well-being and as such, can have objectives and commitments concerning the well-being of others. These objectives can include the pursuit of the well-being and common good of one's own community (Burchardt, 2009; Sen, 1985a).

Agency goals play a particularly important role in the lives of small communities, such as the Irish Travellers, which have striven to maintain a sense of separateness and their own identity, sometimes in the face of official and popular antipathy. Irish Travellers have agency goals given that they self-identify as a minority community with distinct traditions and culture which they wish to preserve: *'this is a small community and one that is very family-centric...they see their objectives as being for the family, for the community and not for just one person...that's not how they see things'* (Traveller Interview Sessions #1, 2013). Such goals – from the freedom to live side-by-side in a dedicated space to the freedom to live a nomadic lifestyle at will – are states of being within the capability set of each individual Irish Traveller but are only desirable and valued when shared by the whole community and when the community has the freedom to be, and to be seen to be, just that: a community.

Notwithstanding the value of freedom and the process of making one's own choices, it is clear that both individual preferences and agency goals are, inevitably, adaptive. The lived experiences of any individual, or group, come to shape their aspirations around future opportunities with 'those experiencing significant past disadvantage forming lower aspirations' (Burchardt, 2009). The vagaries of adaptation (or habituation to one's own circumstances) ensure the process of choosing available functionings from each individual's capability set will depend on past experiences. This ensures that the full 'menu' of available options and opportunities are not perceived to be part of an individual's capability set because their expectations are conditioned by the experience of growing up in disadvantaged circumstances. Consequently, subjective constraints, such as low expectations, effectively serve to limit a person's capability set. Moreover, the perceived 'menu' influences choice and can also shape preferences (Sen, 1997). For marginalised and impoverished groups within society, the restrictions on agency imposed by the experience of disadvantage are further compounded by the role of discrimination. The experience of discrimination is important as it presents an obstacle to the expansion of the capabilities and functionings of individuals and 'it constrains autonomy and redistributes freedom' (Anand et al, 2009; Fukuda-Parr, 2011).

The foregoing considerations are of the utmost importance when considering the freedoms and choices of Irish Travellers as so many in the community are confronted with a cradle-to-grave experience of discrimination, marginalisation and life in economically-deprived circumstances. As we have already seen, issues pertaining to agency and autonomy are oftentimes problematic for the Irish Traveller community. Identity is characterised as an object of choice in the capabilities approach but for Irish Travellers, they can find that their choice to self-identify as an ethnic minority is simply ignored by those in authority. For many in the community, indeed, it is necessary to engage in 'passing-off' and to refuse and conceal their identity rather than being free to choose their identity and affiliations. Similarly, Irish Travellers are commonly subjected to discrimination (NCCRI, various years) (see Table 1). The day-to-day experience of discrimination further constrains the autonomy of the community. Moreover, subjective constraints and the process of adaptation, and how this shapes aspirations and preferences, are also important concepts for Irish Travellers given their experience of poverty over the lifecycle.

For those Irish Travellers who experienced poverty during their own childhood (and thus, a restricted capability set during the formative stages of their life) – including the substantial numbers raised on roadside encampments until the 1990s – this experience will continue to influence contemporary individual preferences and agency goals due to conditioned expectations. These conditioned expectations serve to constrain the capability set by shaping aspirations and preferences as the individual (or group) come to perceive their opportunities as being narrower than they might be. This is equally true of young Travellers today. Their experience of poverty and discrimination not only serves to constrain their freedom to choose today but will also shape their aspirations and preferences into the future (Burchardt, 2009). It does so in a manner which invariably constrains the capability set from which they can choose as they grow older and in so doing, reinforces a less than virtuous circle. For instance, their childhood experience of being someone less valued by society (or somehow different) and of being unable to live a

nomadic lifestyle will limit their expectations around what the future holds for them (and those set of functionings from which they chose as they grow older). Similarly, for those growing up in a community afflicted by extremely high levels of unemployment and low levels of educational attainment (particularly, at tertiary level), these experiences will ultimately shape their occupational and educational expectations and choices in later life.

2.2.2 Implications of Dependency for Traveller Agency

The interplay between adaptation and dependency over many decades has had very real consequences when it comes to Traveller agency in many walks of life. In parallel with the gradual grinding down of the community referred to earlier, processes of technological, economic, social and legal change have led to the Traveller community becoming increasingly dependent on others, and in myriad ways. This dependency, broadly speaking, has three principal streams: traditional welfare dependency (relating to income supports or ‘cash’); dependency upon the State to provide services, including housing; and an increasing reliance on support groups, such as community development workers, to advocate and act on the community’s behalf (including liaising with local authorities and other statutory bodies). Irish Travellers were traditionally economically self-sufficient and played a significant role in the Irish rural economy pre-1960 working as artisans, entrepreneurs and seasonal labour but the advent of industrialisation and modernisation has meant that traditional forms of Traveller employment have become marginalised (Fanning, 2009). All groups in society will at some point face the consequences of economic and industrial change but, in many ways, the Traveller community has not adapted to these challenges. In those cases where Travellers have endeavoured to carve out fresh niche enterprises – scrap metal, recycling, horse-trading, etc. – they have sometimes faced difficulties around access to facilities and credit in addition to regulatory challenges.

The extremely high rate of unemployment amongst Travellers indicates the difficulties they face in accessing mainstream employment: *‘if they find out you’re a Traveller, you’ve no chance...you have to pretend not to be if you want to get work’* (Traveller Interview Sessions #3, 2013). The absence of paid work, and follow-on consequences around self-esteem, for many in the community is just one way in which Travellers have increasingly become dependent on external support. During the course of the authors’ fieldwork, a number of those working in the field of community development with Irish Travellers reflected on how this community has come to develop a culture of high dependency and reduced agency which, for many Travellers, is most characterised by low expectations around what it is that the community can achieve for itself: *‘...the direct provision of so many supports and services, including housing, is only disempowering the community’...‘the steady fall in the community’s own self-esteem has only led to greater disengagement and a heightened reliance on others’* (Traveller Interview Sessions #1 & 2, 2013).

This reliance upon others has had a profoundly negative impact: *‘this has undermined Traveller autonomy...this requires not just a long-term approach but an internal community solution...we need a process to empower Travellers’* (Traveller Interview Sessions #1 & 2, 2013). There is a perception that many public policy responses don’t really get beyond throwing money at the community: *‘this is not about giving Travellers money...there needs to be a focus on the process...how can we encourage Travellers to engage and to understand and meet their own needs’* (Traveller Interview Sessions #1 & 2, 2013). Interestingly, it was suggested that the sheer weight of community development projects had produced an adverse outcome and had contributed to the loss of cultural capital and community confidence: *‘...these projects were about capacity-building within the community and empowering them...but sometimes these projects seem to only create further dependency’* (Traveller Interview Sessions #2, 2013).

Challenges confronting Traveller agency and autonomy, their freedom to pursue their own agency goals and the intrinsic value of being able to make choices viz those functionings they have reason to value are also played out when it comes to the issue of housing and the Irish Traveller community. This arises because, mainly due to high rates of welfare dependency amongst Travellers, they are generally reliant upon the State to meet their housing needs with up to 85 per cent of Travellers receiving some form of assistance from the State to meet their own housing needs. This also arises due to the preference for many in the community for Traveller-specific accommodation and their distinctive cultural and lifestyle traditions. In part, this surfaces questions of how Irish Travellers can exercise any agency, either individually or as a group, when it comes to housing. It also implies that where consultative mechanisms are instituted to allow the voices of the community to be heard, it is essential that such mechanisms are effective so that their choices are substantive (or real). However, recent research undertaken with regard to housing and the Irish Traveller community has raised questions as regards to the veracity of the choices open to this community: whether there are sufficient mechanisms in place to allow the views of the community to be voiced and/or whether these opinions are taken into consideration at all times (Coates et al, 2008).

The issue of choice, and particularly substantive choice, is important in the context of communities reliant upon public provision and where welfare dependency is high. In the absence of such freedoms, dissatisfaction and disengagement are inevitable. There is evidence to suggest that in spite of the progress made in recent decades the choices open to the Irish Traveller community are not always, in practice, substantive when it comes to influencing the provision of culturally-appropriate accommodation. Implementation and delivery deficits persist and these shortfalls have significant negative spill-over effects for other areas of Traveller life and in particular, for those aspects of Travellers' unique culture and lifestyle that are most valued by the community, including the maintenance of family networks, Traveller economy and the opportunity to live a nomadic lifestyle (see Section 4).

2.3 Horizontal Inequality and Traveller-specific Outcomes

Inequality between culturally formed groups is an important dimension of development as each group's relative performance in economic, social and political dimensions is an important source of individual welfare. Such inequality is evident across a number of areas. The unemployment rate for Irish Travellers was 84 per cent in 2011 compared to 14 per cent among the general population. The labour force participation rate for Irish Travellers is also lower than for the general population and where Irish Travellers are in paid employment, they are more likely to work in unskilled (or elementary) occupations. A similar tale can be observed with regard to education with Irish Travellers being much less likely to continue with their education beyond age 18. Consequently, just one per cent of Irish Travellers have completed third-level (or tertiary) education compared to 31 per cent of the general population.

In terms of health, the difference between Irish Travellers and their settled peers is stark (Department of Health and Children, 2010). Irish Travellers experience both a significantly lower life expectancy, as can be seen in both age and gender-specific mortality rates, and a significantly higher infant mortality rate than do the general populace. As a result, the Standardised Mortality Rate (SMR; or difference in the mortality rate for these two groups) for Irish Travellers is 3.5 times higher than that for the general population. This mortality gap has actually widened over the past 20 years and in the case of Irish Traveller males, no improvement has been recorded over this period. The principal causes of this excess mortality include heart disease, respiratory conditions and external causes (including suicide). The suicide rate for Irish Traveller males is almost 7 times higher than for the general population. Moreover, the population structure of the Irish Traveller community also differs significantly from that of the general population where the latter has a substantially younger average age profile with a low number of persons in the middle and older age groups (including a much lower proportion of those aged 65 years or more). Such

differences are attributable to a number of factors including the lower average life expectancy, a higher birth rate, a higher infant mortality rate, larger average family sizes and a cultural propensity towards marriage at a younger age.

2.3.1 Nussbaum's List

The capabilities approach provides us with a framework to explore the inequality and poverty confronting Irish Travellers. Nussbaum (2000) has put forward a high-level account of those capabilities that are essential to human well-being. This 'list' spans ten headline capabilities categories ranging from *Life* and *Bodily Health* to *Affiliation* and *Control over Environment*. Each of the headline capabilities categories incorporates a diverse range of constituent capabilities such that Life, for example, encompasses good health, reproductive health, adequate nourishment and adequate shelter (see Table 1). The universalist nature of one single 'list' of capabilities is questionable as it is unlikely that such an account is equally appropriate in every country, regardless of culture or other considerations (Anand et al, 2009; Robeyns, 2005). Nevertheless, this is intended to be a general, high-level checklist and as a concrete endeavour to account for all substantive capabilities, it is a good starting-point for our purposes here.

From the capabilities perspective, the extent to which capability deprivation (or poverty) afflicts this community can be underscored by using Nussbaum's list of substantial freedoms (or capabilities) as a prism through which the day-to-day experience of Irish Travellers can be better, and more holistically, understood. To this end, the authors have reviewed and analysed the available evidence where the metrics considered relate directly, or indirectly, to those capabilities outlined by Nussbaum. This, in turn, has been used to create both qualitative and quantitative metadata which has been mapped against Nussbaum's list under each headline capability (see Table 1). The results of this exercise show starkly that Irish Travellers exhibit capability deprivation under all of the substantive freedoms put forward in Nussbaum's account where this poverty encompasses many disparate themes. These include, but are not limited to, reduced life expectancy (*Life*), poor self-rated health (*Bodily Health*), restricted freedom to move about freely (*Bodily Integrity*), poor levels of political representation (*Control over Environment*) and the lived experience of discrimination alongside a perceived need to refuse, or conceal, one's identity (*Affiliation*).

Table 1 here.

This capability deprivation is also evident when it comes to the housing and living conditions of Irish Travellers. Housing is another sphere where this community has very visibly underperformed in terms of outcomes achieved relative to the general populace in Ireland with Irish Travellers being more likely to live in overcrowded accommodation, more likely to be without basic amenities and more likely to be reliant upon the State to provide for their housing needs. Under the headline category *Bodily Health*, housing is explicitly specified by Nussbaum: being able to access to adequate shelter is one dimension of this attribute. However, housing is inherently cross-cutting. Its influence goes beyond mere 'bricks and mortar' but feeds into other good life desiderata including physical and mental health outcomes and the accessibility of employment, education and training opportunities; social and healthcare services and recreational facilities. Housing is a critical determinant of a range of other outcomes and is also directly, or indirectly, related to many more of those capabilities proposed by Nussbaum.

Our immediate environment, including the home, shapes our life chances and effects both current and future well-being (Harker, 2006). Poor housing is strongly associated with a greater likelihood of poor health, including respiratory and heart diseases, with self-rated health in adults being significantly affected by the experience of poor quality housing in childhood (Blackburn, 1990; Marsh et al, 2000). The built environment can have profound negative effects upon both physical and mental health outcomes, and can magnify health disparities so that these effects are most pronounced for ethnic minority groups and low-income communities. Unsafe, poorly-serviced and dilapidated private and urban spaces have been found to contribute to unhealthy lifestyles, violence and reduced interpersonal contact and participation by discouraging physical activity and recreation and encouraging social isolation (Hood, 2005).

The contribution of housing to capability deprivation amongst Irish Travellers goes beyond issues relating to poor quality housing alone. It also relates to choice, cultural appropriateness and control when it comes to accommodation. These can also have spillover effects which can negatively impinge upon the freedom of this community to enjoy a life that they have reason to value. The importance of housing in this regard cannot be overstated and these themes are explored in more detail in Sections 3 and 4.

3. The Development of Traveller Accommodation Policy Frameworks

Irish Travellers have often endeavoured to maintain separateness from the wider Irish community for the purposes of maintaining and strengthening their own unique cultural identity, social supports and family networks. However, this very separateness has often been seen to be problematic beginning with officially-commissioned research in the 1960's which identified the presence of this community, and their nomadic traditions, as a social problem to be resolved by way of assimilation into the mainstream (or settled) community and without reference to the potential impact of such a course of action on the long-term viability of the Irish Traveller community as a distinctive minority group. The evolution of public policy towards the provision of housing to Travellers, the progress made and barriers to further improvements are detailed in the remainder of this section.

3.1 Public Policy Priorities: From Assimilation to Integration and Beyond

3.1.1 Assimilation

Public policy on the provision of housing to the Traveller community in Ireland has evolved incrementally over many decades and has been shaped, at least in part, by the findings and recommendations of a number of independent review bodies (Coates et al, 2008; 2009). The first such review – *The Report of the Commission on Itinerancy* – was published in 1963; prior to this, neither Traveller accommodation nor any other aspect of the provision of services to Irish Travellers had been explicitly addressed. Before the 1960's, this community was seen as providing valued, niche services within Ireland's predominantly rural economy but after the onset of modernisation and industrialisation, such economic activity had become untenable (Ó Síocháin et al, 1994) and the nomadic traditions of the Irish Travellers and their relatively poor living conditions (including substantial numbers of families living on the roadside without basic services or amenities) had come to be seen as 'social problems' to be resolved (Fraser, 2002; MacLaughlin, 1996). Indeed, the subsequent trajectory for dealing with Traveller accommodation issues was established early on. An analysis by Ní Shuinéar (1998) of three public policy statements on the Traveller community (from 1963, 1983 and 1995) found that these issues were first approached and defined in the 1960's as seeking to 'solve' the 'problem of itinerancy'. The genesis of the recommendations that were to follow can be clearly seen in the terms of reference of the Commission: to resolve '*the problem arising from the presence in the country of itinerants in considerable numbers*'. Unsurprisingly then, the report's authors recommended the assimilation of the Irish Traveller community into settled society

through the provision of standard social housing alongside the provision of temporary serviced and unserviced campsites (for more mobile families).

3.1.2 Integration

The second review – *Report of the Travelling People Review Body* – was published in 1983. This was a departure from its predecessor in that the report argued against the assimilation (or absorption) of the Traveller community into settled society but rather, suggested the ‘integration’ of the two communities (Coates et al, 2008). Nevertheless, in spite of this progress towards the recognition of differences between the communities the report went no further and did not endorse the notion of a distinct ethnic identity. Consequently, Norris and Winston (2004) noted that many of the recommendations contained therein imply that Traveller differences are merely choices rather than stemming from cultural traditions or collective rights. This report shifted the emphasis away from standard social housing only and recommended the construction of Traveller-specific accommodation (or culturally-appropriate housing). This included Group-Housing Schemes allowing extended families to live together – an important feature of Traveller living – and Halting Sites for those who did not accept other accommodation options (albeit that these were to be provided in limited numbers only). The third and most recent review – *Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community* – was published in 1995 and covered a wide range of topics including relationships between the Traveller and settled community, Traveller culture and economy, health, education and housing. Once again, this report went further than its predecessors in recognising that Travellers do have a distinct identity and once that should be supported by public policy; however, there was still to be no recognition of Irish Travellers as a distinct ethnic group. The report advocated the continued provision of both Traveller-specific and standard social housing in addition to the development of a network of short-term transient sites (to facilitate nomadism) and a national programme for Traveller housing (embedded in the local authority sector).

Figure 2 here.

3.1.3 Assimilation versus Integration

For the past three decades, official public policy towards the Traveller community has been predicated upon integration rather than assimilation where the former entails the recognition of the differences between the two communities and acceptance of Travellers’ distinct identity: ‘*this was about two equal communities living side-by-side*’ (Traveller Interview Session #2, 2013). The pursuit of integration as a policy goal spans many aspects of the public services and has given rise to a wide range of interventions. These include the funding of an array of national and local community development and advocacy groups for the Traveller community by the Exchequer. Discrimination on the grounds of membership of the Traveller community is illegal under the Equal Status Act, 2000. Traveller Resource Teachers (or in-class supports) and additional teaching hours and grants have been provided at primary and post-primary level and access programmes have been established to increase at the numbers of Travellers in higher education. Traveller health, training and employment strategies and programmes have also been put in place. Whilst progress has been made it can still be said, however, that Travellers still fare significantly worse than other sections of Irish society in terms of education, health and employment outcomes (see Section 2). Moreover, many in the Traveller community have argued that, in practice, current policy is still assimilationist: ‘*...assimilation is still the goal because the implementation is so weak...there’s no real will to make integration work*’ (Traveller Interview Sessions #1 & 2, 2013). When it comes to housing, the main policy departure viz integration has been Traveller-specific accommodation. Traveller housing outcomes, including the provision of Traveller-specific accommodation, are explored in detail in Section 4.

3.2 Multicultural Approaches, the Welfare State and the Choice-based Agenda

For all of the flaws in the public policy response to the delivery of Traveller-specific accommodation (and indeed, to other issues of concern to Irish Travellers) and the challenges faced by all stakeholders in this regard, it is important to note that important far-reaching progress has nonetheless been made in terms of establishing a more equitable and responsive framework, particularly in recent years. As the public policy imperative was shifted away from a stance predicated upon assimilation and the provision of standard social housing for all and moved towards a more multicultural stance which recognised the need to provide Traveller-specific housing options, so too has the architecture for planning and delivery been updated, including the introduction mechanisms to ensure that the housing choices of the community are ascertained and that specific targets are set. The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 places a statutory obligation on all local authorities, in consultation with the local Irish Traveller community and their representative groups, to produce multi-annual Traveller Accommodation Programmes (TAPs) setting out the identified need in each area and how this was to be met.

At the time of writing, three rounds of TAPs have been advanced (2000-2004; 2005-2008; 2009-2012). Each local authority was also legally obliged to provide a full range of accommodation options in their locality, including a network of transient sites. This legislation also established a National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (NTACC) and a network of Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees (LTACC). In recognition of the importance of effective consultation between each local authority and their Irish Traveller-tenants, these local committees consist of local authority officials, elected public representatives and representatives of local Travellers and it is intended that each LTACC would be consulted for advice during the preparation of the TAPs and that these committees would monitor the preparation, adequacy and implementation of these plans.

The role of the NTACC is to develop and oversee a model of consultation between local authorities, Irish Travellers and other stakeholders at the national level and to advise on all issues pertaining to Irish Traveller accommodation. In addition to the NTACC, a number of other national advisory bodies have been established more recently including the High-Level Group on Travellers and the National Traveller Monitoring and Advisory Committee where such bodies are charged with improving outcomes for this community; as part of this remit, such bodies have a role to play in terms of improving Traveller accommodation policy and practice and identifying priorities around issues such as inter-agency cooperation and meaningful consultation. The most recent statement on Irish housing policy – *Building Homes, Sustaining Communities* (DEHLG, 2007) – emphasised the importance of delivering sustainable communities through a recognition of the importance of community considerations and equal access and by adopting models of service delivery which encourage choice and personal autonomy. This document also included a number of Traveller accommodation-specific recommendations including the facilitating of community self-supporting approaches to meet their own needs and the development of new strategies to accelerate the provision of Traveller-specific accommodation.

3.3 Traveller Accommodation Practice and Implementation Deficits

In spite of the policy and institutional developments outlined above, progress on-the-ground has not always been either smooth or consistent and a range of ‘implementation deficits’ (Coates et al, 2008) have been identified. Whilst significant progress has been made in some local authority areas, this is not always the case and a number of disconnections between national policy and local practice are evident. These are attributable to a wide range of factors, including unclear legislative procedures, absence of political commitment, inconsistencies in local authority practice, institutional racism and discrimination, negative public opinion regarding Traveller accommodation and flaws within the consultative mechanisms outlined below. The outcomes which flow from such inconsistent practices are clear for all to see. For instance, although each local authority is legally mandated to set multi-annual targets for housing delivery under the TAPs, such targets are regularly unattained. Progress in the implementation of the various

rounds of these plans has tended to be slow, notwithstanding unavoidable planning delays, etc. (Coates et al, 2009) with one community advocacy group noting that less than 10 per cent of the assessed need for permanent accommodation had been delivered (ITM, 2006). A review by the NTACC (2004) recommended that local authorities should be required to set realistic and achievable targets going forward. A similar lack of progress with regard to the delivery of short-term transient sites is also evident (see Section 4).

Interestingly, in some cases actual developments and output delivery at the local level have run counter to recommendations of past reports (see Section 3.1). *The Report of the Commission on Itinerancy* recommended that steps be taken to reduce the numbers living on the roadside but these numbers remained stubbornly high for many years thereafter. The *Report of the Travelling People Review Body* recommended that limited numbers of Halting Sites be provided but these quickly became a permanent (and growing) feature of Traveller-specific housing in the years after 1983. Successive reports recommended a shift away from standard social housing but there has been a consistent increase in the number of families accommodated in this tenure (O'Toole, 2009). The poor living conditions and housing of the Irish Traveller community and the failure to properly address and resolve such issues have been attributed to institutional racism on behalf of the institutions of the Irish State (NCCRI, undated; Kenny, 1997). Moreover, many stakeholders, including the general public (i.e. the settled community), express ongoing dissatisfaction with regard to the current state of Traveller accommodation throughout the country. Much of this dissatisfaction relates to the physical appearance of Traveller-specific accommodation, including public perceptions regarding issues such as the accumulation of rubbish (Treadwell-Shine et al, 2008). The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (2001) found that:

'One of the main barriers to the improvement of the situation as regards to accommodation is reported to be the unwillingness of the local authorities to provide accommodation and resistance and hostility among local communities to planned developments...'

4. Traveller Housing: Agency, Outcomes and Constraints

Traveller accommodation has been the subject of much research over the years and progress has proven difficult. The provision of better and more appropriate housing for the Travelling community can be considered an important benchmark for assessing the success or otherwise of any endeavors to improve both Traveller quality of life and access to services given that housing is central to improved health outcomes and so forth (Coates et al, 2009). It is clear that significant progress has been made with regard to improving housing provision for the Traveller community in Ireland – from the recognition of the need to provide Traveller-specific housing options to significant reductions in the numbers of families living in unserviced roadside encampments – and in mainstreaming institutional reforms to support this progress. Nevertheless, there remains much to do and Irish Traveller housing outcomes still lag far behind that of much of the rest of society.

Home ownership rates for this community are very low by Irish standards with just 1 in 5 Traveller households owning their own home (compared to 70 per cent of all Irish households) whilst almost a very high proportion of Traveller families rely on the State to assist them with their housing. The average number of rooms in Irish Traveller households is markedly lower than the nationwide average and Irish Traveller families are eight times more likely to be living in overcrowded accommodation. Moreover, about 1 in 8 Irish Traveller families reside in caravans (or other temporary or mobile dwellings) and of these, a significant proportion still had no sewerage facilities or piped water in 2011 (CSO, 2012). Indeed, the number of Irish Traveller families without access to basic household amenities such as a flush toilet, running water and postal and refuse collection services are disproportionately greater than the general

population (Department of Health and Children, 2010). These outcomes and a number of related themes are explored in detail in this section.

4.1 Accommodation Outcomes, Housing Satisfaction and the Traveller Community

The necessity of providing Traveller-specific accommodation (or culturally-appropriate housing) was first recognised in the 1980's. The local government sector in Ireland has been legally mandated to identify the need for such housing in each locality, and to set multi-annual targets, under their TAPs since the 1990's. However, by 2011 less than 1 in every 4 Irish Traveller families was residing in Traveller-specific accommodation (see Table 2). Over the course of the past decade, important progress has been made with the Irish government spending some €370m on Traveller housing between 2000 and 2010. Substantial progress has been made in terms of reducing the number of Irish Traveller families living on unserviced roadside ('unauthorised') sites but several hundred families still live in these conditions. The main area of change in recent years relates to the number of families living in the private-rented sector. This tenure has seen a 15-fold increase and now accommodates 27 per cent of all families (compared to just 3 per cent in 2002). The State still plays an important role in housing these Travellers also, however, as approximately 96 per cent of Travellers residing in private-rented accommodation have their rents subsidised by the Exchequer.

The increase over the past decade is still significant, albeit that it did start from a very low base, and would suggest that this tenure has become much more open to Irish Travellers in recent years. This tenure can still present problems to some Travellers attempting to access private-rented accommodation, however, with a number of advocacy groups reporting discrimination amongst private landlords. In a number of cases, Travellers '*have found it extremely difficult to find landlords who are willing to rent property to them*' (ITM, undated; Wicklow Travellers Group, 2012). Such difficulties appear to have receded due to the incidence of surplus (or vacant) rental units during the current financial crisis but anxieties remain that this problem could re-surface in time. Given that the Irish government has moved away from a traditional social housing construction programme and has increasingly sought to house low-income households in the private-rented sector under PPP (public-private partnership) financing models in recent years (Norris and Coates, 2010), there is a concern that discrimination could put Traveller tenants at a severe disadvantage in the future.

More than 1 in 3 families now live in standard social housing albeit that this represents an increase of 1,000 families over the past decade. This equates to almost 70 per cent of all individual Irish Travellers (up from 50 per cent when the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 originally tasked Irish local government with Traveller housing). This is still the largest single housing tenure for the Irish Traveller community albeit that this option was originally pursued from the 1960's onwards in order to deal with the 'problem of itinerancy' through the assimilation of the Irish Traveller community into settled society. Some Travellers and their advocates believe that the steep jump in the number of Irish Travellers now living in either standard social housing or private-rented accommodation is due to a shortage of Traveller-specific accommodation. This reflects a perceived unwillingness on behalf of local government to provide this option so that Irish Travellers are being pushed into these two tenures in what some see as an ongoing attempt to assimilate them still. Whilst the authors do not suggest that Travellers living in standard social housing encounter unique difficulties viz housing quality, management or maintenance, the extent to which this tenure constitutes '*access to adequate shelter*' for Irish Travellers is questionable given the distinct cultural traditions of this community.

Table 2 here.

These traditions include a marked preference for living alongside kin and maintaining immediate and extended family networks in a shared space. It is necessarily more difficult to accommodate such preferences in the allocation of standard social housing. In other words, the allocation of neighbouring houses to the same family in a single development cannot be guaranteed under a points-based system. Moreover, standard social housing also does not include the necessary space or amenities to facilitate other aspects of the Irish Traveller lifestyle, including nomadism or Traveller economy; hence the introduction of Traveller-specific accommodation options as an alternative given that the latter is generally designed to meet the needs of Traveller cultural traditions and family dynamics. It is in this context that the cultural-appropriateness of standard social housing as largest single housing tenure for the community can be questioned and, from a capabilities perspective, this gives rise to a debate around whether such an outcome is valued by the community.

Many Travellers, and their advocates, still object to living in (standard social) houses as assimilationist and as culturally inappropriate. It should be noted, however, that for some Travellers living in standard social housing (and also, private-rented accommodation), they do so by choice. This may be attributable to a number of factors including, but not limited to, family incompatibilities, feuding or health-related concerns. Even for those Travellers living in houses, however, there can still be apprehension over the adequacy of their accommodation. This arises on foot of 'concerns about the consequences of moving into settled accommodation'. These concerns are centered around issues of cultural identity, family interconnectedness and the potential for discrimination and isolation with some Travellers citing a series of problems including the loss of community support structures, living away from close family and living amongst those who view them as 'deviant and alien' (Department of Health and Children, 2010).

Interestingly, an apparent dichotomy between the Travellers and their advocates (many of whom are non-Travellers) was obvious during the authors' fieldwork with the latter uniformly seeing 'houses' per se as a negative outcome for Travellers. By contrast, Travellers themselves often had a more nuanced view and could see certain benefits that came with living in a house, whether private- or social-rented, in terms of comfort and health. Nevertheless, they did recognise that living in a house carried an explicit trade-off with a number of Traveller interviewees commenting that: *'when you live in a house, you know that you're different from everyone else'* (Traveller Interview Session #3, 2013). These trade-offs also include the loss of something of what it means to be a Traveller: *'in a house we're locked in but on a site, we are accepted...have our own space and are with our families...we have the chance to travel and to experience Traveller culture'* (Traveller Interview Session #3, 2013). In the majority of cases, those interviewed by the authors expressed a preference for Traveller-specific accommodation over all other options.

This feedback was consistent with the result of other published research on this topic. As part of the *Traveller Accommodation Study* (TAS), survey-based research undertaken by Treadwell-Shine et al (2008) indicates that almost 60 per cent of Irish Travellers would prefer alternative accommodation. The majority of those expressing this sentiment indicated a preference for Traveller-specific accommodation and, in particular, for Group Housing Schemes. It is, of course, true that some of the reasons underpinning this preference for alternative accommodation are outside the control of public service stakeholders. These can include factors such as unrealistic expectations amongst some Travellers – particularly, the preference for one-off rural housing – and problems amongst tenants on-site (i.e. anti-social behaviour and family incompatibilities).

This is not to suggest, however, that Traveller-specific accommodation does not present a different set of problems with regard to housing quality and provision. As part of the TAS research, the residents of Traveller-specific housing developments were surveyed regarding their satisfaction with the comfortableness of their housing. The results indicated that approximately 30 per cent of respondents were dissatisfied with their housing; these results were particularly pronounced amongst those living on

Halting Sites. Such dissatisfaction simply reflects the practical day-to-day realities for some residents of Traveller-specific accommodation in terms of poor standards of design, management and maintenance; inaccessibility; and sub-standard facilities.

For many Irish Travellers, it is housing quality, access to amenities and the adequacy of the location of their housing that often matters most, not housing-type per se. However, a substantial minority of Irish Travellers report that their area of residence is unhealthy and/or unsafe with some Irish Traveller living in very poor conditions indeed (Department of Health and Children, 2010). The aforementioned TAS research indicated that the general provision of infrastructure and communal facilities on Traveller-specific housing developments is often poor and that on-site facilities are often not in good working order (Treadwell-Shine et al, 2008). The authors also found that Traveller-specific accommodation tends to be developed in out-of-the-way locations which are invariably not conducive to good access to services and amenities. Moreover, such sites are often located proximate to environmental hazards such as municipal dumps and industrial estates. Finally, although very real progress has been made in the area of Irish Traveller accommodation ‘the reality is that progress...has been slow, regardless of the reasons for such delays’ (Coates et al, 2008).

4.2 Capability Deprivation in the Housing Sphere and its Spillover Effects

For many Irish Travellers, as for most people elsewhere, access to good quality accommodation and basic household amenities is a desirable state of being and one which is, at the very least, a prerequisite for a good life. We have already seen that many Irish Travellers do not live in good quality accommodation. This absence of adequate shelter, even leaving aside considerations of cultural-appropriateness, represents one obvious state of capability deprivation. This can also contribute to capability deprivation in a number of other ways that go beyond questions of simple ‘bricks and mortar’. Poor quality, overcrowded housing can have direct causal impacts across a whole range of other functionings, including health outcomes, self-esteem and social interaction. This, however, is not the end of the story. Continuing deficiencies in the delivery of accommodation for the Traveller community can be said to perpetuate capability deprivation in a number of other ways. Specifically, the challenges presented by the need to provide adequate and appropriate accommodation for the Traveller community can be said to have associated adverse spillover effects. These spillovers – or unintended, negative externalities – serve to constrain substantive freedoms and autonomy for the community and in so doing, negatively impinge upon other lifestyle and good life desiderata specific to Travellers themselves.

As seen through the prism of the capabilities approach, capability deprivation relates to the absence of freedoms that people have reason to value. It is the view of the authors that these negative externalities constrain Traveller freedoms in a number of ways but for the purposes of this paper, we shall look at three examples. The first of these relates to Traveller autonomy and agency goals. The imposition of constraints upon Irish Travellers’ autonomy are manifold and are apt to limit their freedom to choose valued functionings and opportunities across a variety of life domains. This includes areas as disparate as identity and affiliation to the long-term impact of inter-generational poverty via conditioned expectations (see Section 2). This is no less true when it comes to the issue of housing. The high levels of unemployment and welfare dependency that characterise the experience of Irish Travellers mean that when it comes to housing, they are reliant upon what is provided to them, particularly for those not housed in Traveller-specific accommodation.

Approximately 60 per cent of Irish Traveller families are housed with the direct assistance of the local government sector. When the likely numbers living in the private-rented sector, but in receipt of public subsidies through the housing benefit programmes, are also taken into consideration this number is potentially closer to 85 per cent or more. This suggests a distinct absence of substantive freedom and

choice. For this stark majority of Irish Traveller families, their achieved functionings in housing are merely that which is delivered (or deemed deliverable) by the State. This, in turn, can be said to give rise to capability deprivation by perpetuating dependency, limiting choice and resources and marginalizing (or dis-empowering) the Traveller community. Moreover, freedom itself has an intrinsic value but for those housed in standard social housing or allocated housing in the private-rented sector, there is no choice to be made. In effect, they cannot participate in the process of making a choice.

Those living in either of these tenures can also find that their scope to re-locate to Traveller-specific accommodation at some future point is also quite limited as once they accept this housing, they are often deemed to no longer have any housing need. The State makes decisions over a long-term time horizon and once today's need has been met, it is deemed to be met into the foreseeable future. There can often be only limited flexibility around re-visiting it but this may conflict with changes to Traveller needs over time. The manner in which it does so can ultimately deprive Travellers of their own choice: *'local authorities always want to have a permanent solution and to make permanent provision and they're not flexible...but Travellers have incremental needs...their housing needs can change and what is acceptable today isn't acceptable forever'* (Traveller Interview Session # 1, 2013).

Consequently, they cannot then access what they might consider to be more culturally-appropriate accommodation at a later date. Many Irish Travellers, and their advocates, feel that Travellers are being pushed into these tenures in an attempt to assimilate them and in spite of changes in official public policy (see Section 3). Many Irish Travellers reside in standard housing due to a shortage of Traveller-specific accommodation. This shortage arises due to an inability, or sometimes unwillingness, to deliver Traveller-specific accommodation as can be seen in the under-spend reported by the local government sector. This sector has consistently reported an under-spend of the capital budgets allocated to Traveller-specific accommodation in every year since the mid-2000's.

4.2.1 Choice and Consultation

The issue of Traveller choice also arises with regard to Traveller-specific accommodation. Choice, and particularly substantive choice, is important in the context of communities reliant upon public provision and where welfare dependency is high. In the absence of such freedoms, dissatisfaction and disengagement are inevitable. It would appear, however, that Traveller choice is not always 'real' when it comes to influencing the provision of culturally-appropriate accommodation. In the late 1990's, a network of Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees (LTACC) was established to allow the voice of the community to be heard when it came to planning and designing new developments. In recognition of the importance of effective consultation between each local authority and their Irish Traveller-tenants, these local committees consist of local authority officials, elected public representatives, representatives of local Travellers and Travellers themselves. It was intended that each LTACC would provide a forum for consultation between all stakeholders and would act in an oversight capacity.

These consultative mechanisms, however, are considered to be flawed and ineffective. There are important weaknesses inherent in the structures put in place (Department of Health and Children, 2010). For instance, the NTACC acts in an advisory role only. It has no specific powers to influence implementation nor can it apply sanctions to those local authorities that do not implement their TAPs fully. Indeed, concerns over the manner in which local government bodies approach the issue of Traveller housing, and the extent to which their planned actions reflect Traveller priorities and needs, pre-date these consultation mechanisms. According to the UN Commission on Human Rights (1994):

'Travellers have also expressed the view that, where accommodation and services are provided, these do not always adequately reflect their needs'.

Similar criticisms of the extant consultation mechanisms were also surfaced during the course of the qualitative fieldwork undertaken by the authors with Irish Travellers during the source of this research. Whilst the mandated network of LTACCs are in place, these were seen merely as a sop to the community and not intended to facilitate any substantive Traveller input into the process of planning, designing and delivering Traveller-specific accommodation: *'real and meaningful consultation just does not happen'... 'they never ask us what we'd prefer... they don't present us with options'* (Traveller Interview Sessions #2 & 3, 2013). The parameters within which these LTACCs work are often quite narrow with local authority officials sometimes unwilling to meet with the community as a whole and/or cancelling planned meetings at short notice. Moreover, when Travellers are brought into the process, it is often at a very late stage such that the community is simply presented with a fait accompli: *'they just go ahead to plan and design a site... then that's what is presented to us'* (Traveller Interview Session # 3, 2013).

Given the criticisms put forward during these interviews, the authors have formulated a draft Consultation Toolkit as a practical outcome from this research for the Traveller community and those other stakeholders involved in the consultation process. The objective of this Toolkit is to enable all stakeholders to plan, execute and implement consultative and participatory exercises which are seen as credible by the Traveller community and bring Irish Travellers into the decision-making process at an early stage. This is not intended to be an 'end-product' but as a contribution which can be refined and developed over time. The proposed Toolkit is presented as an Annex.

4.2.2 Irish Traveller Lifestyle and Culture

Secondly, the spillover effects from the delivery, management and maintenance of Traveller housing also impact adversely upon Travellers' unique culture and traditions. In the case of the majority of Irish Travellers residing in either standard social housing or the private-rented sector, these effects are acute. As we have already seen, those living in such accommodation can often feel that their community bonds are broken and the ensuing isolation negatively impacts upon their mental health and well-being. They can also struggle to engage in nomadism or traditional Traveller economic activities (including self-employment) as standard housing in the social-rented or private-rented sectors are not equipped to facilitate such lifestyles. Although Traveller-specific accommodation is designed to facilitate them, problems can and do arise here also. The desire to live a nomadic lifestyle, or at least retaining the freedom to do so, is the single most distinctive aspect of the cultural traditions maintained by Irish Travellers and is recognised as central to cultural identity of the wider community (see Section 2). It goes to the heart of how they see themselves and is something which the community has reason to both value and to protect. Even where individual Travellers have not travelled for many years, they reserve the right to do so (Collins, undated; Department of Health and Children, 2010):

'a lack of travel does not equate simplistically to a declining wish to travel for many, and is regularly invoked as a defining characteristic of being a Traveller'

The freedom to do so, however, is often much-constrained, even in the case of those living in Traveller-specific accommodation. Research under the *Traveller Accommodation Study* found that 85 per cent of respondents, all of whom resided in Traveller-specific accommodation, believed that it would be very difficult for them to travel freely about the country (Treadwell-Shine et al, 2008). In effect, the very freedom that the Irish Traveller community has reason to value – the right to be a Traveller and to travel – is absent. This is central to Traveller well-being. Having the discretion to travel, alongside factors such as housing adequacy and basic household amenities, has been found to be one of the most important predictors of health for Irish Travellers (Department of Health and Children, 2010; Whelan et al, 2010). This highlights one of the most glaring examples of these aforementioned negative externalities and the

gap between stated public policy and actual on-the-ground-delivery: the provision, or lack thereof, of transient sites.

The provision of this infrastructure is mandated in law in order to facilitate a nomadic lifestyle through a network of temporary sites. These sites were intended to facilitate the nomadic lifestyle that is unique to Irish Travellers and which is so valued by many members of the community. A functioning network of these sites would enable Irish Travellers to move across the countryside without recourse to living on the roadside (and the attendant lack of water, sanitary facilities, etc.). The restrictions upon nomadism that flow from the lack of this infrastructure are further accentuated by changes to the trespass laws. In the absence of sufficient transient sites, the provisions of the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 1994, as amended by the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2002, is viewed by the community as, in practice, curtailing Travellers' freedom to move freely about the country. However, such a network has not yet been established and Coates et al (2008) have previously noted that:

'the virtually non-existent provision of such sites despite legislative requirements is a significant stumbling block in the progression of Traveller accommodation policy and practice at present'.

Finally, the presence of these negative externalities arising from the delivery, management and maintenance of Traveller-specific accommodation can also impact upon the capacity of the Irish Traveller community to exercise what Nussbaum (2000) termed *Control Over One's Environment*. This headline capability category encompasses a number of specific capabilities including effective participation in political choices and having the right to seek employment on an equal footing with others. A combination of institutional barriers and discrimination often mean that Travellers can struggle to enjoy either of these substantive freedoms. The importance of some measure of 'control' to human well-being is also true in the sphere of housing where being able to exercise control over one's immediate environment and having the right to make choices with regard to living space is, arguably, an important consideration for all individuals and groups in society. These very freedoms reflect our conception of the home as central to family life and as a place of refuge and safety. Indeed, Nussbaum's checklist also cites an individual's freedom to hold property and to exercise property rights.

These freedoms, however, are often not granted to Irish Travellers when it comes to housing, or at least not to those housed by the State. Residents of Traveller-specific accommodation can generally hope to exercise only minimal control over their immediate environs. It has been found that Irish Travellers tend to have very little control over their own residential areas and in some cases, this extends to an inability to control who comes onto their own sites and when. Specifically, they are often not in a position to exercise control over access barriers, communal facilities or estate management. Such control is vested in caretakers and/or private security personnel retained by local authorities (Treadwell-Shine et al, 2008). Moreover, in many cases Traveller-specific accommodation developments are constructed with high external walls and CCTV which residents can find visually unappealing, intrusive and unwelcome. The residents cannot, however, make any changes and their dissatisfaction with these aspects of their housing often goes unanswered.

The issue of CCTV surveillance was broached during the authors' fieldwork and brought out a strong response: *'it's an invasion of privacy, pure and simple...no one else is ever subjected to this'* (Traveller Interview Session # 3, 2013). All persons enjoy a right of access to, occupation of, and peaceful enjoyment of their home (Irish Human Rights Commission, 2008) but it is this very right that many Travellers feel is undermined by the installation of these CCTV facilities, without any consultation with residents. A number of cases concerning Traveller/Gypsy accommodation have been brought before the European courts with regard to Article 8 of the ECHR, relating to respect for private and family life, where the relevant article states:

‘Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence’.

Nussbaum’s high-level account of those substantive capabilities that are essential to human well-being does partly address some of the foregoing given that it encompasses ‘access to adequate shelter’ under one of its headline capability categories. Nevertheless, as the foregoing has shown this one capability alone cannot fully capture the role and importance of housing in shaping those outcomes that have a cultural resonance for the Irish Traveller community. The authors believe that there is the potential to expand and tailor this checklist to Irish Traveller community and in so doing, to move from the general to the specific by addressing those freedoms and lifestyle choices that Irish Travellers have reason to value such as access to culturally-appropriate accommodation; the validation of their right to travel freely (to live a nomadic lifestyle), etc. This is addressed below.

4.3 Conceptualising Traveller-specific Housing Capabilities

The provision of better and more appropriate housing and living conditions for the Travelling community has been recognised as an important benchmark for assessing the success, or otherwise, of any endeavors to improve quality of life for Irish Travellers given the implicit overflow effects from better and more appropriate housing such as improved access to services, physical and mental health outcomes, self-esteem and so forth (Coates et al, 2009). The incorporation of the ‘quality of life’ (QoL) concept into the debates around Irish Traveller housing has been identified as one way to better inform policy, practice and delivery. Such an approach puts the well-being of Irish Travellers at the heart of the debate and can focus stakeholders on the prioritization of needs, the ‘liveability’ of their environment(s) and the linkages between social, economic and environmental dimensions. This model entails the use of an associated social indicators approach as a measurement tool to operationalise the QoL concept. This approach can include some combination of specific indicators relating to housing and/or simply asking people what is important to their well-being (or to attach some ranking to the latter). This incorporation of measures of QoL into good practice around the delivery of Irish Traveller accommodation has the potential to clarify the agenda, provide a more holistic view of what works (or not) on the ground and clearly establish what the community themselves see as essential to their own well-being (Coates et al, 2008; Kane et al, 2008). The interaction with the Irish Traveller community implicit in such an approach also has the potential to empower the community itself through greater community engagement and to help dispel fears that accommodation, and particularly Traveller-specific accommodation, are provided regardless of the needs, wants and priorities of the community.

The use of participatory research models, including survey-based research, provides a vehicle for this type of community interaction. The application of such models within the capability approach have previously indicated that a multi-dimensional approach to the assessment of well-being can be effective in capturing the import of many life domains for human satisfaction and that suitably designed statistical indicators can be used to measure capabilities (Anand et al, 2009). This is not to suggest, however, that such engagement can adequately capture Irish Traveller QoL though some single measure of utility (or ‘happiness’). It has been argued that the capabilities approach, with its focus upon activities and states of being, produces a more robust measure of well-being than any simple utility metric. This is due to the range of interests and values of individuals and to the effect of adaptation (or habituation) whereby long-term deprivation can shape an individuals’ satisfaction over time (Burchardt, 2009).

Sen identifies individual examples of valuable capabilities but he had never prescribed a single ‘list’ of capabilities or functionings as has been done by Nussbaum and others (Robeyns, 2003; Sen, 1993). Rather, Sen has expressly rejected the concept of developing one standalone, universal ‘list’ on the basis

that the capabilities approach is intended to provide a framework for the evaluation of human well-being. Sen has argued that this approach must be capable of adaptation to diverse local and cultural contexts. A process based upon participation (or democracy) can uncover those capabilities that are most valuable within a given local or cultural context (Sen, 1990). This stance underscores the stated importance of agency and the freedom of peoples to make their own choices by means of empowerment to exercise value judgements regarding an individual and community's own wants and priorities (Gigler, 2005; Sen, 1993).

The specification of Nussbaum's 'list' of the ten capabilities that are essential to human well-being has been criticised on these very grounds. The applicability of any universal checklist to culturally diverse groups and environments is questionable and it may be the case that 'the items for inclusion on such a list may vary across cultures' (Anand et al, 2009). Robeyns (2005) has also questioned the use of a single list on the basis that a different list may be required for different circumstances or purposes. It can be said then that the operationalization of the capabilities approach, and the specification of capabilities that are valuable to a given community, requires some grounding in the culture of each community. This implies the need for the effective involvement of that community. To this end, it is counterintuitive to ignore the 'cultural habitat' of any people when devising and implementing development policies for their benefit (Flores-Crespo and Nebel, 2005). The effective and meaningful participation of people is thus a central tenet of the capabilities approach with the implied need for the full involvement of people in their own development (Gigler, 2005).

The developing literature around the capabilities approach provides a number of examples of just such a participatory and consultative approach in action with regard to indigenous and ethnic minority groups. This research has shown how community and environment-specific checklists can be developed and how communities can identify their own valued capabilities where these are culturally and contextually-appropriate. In the case of indigenous groups in two Latin American countries, Bolivia and Peru, a list of those capabilities that are important to these communities was developed using an extensive consultative process (Gigler, 2005). This enabled the communities define their own 'list' of capabilities (both individual and social), and associated priorities and actions, for their own development where these capabilities reflect the views of the community regarding well-being and human development. The individual human capabilities specified were as follows: (1). Participation and leadership in national and regional political life; (2). Securing national legal framework establishing and enforcing rights of indigenous communities; (3). Securing access to basic and social services (including the participation of communities and design and implementation processes); and (4). Securing sustainable economic development (including programmes to extend economic opportunities to these communities).

This participatory exercise also identified a list of social (or collective) capabilities. The authors found that the capabilities approach is theoretically underspecified with regard to groups and collective effort as it does not reflect the extent to which both individual and collective well-being can be enhanced through collective action. In this regard, participants define well-being in collective, and not just individual, terms and this mindset is reflected in perceived need to strengthen the social capabilities of their communities. These social capabilities were as follows: (1). Development of organisational capacity of community organisations; (2). Environmental protection; (3). Recognition and strengthening of cultural identity (or 'development with identity') where distinctive cultural identities are recognised and valued.

4.3.1 Outline of our Traveller-specific Housing Capabilities

The authors have sought to build on the foregoing by means of undertaking a participatory exercise with the objective of identifying a series of housing-related capabilities, both individual and social, that are valuable to the Irish Traveller community. The use of these targeted, community-driven measures has

merit in that these are focussed upon housing outcomes identified by the community themselves and which have value to members to the community. Given the scope for adaptive preferences (or conditioned expectations), this targeted approach is perhaps preferable to some broad suite of measures intended, first and foremost, to enhance community subjective well-being. An approach solely limited to 'happiness' (in the absence of specific measures) can be deeply unfair to deprived communities: 'traditional underdogs...oppressed minorities...often tend to adjust their desires and expectations to what little they see as feasible...the adjustments have the incidental effect of distorting the scales of utilities' (Sen, 2008). The capabilities suggested below are, however, only a first step and are put forward as building blocks only.

As part of this consultative process, the authors sought to incorporate the thoughts and insights of a number of Traveller representative organizations, at the local and national level, in addition to input from individual members of the community. Firstly, the proposed individual human capabilities are as follows: (1). Full participation and leadership the development of Traveller-specific housing plans (including the participation of community members or representatives in design, implementation and enforcement processes); (2). Access to good quality, well maintained housing with all associated amenities (including the location of such developments within a set distance of public and social services); (3). Access to culturally-appropriate Traveller-specific accommodation (including appropriate facilities for Traveller economy and other needs) for those that choose this option; and (4). Respect for the right to travel (including the provision of transient sites).

Secondly, the consultation exercise undertaken by the authors also revealed that those participating in this research were of the view that Irish Travellers do have objectives and needs that are focussed upon their community rather than just the individual (or agency goals; see Section 2). Consequently, this exercise also yielded a series of proposed social capabilities as follows: (1). Strengthening of cultural identity and respect for traditions (including the recognition of Irish Travellers as an ethnic minority); or (2). Development of a National Traveller Accommodation Authority to prioritise development and enhance organisational capacity; and (3). Respect for the right of Irish Travellers to live together in a shared space and to manage that space (including the extension of economic opportunities in this regard).

5. Summary and Conclusions

We believe that the application of the capabilities approach to issues such as housing and marginalised communities – in this case, the Irish Traveller community – can make an important contribution to the literature precisely because of the nature of the capabilities approach. It is the view of the authors that using the thinking which informs this approach as a framework encourages us to see and explore some key themes around those factors, or constraints, that influence the ability of this community to live lives that they have reason to value and to exercise choice and autonomy in how they live. Moreover, by doing so in a holistic manner we have endeavoured to draw out key linkages and overlaps that can shed more light on the problems encountered by the community and draw out some new and interesting themes for policymakers and identify those factors which merit further investigation.

The results presented here indicate that housing outcomes for the Traveller community are a consequence of marginalisation, disengagement and historical dynamics which have seen a constellation of factors lead to negative outcomes. From the perspective of our conceptualisation of poverty (as a state of capability deprivation and an absence of valued freedoms), it is noteworthy that the metadata presented here illustrates that Travellers tend to perform poorly under each of the headline categories set out in Nussbaum's checklist viz human welfare and flourishing. This includes housing where factors ranging from access to basic sanitary facilities to privacy/control to cultural appropriateness and adequacy have all come to fore over the course of the authors' research.

This negation of Traveller culture and the focus on the containment and assimilation of Travellers has echoes of the treatment of Roma/Gypsy communities in other parts of Europe. Many Travellers view the acceptance of their ethnicity as central to the promotion of their equality of opportunity in Irish society. The recognition of Traveller ethnicity, however, is not a catch-all solution but it would help in building the community up from the inside and this is important given the community disintegration and disengagement referred to here. There is a need to assist the community in building up itself and for some early 'wins'. These may encompass the promotion of 'community exemplars' whereby examples of success and the contribution being made by the community – both to its own well-being and to the wider society – can be highlighted in order to generate confidence.

The promotion of sustainable Traveller economy and the emergence of a self-sustaining community are another area where progress can be made. Progress in these spheres can also empower the community to make more choices for itself in an array of areas, including housing, and in so doing, can lessen Traveller dependency on others over time. All groups in society will at some point face the consequences of economic and industrial change but, in many ways, the Traveller community has not adapted to these challenges. This suggested a possible role for Government interventions which go beyond simply providing income supports. Such supports can include the provision of facilities and training and assisting the community to identify and exploit opportunities around niche economies that play to their own strengths. This can kick-start a process of empowering the community to resolve its own difficulties albeit that there is a need to ensure that the community is involved from the start.

Finally, as part of the qualitative research undertaken by the authors, a programme of fieldwork visits and interviews with Irish Travellers and their representatives (including Local Action Groups and Community Development Groups) was completed at three sites over a two-day period. The material gathered during this fieldwork was extremely useful and enlightening and has been interwoven throughout this Chapter in order to inform our findings and conclusions. As part of this fieldwork, the authors sought to identify a series of housing-related capabilities, both individual and social, that are valuable to the Irish Traveller community. These capabilities are presented in Section 4. Moreover, on foot of the criticisms put forward with regard to the ineffectiveness of extant consultation mechanisms during these interviews, the authors have also formulated a draft Consultation Toolkit. The objective of this Toolkit is to enable all stakeholders to plan, execute and implement real and substantive consultative and participatory exercises around Traveller accommodation and we believe that such a tool (if used) can provide useful outcomes for Irish Travellers themselves. This proposed Toolkit is presented in the Annex to this Chapter.

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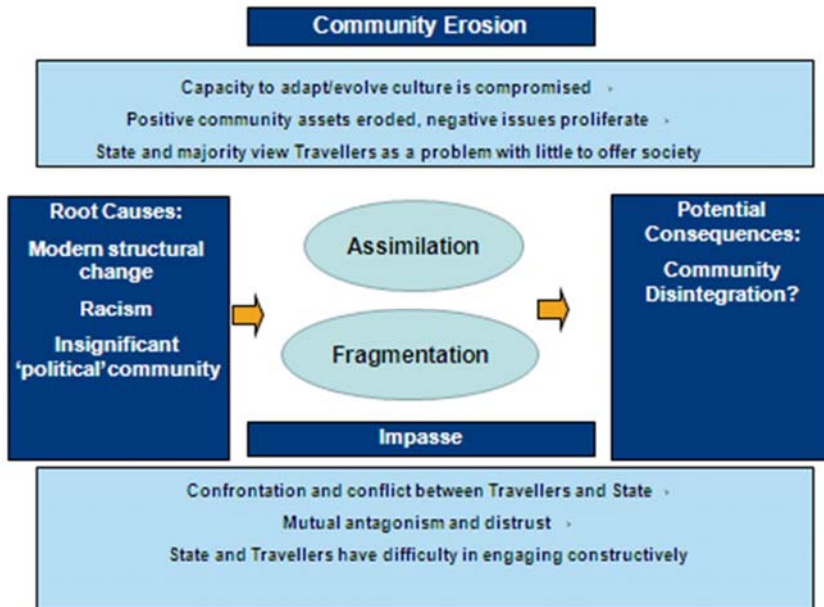
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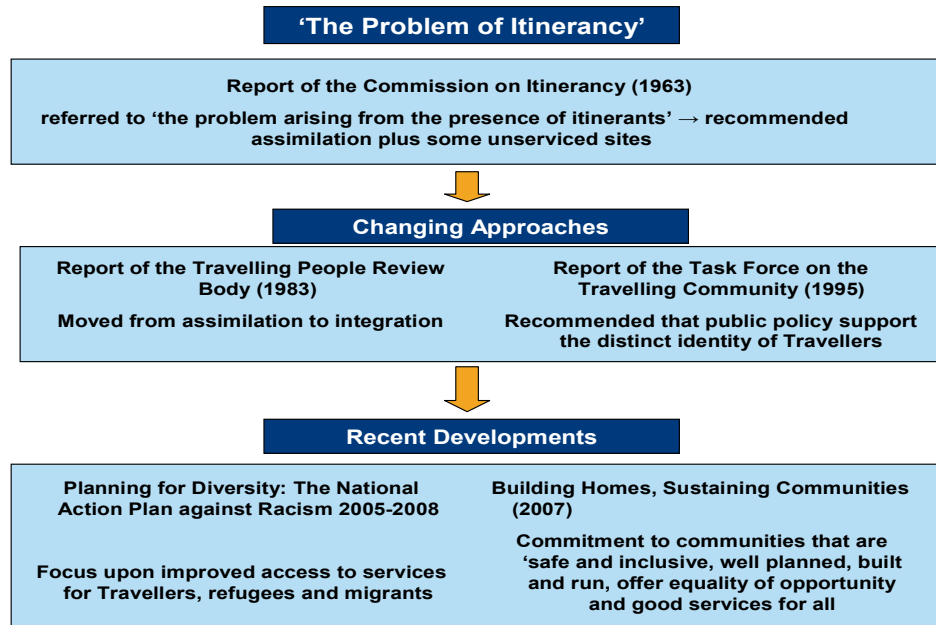
Tables and Figures

Figure 1: *Community Erosion, Fragmentation and Disintegration*



Source: Irish Traveller Movement (Strategic Review, 2011)

Figure 2: Summary of Changing Public Sector Delivery Models for Traveller Accommodation



Source: Coates et al (2009)

Table 1: Mapping Traveller Social Outcomes against Nussbaum's Checklist of Capabilities

Capability Indicator	Stylised Metric	Traveller Outcomes	Sources (selected)
Life	Life Expectancy	<p>Life expectancy at birth for Irish Traveller males is only 61.7 years (or 15.1 years lower than in the general populace)</p> <p>Life expectancy at birth for Irish Traveller females is only 70.1 years (or 11.5 years lower than in the general populace)</p>	Department of Health and Children (2012)
Bodily Health	<p>Good Health</p> <p>Adequate Shelter</p>	<p>Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births amongst Irish Travellers is 14.9 (compared to 3.9 in the general populace)</p> <p>SMRs across a range of conditions (including respiratory diseases, heart disease, stroke and suicide) for Irish Travellers are many multiples of those found amongst the general populace</p> <p>Irish Travellers have a higher rate of disability than for the population as a whole</p> <p>The self-assessed health of Irish Travellers is less than that of the general population with 87 per cent reporting good or very good health (compared to 90 per cent overall); Irish Traveller health also deteriorates more quickly with age</p> <p>Estimates of the number of Irish Traveller families residing in temporary, unofficial sites (roadside encampments) without electricity or water supply, sanitation or refuse collection range from 600 to 1,200; this number has remained stubbornly high over many decades</p> <p>In many cases, Travellers residing on publicly-provided Traveller-specific housing sites consider the facilities/infrastructure provided to be sub-standard</p> <p>In many cases, Travellers residing on publicly-provided Traveller-specific housing sites are dissatisfied with the quality of their own accommodation and consider their area of residence to be unsafe and unhealthy</p> <p>In many cases, publicly-provided Traveller-specific housing sites are located in unsuitable areas (i.e. proximate to municipal dumps, etc.) with poor access to services</p>	<p>Department of Health and Children (2012) CSO (2012)</p> <p>Collins (undated) Treadwell-Shine et al (2008) Department of Health and Children (2012) Coates et al (2008) CSO (2012)</p>

		<p>Approximately 3,500 Irish Traveller households reside in standard social housing (i.e. 'settled' persons housing) which many will deem to be culturally inappropriate</p> <p>The average number of rooms in Irish Traveller households was 4.3 compared to 5.5 in all private households</p> <p>Approximately 1 in 3 Irish Traveller households residing in mobile/temporary dwellings (incl. caravans) had no sewerage facilities and 1 in 5 had no piped water source</p>	
Bodily Integrity	Being able to move freely from place to place	<p>Nomadism remains a central feature of Traveller identity but their past portrayal as dispossessed 'settled' persons serves to disenfranchise them of their cultural heritage (or right to travel); even where individual Travellers have not travelled for long periods, they wish to reserve their right to do so</p> <p>The majority of publicly-provided Traveller-specific housing sites do not fully support a nomadic lifestyle due to issues relating to inadequate space and poor accessibility</p> <p>Trespass laws have come to restrict free movement</p> <p>A strategic nationwide network of transient sites has not been put in place (regardless of past recommendations)</p>	<p>Pavee Point (1992)</p> <p>Treadwell-Shine et al (2008)</p> <p>Coates et al (2008)</p> <p>Collins (undated)</p>
Sense, Imagination & Thought	Education	<p>Educational disadvantage is prevalent amongst the Irish Traveller community and is compounded by the fact that many parents have insufficient schooling to support their children with homework, etc.</p> <p>Early school leaving and literacy/numeracy difficulties are particularly prevalent for the Irish Traveller community</p> <p>On average, Irish Travellers cease their full-time education 4.7 years earlier than applies in the general population</p> <p>90 per cent of Irish Travellers will have completed their full-time education by age 17 years (compared to age 24 years for the general population)</p> <p>The percentage of Irish Travellers with no formal education is close to 18 per cent (compared to just over 1 per cent for the general population)</p>	<p>Youthreach (2004)</p> <p>Combat Poverty Agency (2003)</p> <p>CSO (2012)</p>

		Just 1 per cent of Irish Travellers have completed third-level education (compared to 31 per cent for the general population)	
Affiliation	<p>Treated as a dignified being</p> <p>Having social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation</p> <p>To engage in various forms of social interaction</p> <p>Past or future discrimination</p>	<p>The distinctive ethnicity of the Irish Traveller community is not recognised by the Irish State (albeit that ‘differences’ are)</p> <p>Many Irish Travellers believe that this absence of recognition has negative consequences for them in terms of cultural survival in addition to policy implications</p> <p>Many younger Irish Travellers feel the need to hide their identity in order to access basic social services or events, in order to fit in and to avoid harassment or bullying</p> <p>Irish Travellers regularly experience difficulty in accessing standard social fora such as venues and bars which are regularly frequented by non-Travellers</p> <p>Irish Travellers account for a significant proportion of all reported incidents of racism and discrimination in Ireland</p> <p>Irish Travellers are recognised as one of the most marginalised and discriminated against groups in Irish society</p> <p>The ongoing reality of discrimination against Irish Travellers has an insidious effect on their self-esteem and life experience</p>	<p>Norris and Winston (2004)</p> <p>Ní Shuinéar (1998)</p> <p>Department of Health and Children (2012)</p> <p>CERD (2005)</p> <p>Department of Foreign Affairs (2006)</p> <p>Sheehan (2000)</p> <p>Walshe (2012)</p> <p>NCCRI (various years)</p> <p>Rottman et al (1986)</p> <p>European Parliament (1991)</p>
Control over Environment	<p>Being able to engage in political participation and representation</p> <p>Being able to hold property</p>	<p>Levels of political representation amongst members of the Traveller community at the local and national level is extremely low</p> <p>The United Nations and the Council of Europe have expressed concern at the under-representation of this minority group in the political process and have recommended affirmative action programmes</p> <p>Irish Travellers have a significantly lower home ownership rate than for the non-Traveller population with just 20 per cent of Travellers owning their own home (compared to 70 per cent nationwide)</p>	<p>O’Connell (2006)</p> <p>Hammarberg (2008)</p> <p>CSO (2012)</p> <p>Treadwell-Shine et al (2008)</p>

	Expect to work	<p>In many cases, Travellers residing on publicly-provided Traveller-specific housing sites have poor (or only limited) control over these sites (i.e. access, communal facilities, etc.)</p> <p>The unemployment rate amongst Irish Travellers was 84 per cent in 2011 (compared to 14 per cent nationwide)</p> <p>Irish Travellers were traditionally economically self-sufficient and played a significant role in the Irish rural economy pre-1960 working as artisans, entrepreneurs and seasonal labour but the advent of industrialisation and modernisation has meant that traditional forms of Traveller employment have become marginalised</p> <p>The majority of publicly-provided Traveller housing sites do not provide sufficient facilities to support traditional Traveller economic activities (including horse-based economic activity)</p>	<p>CSO (2012)</p> <p>Treadwell-Shine et al (2008)</p> <p>Fanning (2009)</p> <p>Department of Health and Children (2012)</p>
Emotions	<p>Being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves (incl. making friends)</p> <p>Not having one's emotional development blighted by fear and anxiety (incl. human association)</p>	<p>Irish Travellers regularly experience difficulty in accessing standard social and recreational fora such as venues and bars which are regularly frequented by non-Travellers</p> <p>Inter-communal tensions, suspicions and uncertainty/unfamiliarity can and do undermine the scope for friendship and connections between Irish Travellers and the settled community</p> <p>The suicide rate amongst Irish Travellers is six times higher than for the general population; the community feels 'hated' and are portrayed as '<i>deviants, villains and a subculture</i>'</p> <p>Irish Travellers are recognised as one of the most marginalised and discriminated against groups in Irish society</p>	<p>NCCRI (various years)</p> <p>Treadwell-Shine et al (2008)</p> <p>Gleeson, 2013</p> <p>Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality (2013)</p> <p>European Parliament (1991)</p>
Practical Reason	Being able to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life (incl. playing a useful role and evaluating life)		

		<p>Irish Travellers exhibit a very high level of welfare dependency (with a concomitant low level of self-sufficient) as traditional forms of Traveller employment have become marginalised</p> <p>Irish Travellers are recognised as one of the most marginalised and discriminated against groups in Irish society</p>	<p>European Parliament (1991) Fanning (2009)</p>
Other Species	Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals	<p>The keeping of horses and dogs is a long-running part of Traveller economic and societal traditions. Travellers have a long history of keeping, breeding and trading horses and in some cases, horses are used as a 'store of value' (or a method saving)</p> <p>In most cases, local authorities make no provision (i.e. facilities or space) for allowing Travellers to keep horses and/or dogs on Traveller-specific accommodation sites (either on or off-site)</p> <p>In some cases, the keeping of dogs or horses is counter to the tenancy/licence agreements in place</p>	<p>Treadwell-Shine et al (2008) Lynam and Dowdall (2008)</p>
Play	Being able to laugh, to play, to enjoy recreational activities	<p>In many cases, Travellers residing on publicly-provided Traveller-specific housing sites are dissatisfied with the facilities and amenities provided (including facilities for play and recreation) and consider their area of residence to be unsafe and unhealthy</p> <p>The keeping of horses plays an important social and recreational role for many Irish Travellers. However, it is no longer feasible for Travellers to keep horses in many areas (see Other Species above)</p> <p>Irish Travellers regularly experience difficulty in accessing standard social and recreational fora such as venues and bars which are regularly frequented by non-Travellers (see Affiliation above)</p>	<p>NCCRI (various years) Department of Health and Children (2012) Coates et al (2008) Treadwell-Shine et al (2008) Lynam and Dowdall (2008)</p>

Table 2: Total Number of Irish Traveller Families in All Housing Categories, 2002-2011

Variable	2002		2011	
	Obs	%	Obs	%
With Local Authority Assistance	4,522	72	5,595	59
Standard Social Housing	2,395	38	3,320	35
Group Housing	493	8	739	8
Private Houses*	259	4	470	5
Halting Sites**	1,314	21	920	10
Voluntary Bodies	61	1	146	2
Unauthorised Sites***	939	15	327	3
Own Resources	417	7	563	6
Private Rented	162	3	2,558	27
Sharing****	249	4	492	5
Totals	6,289	100	9,535	100

Source: Department of the Environment, Housing Statistics (various years)

*Includes Single Instance Purchases

**Includes permanent, temporary and transient sites

***Roadside, private yards, fields and gardens

****Multiple families cohabiting in a house designed for one family

Annex:

**Proposed Consultation Toolkit for
Irish Traveller Accommodation Delivery**

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Consultation and Participation
3. Planning and Preparation
4. Inclusive Consultation
5. Principles of Good Practice
6. Principles of Public Participation
7. Public Participation Toolbox

Derived from: Public Health Advocacy Toolkit (Public Health Alliance, 2007) and Ideas, Methods & Resources (West Sussex County Council, 2005)

1. Introduction

Effective consultation can be a powerful tool in the delivery of quality public services. It does, however, require careful planning and clear-sighted thinking to work effectively.

It is a prerequisite to involving local people in the decision-making process and credible local democracy requires an ongoing relationship between the local community (including Irish Travellers), elected representatives and public officials. To limit cynicism, build credibility and overcome barriers to participation it is essential that consultations are of a high standard.

These should include the local Traveller community from an early stage and the community should be able to see how and where their input has contributed to the final decisions. This also means that, where necessary, the community can see why it was not possible to meet a given stated need (i.e. decisions should be explained clearly).

'A process of dialogue or the gathering of information that contributes to a decision or change'
(West Sussex County Council, 2005)

This draft Toolkit is intended to assist those working in the sphere of consultations around the planning and delivery of Traveller-specific accommodation and as the authors' contribution to a process of continued improvement. This is not an 'end-product' but rather there is scope for this document to grow and develop.

2. Consultation and Participation

A consultative process should be one of engagement with the Irish Traveller community being served with regard to Traveller-specific housing. Such a process relates to those activities and techniques where the relevant public body is planning to undertake a housing project and is endeavouring to inform the community and to hear their views. In such cases, there may be decisions to be made, options to consider and alternatives to review. The purpose of real and effective consultations is to provide an opportunity for the community to express an opinion before substantive, final decisions are made.

Consultation is a process and one that is ongoing as the public body seeks to establish a credible two-way dialogue with the local Traveller community. This dialogue should enable all sides to listen and to be heard and must be linked to the decision-making process.

Effective consultation should also be participatory. Participation ensures that the local Traveller community has the opportunity to be involved with the development of policies and are consulted from an early stage.

Whether we use the terms 'consultation' or participation', the key issue is the involvement of the community in the decision-making process.

It is important to ensure that delivery bodies take on board what the community tells them and that everyone's voice is heard, particularly hard-to-reach groups.

3. Planning and Preparation

It is essential that each consultation and participation exercise are well-planned in order to ensure that they are worthwhile, both for the service-delivery organisation and for the community being consulted.

To this end, it can be useful to start with a Consultation Plan to ensure that all stakeholders are clear on the following points:

- Why are you consulting?
- Who is being consulted?
- What are you consulting about?
- When will you consult?
- What techniques/models are to be used?
- What is the timescale for the consultation?
- What resources and skills are required to undertake the consultation?
- How will you disseminate the results?
- How will you give feedback?
- How will you monitor and evaluate the activities undertaken?

Some useful tools are outlined in Section 7 below.

4. Inclusive Consultation

A key aspect of an effective consultative and participatory exercise is to include diverse, minority groups where such groups are sometimes considered to be 'under-represented' or 'hard-to-reach'. The targeting of such communities is essential to an 'inclusive consultation' which is credible with the community.

It is easy to incorrectly assume that if a minority community does not respond to a specific consultation exercise that this indicates a lack of interest or concern. However, there may be barriers to effective engagement which need to be overcome.

It is also important that the parameters of the consultation and participation are not defined too narrowly and that the community is brought into the process at an early stage. As part of that process, it is important that the consultation is made accessible to all through the following mechanisms:

- Accessible venues
- Effective publicity and communication
- Trusted moderators

The following considerations should be borne in mind:

- When working with and through community/voluntary groups, endeavour to ensure that these groups represent the diversity of people and views within that community
- Qualitative research – including one-to-one meetings, focus groups and workshops – may be particularly beneficial
- Recruitment (to participate) through community and voluntary groups may be effective
- Use moderators (or facilitators) who are credible with the community

5. Principles of Good Practice

Each consultation exercise should aim to fulfil the following goals:

- Enable all stakeholders to participate in a meaningful process that leads to more realistic outcome which reflect the communities needs
- Involves the community at an early stage of policy and project formulation and implementation
- Identifies needs and service usage based upon an understanding of community characteristics
- Promote and enhance the standing and credibility of projects with the community
- Create meaningful working partnerships with groups, agencies and communities
- Contribute to community and organisational learning
- Ensure outcomes and rationale for decisions are disseminated widely

With regard to the inclusion and participation of the community (and their representatives) in an effective Consultation Process there are, broadly speaking, five Principles of Public Participation, as follows:

- Inform
- Consult
- Involve
- Collaborate
- Empower

These principles are further discussed in Section 6 below.

6. Principles of Public Participation

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Goal	<p>Providing the public with balanced and objective information</p> <p>Assisting the public to understand alternatives, opportunities and solutions</p>	Obtain public feedback on analysis and alternatives	Work directly with Irish Travellers to ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood	<p>Partner with Irish Travellers on each aspect of decision-making</p> <p>Partner with Irish travellers on the identification of their preferred solutions</p>	Place final decision-making in the hands of the community
Promise	To keep Irish Travellers informed and involved	<p>Listening to and acknowledging concerns and aspirations</p> <p>Providing feedback on how inputs influenced decisions</p>	<p>Reflecting concerns and aspirations in alternatives developed</p> <p>Providing feedback on how inputs influenced decisions</p>	<p>Seeking advice and input</p> <p>Incorporate input to the maximum extent possible</p>	Implement what the community decides
Examples	<p>Fact Sheets</p> <p>Briefings</p>	<p>Public Meetings</p> <p>Focus Groups</p> <p>Surveys</p>	Workshops	<p>Consensus building</p> <p>Participatory decision-making</p>	Delegated decision-making

Note: Derived from the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation (International Association for Public Participation, 2007)

7. Public Participation Toolbox

Techniques	Key Issues	What works?	What doesn't work?
<i>Sharing Information</i>			
<u><i>Briefings:</i></u>			
Using regular meetings of civic and social organisations as an opportunity to inform and educate	Keep it simple and short Use visual aides	Opportunity to reach a wide group Building community goodwill	Important to target audiences
<u><i>Field Offices:</i></u>			
Offices with prescribed opening hours to distribute information and respond to queries	Provide adequate staff Select accessible location	Information easily available to target audience Opportunity for responsive ongoing communication	Access limited to those in vicinity Cost implications
<u><i>Hot Lines:</i></u>			
Separate line for access project team members who can answer questions	Contacts must have sufficient knowledge to respond	Conveys image of accessibility Easy to provide updates on project activities	Designated contacts must be suitably prepared
<u><i>Factsheets:</i></u>			
Regular 'factsheet' with up-to-date information	Simple information repository	Provides opportunity for community-wide information distribution	Cost implications
<u><i>Technical Contacts & Reports:</i></u>			
Providing access to technical expertise and documents	Resources must be perceived as credible	Builds credibility Provide opportunity for thorough explanation of project decisions	Accessibility May be too detailed
<i>Compile & Provide Feedback</i>			
<u><i>Comment Forms:</i></u>			
Mail-in forms with 'factsheets' to gain feedback	Develop public involvement record	Provides input from those unlikely or unable to attend meetings	Results may be skewed

Community Facilitators:

Using respected individuals in the community to conduct project outreach	Define roles, responsibilities and limitations up-front	Promotes community-based involvement Capitalise on existing networks Enhance project credibility	Building false expectations Controlling information flows
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In-Person Surveys:

Face-to-face focus groups	Be clear on use of results and any limitations	Opportunity to reach broad cross-section of the community	Cost implications
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Interviews:

Face-to-face meetings with individual stakeholders	To be conducted in person	Opportunity for in-depth information exchange in a non-threatening forum	Time consuming
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Feedback Registers:

Database of residents/clients to provide feedback	Terms of residents Frequency of feedback	Useful in gathering feedback for impacted residents Reduces need for public gatherings	Credibility of selected panel with general community
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Bring People Together

Appreciative Inquiry Processes:

Systematic process of using a narrative communication to surface innovative ideas and commitment to action	Requires very high level of commitment from team members	Creates high level of engagement	Participants need to own the process People need to see results concomitant with their engagement
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Deliberative Dialogues:

Systematic process of bringing people together as a group to make difficult choices where there is uncertainty and a likelihood of polarisation in effort to find common ground	Considerable upfront planning and preparation is required Skilled moderator required to facilitate deliberations	Participants share different perspectives Group identifies common ground within which policymakers can make plans	Participants not willing to openly discuss areas of conflict
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Events:

Central event with multiple activities to provide project information	All issues must be considered	Focuses public attention on one element	Community must be motivated to attend
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	Adequate resources and staff are required	Facilitates different levels of information sharing	Cost implications
<u>Focus Groups:</u> Forum for obtaining input on ongoing planning and development decisions	Skilled moderator required to conduct sessions Frequency of meetings	Provides opportunity to vet decisions prior to implementation	Cost implications
<u>Meetings with Existing Groups:</u> Small meetings with existing groups	Understand likely attendees Opportunities for one-on-one meetings	Provides opportunity for in-depth engagement and exchange in a non-threatening forum	May leave out important groups
<u>Panels:</u> Group assembled to debate or provide input on specific issues	Panellists must be credible with the community	Opportunity to dispel misinformation Opportunity to build credibility	May create unwanted media attention
<u>Public Hearings:</u> Formal meetings with scheduled presentations	May be required by sponsor, etc.	Opportunity for all stakeholders to speak without rebuttal	May not foster constructive dialogue May perpetuate an 'us versus them' atmosphere
<u>Workshops:</u> Informal meetings with interactive working groups	Must know how to use community input prior to workshop	Forum for discussing alternatives Opportunity to build credibility	Several facilitators may be necessary

Note: Derived from the IAP2 Public Participation Toolbox (International Association for Public Participation, 2006)

ⁱ Traveller-specific accommodation: Includes Group Housing Schemes, Permanent or Temporary Halting Sites/Caravan Parks (with Bays) and refurbishment thereof, Transient Sites, Loans for replacement of Caravans/Mobile Homes, Overnight Camping Lay-Byes; and Single Instance (or one-off) Houses (generally in rural locations)

ⁱⁱ Language: One of two dialects of Shelta (Gammon or Cant), albeit that very few Irish Travellers still speak this language (Irish Travellers are predominantly English-speaking)

ⁱⁱⁱ Cultural traditions: These include, but are not limited to, nomadism; a preference for self-employment and/or certain traditional economic activities; and communal inter-marriage and match-making

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