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UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

COMMUNITY RESEARCH REPORT

May 2018

Cork Environmental Forum
and
Community Academic Research Links, University College Cork







Community researchers and authors:

This report was written by CEF members and UCC staff and students who participated on a UCC community-based participatory research module in 2018.

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Table of Contents

Introducing the partners 4
Background to the partnership 5
Research process 6
Emerging themes 9
Conclusion 20
Appendix: Emerging themes 21

Introducing the partners

Cork Environmental Forum, Cork.

Cork Environmental Forum (CEF) came into being in 1995, when it was founded with the support of Cork County Council as an instrument for applying the principles of Local Agenda 21, as agreed by the 1992 United Nations Global Conference on Environment and Development. CEF's initial brief was to bring various stakeholders together at a local level throughout Cork City and County who would not ordinarily have occasion to meet to discuss local sustainability and environmental issues and agree on an appropriate action plan. CEF is an independent limited company with charitable status and has a variety of funding streams on which it depends. Its raison d'être remains is to foster, promote and implement sustainable development at a local level in the Cork region.

Community Academic Research Links, University College Cork

Community-Academic Research Links (CARL) is a Civic and Community Engagement initiative of UCC and an important part of UCC's new Civic and Community Engagement Plan (www.ucc.ie/engagement/civic-plan). CARL is UCC's Science Shop and part of the European Science Shop network www.livingknowledge.org/science-shops. CARL works with community and voluntary groups to facilitate participatory research on topics identified by the community. To find out more about CARL, the groups CARL have worked with and to read a selection of completed research reports, visit the CARL website: http://carl.ucc.ie.

For this partnership, the Cork Environmental Forum partnered with ten PhD students and staff from University College Cork (UCC) on an elective module, community-based participatory research (PG6025). All the resources used in this module are openly available and can be downloaded from this page: www.ucc.ie/en/scishop/resources/module/ This module and partnership was funded as part of a European Commission study, EnRRICH, grant number 665759.

Background to the partnership

Introduction

University College Cork introduced its first Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR) module in 2016. The module was funded and supported by Horizon2020 funding, specifically the EnRRICH project (Enhancing Responsible Research and Innovation through Curricula in Higher Education). The module is a 5-credit module for PhD students from all disciplines in the early stages of their PhD at University College Cork. Following two fruitful partnerships in the areas of social justice / equality, community family support services and older persons, there was a keen interested to explore partnerships in markedly different areas such as environmental sustainability. A dialogue ensued with CEF where the opportunity and feasibility to collaborate on the CBPR module was explored.



CEF and UCC Participants group photo

What were we trying to find out?

Before the module began, when brainstorming a theme that the partnership might loosely be guided by, CEF expressed an interest in exploring two guiding questions:

- How to get the public more engaged on environmental issues?
- How can CEF be more effective at what it does?

With these overarching questions in mind, the community-based collaboration between UCC and CEF began. An appreciative enquiry approach was used as a tool to share, explore and exchange CEF's past activities and achievements with a view to potentially mapping out future activities for the organisation. This report is a short summary of the participatory research scoping and research design process that occurred throughout this partnership. Ethical approval was provided by the Social Research Ethics Committee at University College Cork.

Research process

Process

Every second week, for four afternoon sessions, UCC students and instructors met CEF participants in St Peter's Cork (a meeting spot frequently used by CEF) and Nano Nagle Place for the final session. St Peter's and Nano Nagle Place are apolitical organisations that offer facilities and meeting spaces to community groups such as CEF and play a vital role in supporting citizen action and democratic debate. Throughout these afternoon sessions, CEF and UCC participants spent time getting to know each other. Familiarity and learning to appreciate each other's knowledge and experiences is an important factor of participatory research, as well as for supporting meaningful exchanges between UCC and CEF. Throughout the process, an emphasis was continuously placed on building trust and discovering more about each other, while allowing for key research topics to emerge. In the intervening weeks the 10 UCC students and instructors met on campus and learned about the theory and principles of community-based participatory research. For each classroom session with the students, time was also provided to debrief on the previous interactions with CEF and to identify best routes forward for enhancing and advancing the collaboration.



Group discussion and categorising of emerging themes

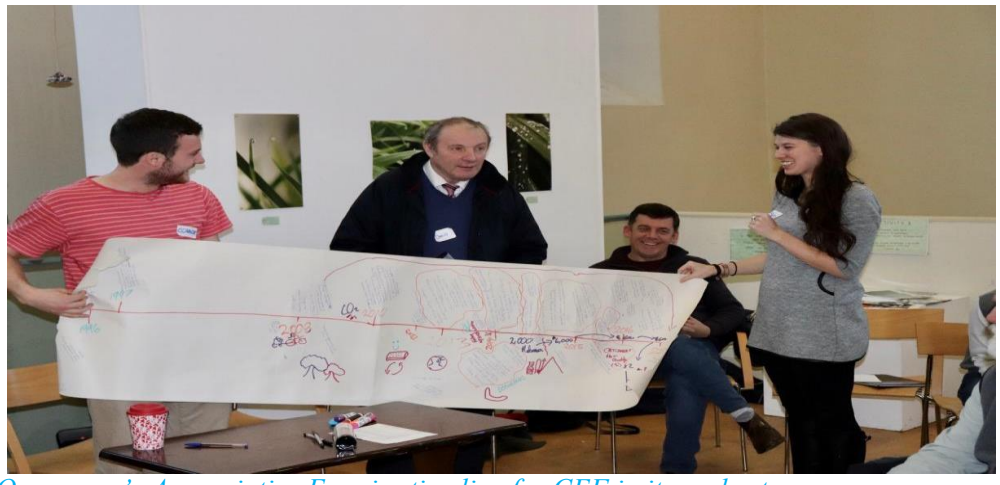
What were our questions?

The emphasis in participatory research is on collaboration, enquiry/discovery, analysis and action. Two overarching questions were proposed to potentially guide the collaborative enquiry and the CEF / UCC partnership's development. These were 1) How to get the public more engaged on environmental issues? 2) How can CEF be more effective at what it does? These questions which were proposed by CEF, were shared with the wider group on our first day

together as a means to orientate participants as to why their participation was important and what this partnership could potentially accomplish.

Figure 1: Overview of phases of CEF/UCC partnership

However, these questions did not overly steer emerging discussions and exchanges. Rather in phase one, an enquiry stage, an appreciative enquiry exercise was introduced which acted as a conduit for the general sharing of stories and experiences related to CEF. CEF and UCC participants formed small enquiry groups of 5-7 people and began by populating a timeline with events, occurrences, ideas, concepts, stories and other matters of significance to the organisation since its inception to present day. By generating, analysing and valuing past and present achievements, experiences and insights, participants were guided to examine what gives life to CEF as an organisation. Participants considered matters such as what CEF does well, what areas require focus, in addition to considering areas and ways of working that are possibly no longer a priority for the organisation.



One group's Appreciative Enquiry timeline for CEF in its early stage

At each table UCC students facilitated the conversations and documented CEF members' deliberations and contributions, trying always to underscore CEF members experience and knowledge. Moving from enquiry to analysis during the third collaborative session, participants began to code or organise the contributions to their timeline under headings,

ensuring all contributions were included until reaching a point of saturation. In turn, each group's headings were organised and compiled within overall themes that were mutually agreed upon by the larger group.

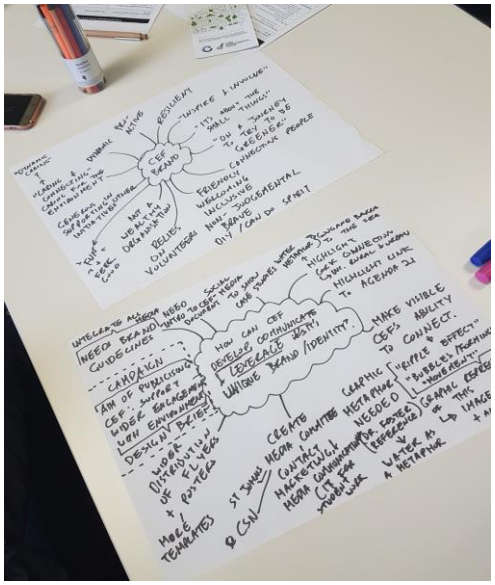
Four overall thematic headings were agreed upon. Moving from enquiry and analysis to an action phase, participants then assigned themselves to one of the 4 themes, according to their own personal interests. In the final session, each person/group explored their chosen theme in greater detail and began to reflect, deliberate and decide upon ways CEF could act on the learning emerging from each theme. These discussions were aided by a guiding question. Below, the remaining sections of this report are dedicated to presenting the outcomes of the fourth session and the deliberations of the 4 individual groups - essentially the thoughts and plans they developed in response to their particular theme. In the fourth session, each group also reported to the larger group and received feedback and critique. Additionally, the appendix section provides an insight into how these four themes were generated and the variety of associated sub-headings. The strength of the participatory approach adopted this collaboration was its deliberative and inclusive nature, and its privileging of the knowledge and insights of the CEF participants.





Emerging themes

Theme 1 - How can CEF develop, communicate and leverage its unique brand values and ethos? 'Our Flavour'



Theme 1 proposed actions and reflections

Group members: Bernie, Richard, Finola, Maria & Emmy.

During the final session with CEF the group discussed the organisation's unique activities, values and ethos. Firstly, the group discussed what the CEF "brand" is. The group agreed that CEF has a "ripple effect" as they channel their commitment to caring about the environment and people, to build a more resilient community in Cork and beyond. This "ripple effect" was identified as a possible visual motif that could be used to represent CEF. CEF is the dynamic thread linking networks of caring individuals with a 'can do attitude' to our environment. Inspiring, involving and supporting people 'on their journey to be greener'.



The fact that CEF is "not a wealthy organisation" was also discussed. But despite the lack of financial resources, it considers itself 'people rich'. Members bring with them an abundance of knowledge and experiences. CEF is conscious that it relies heavily on these volunteers, but also acknowledges that being a member has a "fun and feel good" factor. It was agreed that CEF is ultimately a 'caring' organisation: caring for the environment and caring for people. Possible phrases to describe CEF included "Dynamic Caring" and "Caring and Connecting".

Next, the group discussed how CEF could communicate this "brand" to the general public. Everyone agreed that design plays an important role when developing a brand. The following steps were agreed upon:

Step one: Establish a CEF media committee.
The group agreed that a CEF media committee was needed to develop and communicate the CEF brand and identity. This group could be established by issuing a call within the organisation for volunteers with a particular interest in media, marketing and communications. The committee would then have an important role in linking with third parties (see step two below) to develop and communicate the CEF brand and identity.

Step two: Develop CEF brand and identity profile.
It was agreed that the organisation needed an "Introduction to CEF" document. This would help to consolidate the CEF brand and identity. It was agreed that the best way to develop a brand and identity profile would be for the CEF media committee to contact 3rd level institutes such as Cork Institute of Technology, Collaiste Stiofan Naofa & St John's College, to link with students in marketing and media communications courses to create branding identity and materials. Possible visual metaphors to represent CEF could include: water, ripple effect, bubbles, movement. Graphical representations of this (both still and moving) could be disseminated on social media and other platforms. It would be important to make visible CEF's ability to connect and also highlight the Cork connection and link to Agenda 21. Brand guidelines are needed to consolidate the CEF brand. These guidelines should be integrated into all media / communication with public.

Step three: Communicate CEF brand and identity.
It was agreed that a standard template was needed for CEF flyers, posters and publications. This would create consistency and encourage brand recognition among the general public. The CEF media committee could facilitate a wider distribution of flyers and posters around the city and county and electronic versions could be shared on social media. Again, the media committee could link with third level programmes/students to secure a placement student to work on the social media aspect. It was also agreed that CEF required a range of different flyers with different call-to-actions. For example, the very information-heavy flyers are suitable in some contexts, but not in all. The development of this would be a focus point in projects developed with media students.

Step four: Begin a campaign to encourage wider engagement with the environment.
The group discussed the fact that none of us are perfect and "we are all on a journey to be greener". It was agreed that to bring about environmental change, "we need to focus on the small things". The group agreed that beginning a campaign to highlight this would be a good idea. The campaign would involve focusing on individual issues relating to the environment in "bite size" chunks. This campaign would have two objectives. The first objective would be to encourage people to bring about positive environmental change. The second objective would be to highlight and advertise the CEF organisation. While the group felt that beginning a

campaign would be a good idea, we also agreed that CEF needs to spend some time developing steps 1 and 2 (as outlined above) before beginning a campaign.

Theme 2 - CEF has Organisational Strengths, it works well when we…

Group members: Catherine, Darren, Rosie, Shelbi



Theme 2 proposed actions and reflections

In the final session with CEF, four participants were drawn to discussing the organisational strengths of CEF. Key strengths were listed as follows:

- CEF's focus on relationships
- Communication
- CEF's focus on objectives
- CEF's extensive programmes

A key question arising from this theme was: "Is there a need for CEF to develop a clearly articulated statement that can guide its future development?" This question helped frame the discussions of the group that gathered to develop actions and steps forward in relation to Theme 2. A number of prompts accompanied the framing question and these included the following: mission, goals, objectives and strengths.

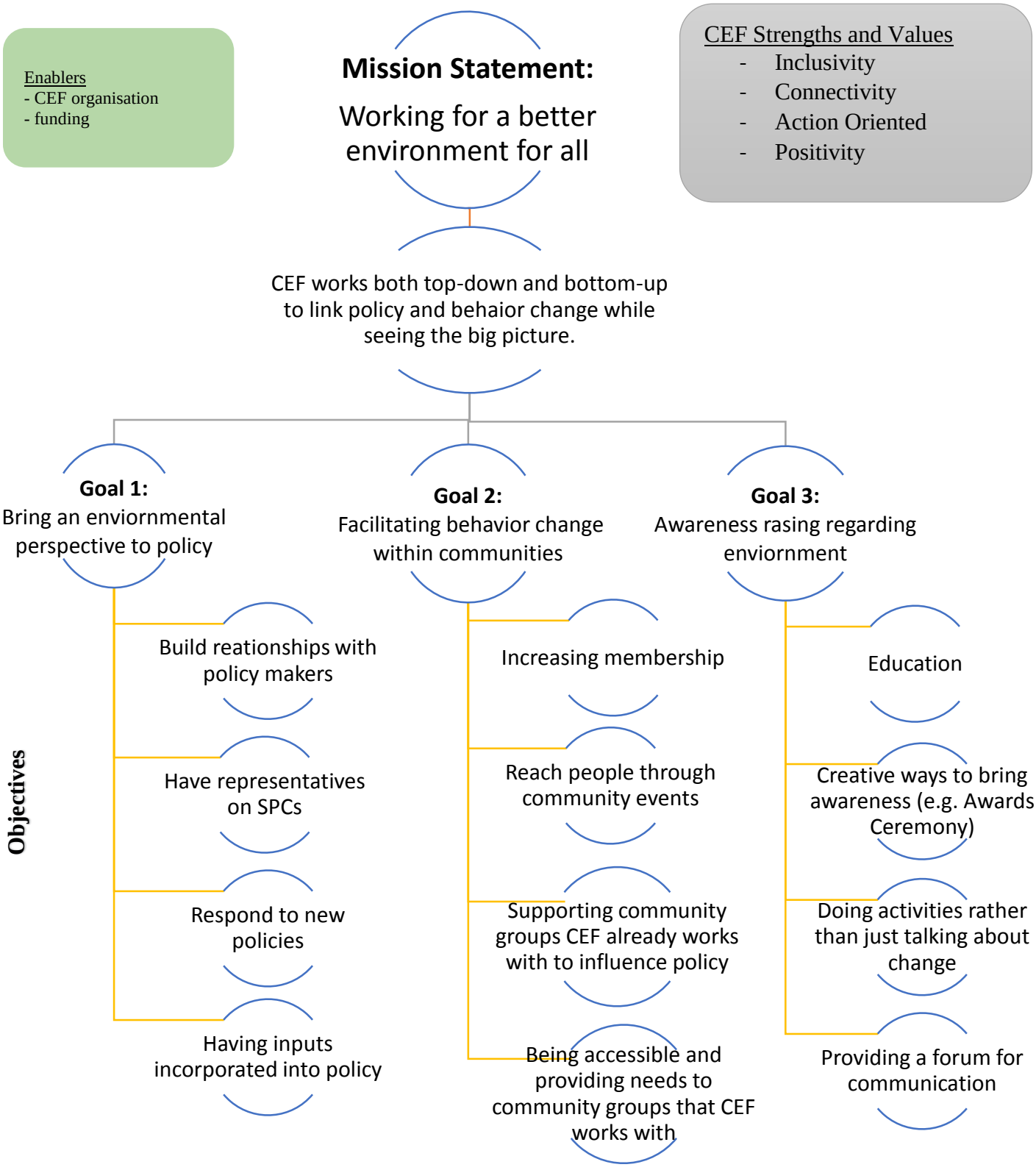
When the group formed there was clear interest in articulating the next steps in relation to Theme 2 rather than reviewing the previous discussions. Consequently, the group focussed on addressing the question "Is there a need for CEF to develop a clearly articulated statement that can guide its future development?" and related prompts.

The group debated whether a mission statement was necessary for CEF. It was agreed that such a statement was necessary and one group member reflected that such a statement would be "most useful for the people who pay the least attention". The audience for such a statement was identified as the general public and funding bodies. It was suggested that the main purpose

of a mission statement for CEF would be to clarify its role and activities to external audiences, as well as strengthen its communication efforts.
A mission statement was quickly agreed upon by the group and one group member observed that "it is harder to articulate the level below this, i.e. what we do". The group began by identifying CEF's strengths such as: its ability to work both top-down and bottom up and to link policy and behaviour change, its apolitical stance and its focus on action rather than 'talking'. The review of CEF's strengths helped identify key areas of activity and subsequent high-level goals for the organisation. The goals were then teased out to identify objectives that consequent activities that would help achieve these goals.

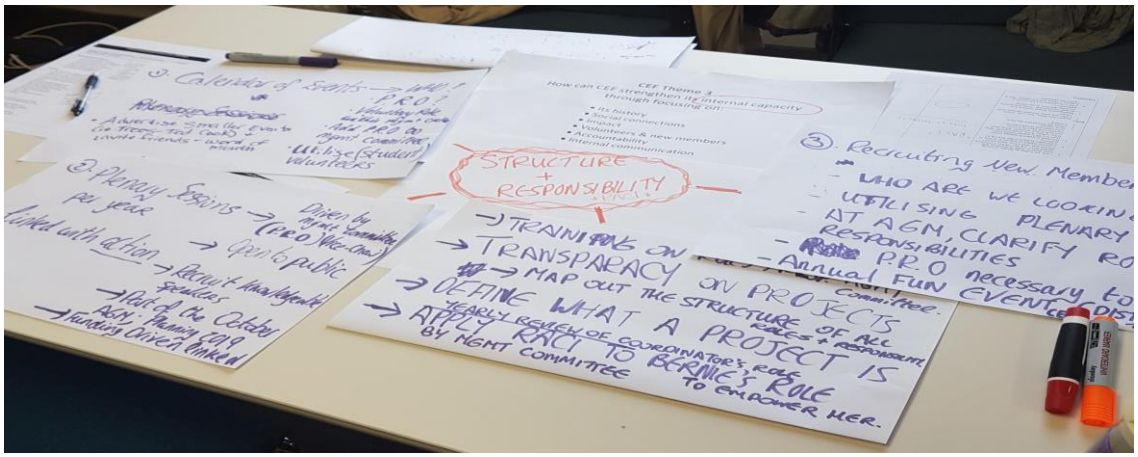
Figure 2 summarises the agreed goals, objectives, and strengths for CEF and relates back to the earlier discussions and timeline mapping.

Figure 2: Goals, Objectives, and Strengths for CEF



Theme 3 - How can CEF strengthen its internal capacity?

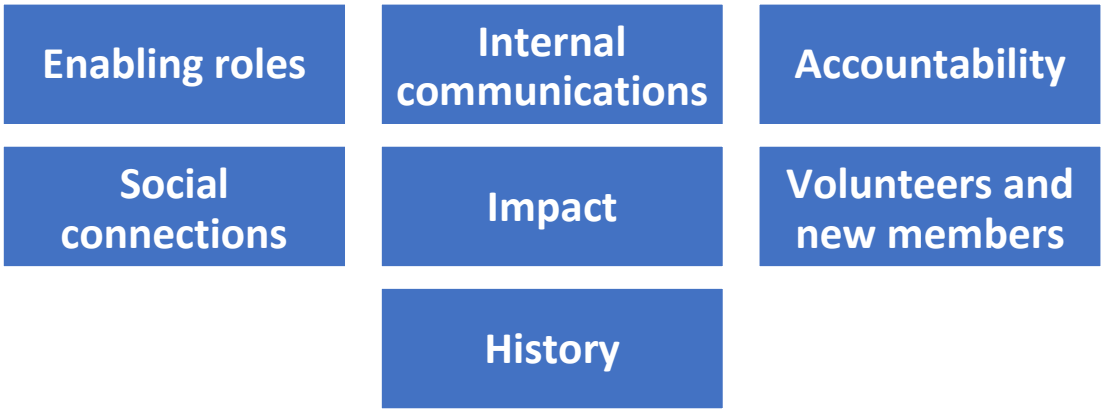
Group members: Angie, Anna, Aoife, Gwinyai, Helen, Ruth and Sarah.



Theme 3 proposed actions and reflections

From the discussions that took place in the project's earlier interactions, a strong theme to emerge was that of strengthening or leveraging the existing strengths of CEF. There was a sense of pride in relation to the breadth and quality of the activities CEF is involved in. Coupled with this, there was also a pragmatic sense that more could be done to optimise the areas that work well and to address functions, processes or roles that need attention. Each group, during the 'storming-norming' phase (Tuckman, 1965) of the CEF and UCC partnership, articulated and expressed the desire or requirement for CEF to strengthen its internal capacity in different, yet interconnected ways. It was suggested that CEF focus on areas such as its: history; social connections; impact; volunteers and new members; accountability; internal communications; enabling roles. The areas are captured in the diagram below.

Strengthening internal capacity through focusing on:



Within the group, CEF members were particularly interested in critically discussing and advancing how CEF functions internally including the structure, and delineation and fulfilment of roles and responsibilities. The group's discussion proceeded to focus on the means by which the organisation could shift more attention toward recruiting new members. Integrally

connected to recruiting new members was creating and assigning a public relations officer (PRO). The following headings represent the primary focus of the theme three group discussions.

Structure of CEF

Focusing on the core structure of CEF as an organisation was seen as crucial. There were three core areas discussed: roles and responsibilities; transparency of projects; and the coordinator's role. It was proposed that the roles and responsibilities of all members could be addressed and clearly mapped out. Despite the voluntary nature of CEF members, members could still take on responsibilities and spread the ownership of tasks, promote teamwork and grow as an organisation. Once there is a clear structure of roles, members can see clearly where they fit and how best to contribute. Projects also need to be defined by the management committee to create transparency and allow members to offer their support where needed. Lastly, it was proposed that the coordinator role should be annually reviewed by the management committee. The roles and responsibilities should be prioritised and disseminated to other members if necessary. It was considered highly important to organise this role in order to empower and support the holder of this role.

Calendar of events

The preparation and dissemination of a detailed yearly calendar of events was proposed as an instrument to facilitate enhanced internal and external communication. The calendar of events would showcase the breadth of CEF events making it easier for potential new and existing members to identify opportunities to participate. It was proposed that the PRO, who would be a member of the management committee, would prepare the calendar. A potential supportive role of student volunteers was raised.

Recruiting new members and volunteers

Two central questions were raised in relation to recruiting and informing members:

1. How can CEF most effectively promote membership growth?
2. Who should CEF seek out when recruiting members and volunteers?

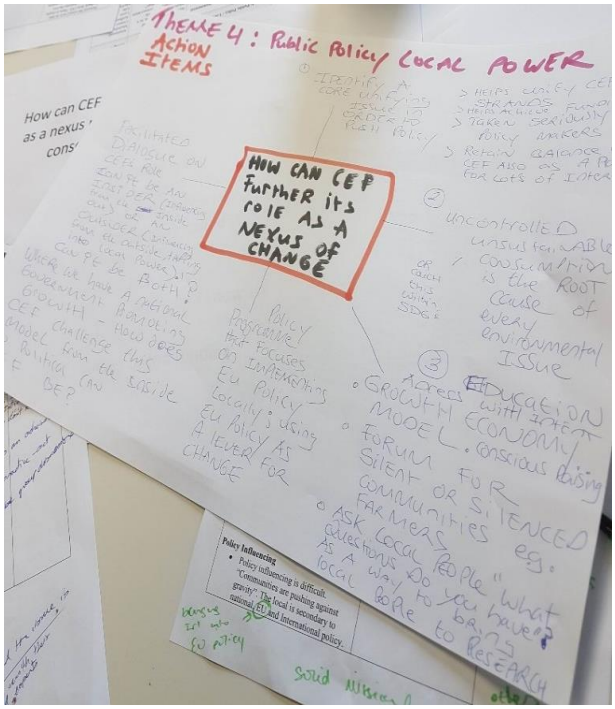
The importance of creating a PRO position was highlighted in response to the first question. The PRO could advertise events, such as plenary sessions where presentations are given on current environmental issues by recognised authorities in the field; this will inform potential members and build interest in CEF's purpose. Another recruitment suggestion was a social event, distinct from, but connected to the organisation's AGM. Linking a fun event to the AGM will balance the detail-oriented nature of this yearly meeting, cultivating comradery and enthusiasm among existing and potential members. The principle response to question two was that CEF can benefit from engaging a variety of people with diverse resources. Those who will give their time, work hard, and fulfil commitments are clearly crucial to the success of the organisation. Those who can provide funds are also essential to help CEF thrive. It will, therefore, be important to remember to seek out members and volunteers who can fill these different roles.

Theme 4 - Public Policy / Local Power

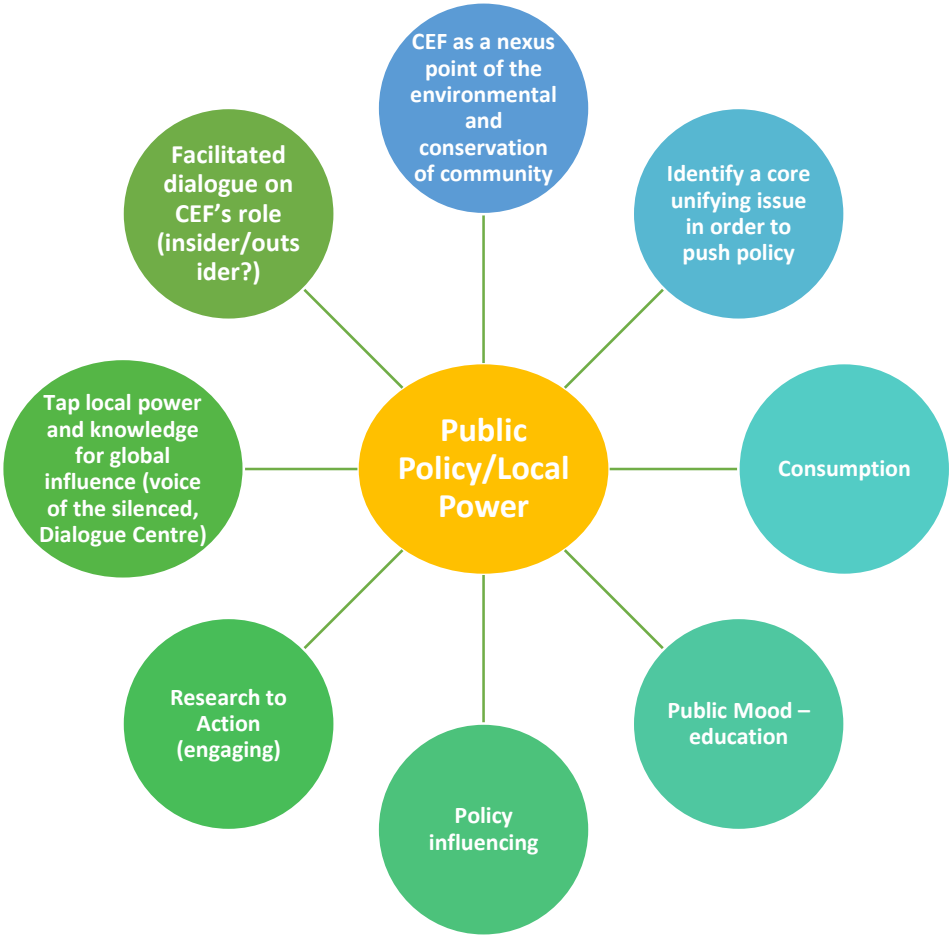
Group members: Anne-Marie, Connor, Lucas, Martin, Muriel, John, Derry

The fourth theme that emerged from the appreciative inquiry and discussions was labelled - "Public Policy/Local Power". It tied together a variety of emerging sub-themes around how CEF could better tap local power, to push policy and tackle key issues like consumption.

A key **question** was formulated to initiate the debate about the actions needed to address these sub-themes: "how can CEF renew and further leverage its role, as a nexus point of the Cork environmental and conservation community, for change …?". Below is a summary of the key talking points.



Theme 4 proposed actions and reflections



CEF as a nexus point of the environmental and conservation of community

There was a discussion on a number of aspects. CEF members were very aware of what they feel they need from CEF (in particular regarding the direction it should take). The positivity of previous CEF campaigns such as, for example, GAP and Awards, were discussed. This is vital to show the range of CEF activities. There were questions around how this is harnessed more publicly for the benefit of CEF. There was a call for more of a 'Social Inclusion focus" – there was a request that this is given a better definition within CEF; what does this mean to CEF? Boomerang Recycling (http://boomerangenterprises.ie/) was noted here as a good example of social inclusion, but also the economic and education aspects for the community.

Identify a core unifying issue in order to push policy

It was noted that having a unifying vision might help CEF strengthen its image. This could prove helpful when securing funding and mean the organisation is taken more seriously by policy makers. While also retaining the balance within CEF, as a place that represented a wide variety of interests.

Consumption

Consumption emerged as a common problem across environmental issues like water, plastic and transport for example. There was a noted concern for unconscious and unsustainable consumption with one CEF member stating that "it is all around us", there was a question if "consumption" could be an overarching theme / issue under which all aspects of CEF could align. There was a note that CEF should have one bold statement of what CEF is about - "consumption" which might help address the fact that CEF appears to be "spread thin". In the interest of securing funding, this could be linked to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

- ➢ Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities
- ➢ Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production
- ➢ Goal 13: Climate action
- ➢ Goal 14: Life below water
- ➢ Goal 15: Life on land

Public Mood

"Vested interested need to be challenged": whose interests CEF represents was discussed and how are compromises reached, which are satisfying to both CEF and others (policy makers, councils, other organisations). "Ordinary people have woken up" was a point raised regarding public consciousness regarding environmental issues. There was a discussion around the need to educate at a local level and the need to provide education that is suitable to various groups – e.g. education which is developed for children. There was a point made that there is a need to educate appropriately; asking local people "what questions do you have?". A suggestion was made that CEF needs to bring education and research to the community: CEF should not presume what the community needs to know, consult widely.

Policy influencing

There was a discussion regarding the need for Ireland to be brought in line with EU policies. Ireland is not following already directed policy and it was discussed that perhaps this is a good starting point for CEF. The following question was raised: "is there room to get the State accountable for failures to enact agreed EU directives?". Making policy "sexy" could begin by developing a solid mission statement for different core issues - again this refers to back to the earlier theme of consumption as a good starting point.

It was noted that there needs to be a balance between policy and community engagement - how does CEF do this in a manner that gets things done? How does CEF capitalise on the feedback provided from Councils? There was a discussion about how helpful the Council has been in the past. Regarding policy, CEF needs more opportunities to sit on Council forums to enable education of Council body members on environmental matters. Concern was raised about CEF members not being seen as objective on issues - insider /outsider status and the need to balance this to become more effective in achieving CEF's goals.

Research to Action

There was a call for a restoring trust in science. There was a point raised that CEF is often seen as outsiders, activists, environmentalists. Professionals with scientific environmental concerns are not listened to or "shut down" by bodies once they declare that they are part of CEF: how can CEF respond to this? How does CEF engage more with the scientific community to develop research links and provide a professional scientific basis for raising policy / environmental issues? This suggests a need to further debate about how to develop stronger links with the research community in Cork (e.g. UCC, CIT). This would also help address concerns around the difficulties facing CEF due to funding constraints: perhaps linking into research partnerships as a community group may enable additional funding, while also providing a good basis for environmental issues.

Tap local power and knowledge for global influence

There was a point raised about the need to link in with "silence communities": how can CEF do this? Also discussed was the possibility of bringing forth "voices lost & unheard into the environmental forum". There was an acknowledgement of local power and the importance of this in relation to key environmental issues in Cork. This was discussed in the context of education. Members addressed an awareness of and need for bottom up research to tap into local knowledge - grass roots research - ask communities what is important to them.

There was a discussion around the need for a Cork Dialogue Centre: a place to meet and discuss environmental issues. It was pointed out that, in the past, CEF has explored the idea of premises with the council but has not been successful, neither have CEF been exhaustive in this request. Members noted the need for a central space where like-minded people can meet. It was noted that public accessibility on environmental activities / projects or goings on are not always visible. There was agreement from CEF members that it is not leveraging technology enough to highlight CEF events.

Facilitated dialogue on CEF's role

It was thought that it would be valuable for CEF to have a facilitated discussion around its role. This may address questions which emerged around how effective CEF could be from inside the political system. Is CEF better positioned inside or out? As an insider - influencing by sitting on boards and committee or as an outsider - tapping into local power. Can it be both? When we have a national government promoting growth, how can CEF challenge this model from the inside? How political can CEF be?

Conclusion

Over the course of four community and participatory research meetings, UCC and CEF participants surfaced and explored some of the most salient topics currently impacting and characterising CEF. These include the organisation's purpose, its capacity to emphasise pertinent environmental issues to the public, and the organisation's future development. CEF is a dynamic organisation and is active in multiple, evolving environmental areas. Their members range from those who are strongly involved in the organisation's activities to those who infrequently engage, but are generally interested in environmental issues. Considering the membership profile and the wide range of environmental issues CEF occupies, throughout the research partnership, it was important to structure discussions to ensure we kept close to CEF's values and ambitions for the collaboration. A balance had to be struck in allowing time to explore individual or sub-group interests while also keeping an eye to the overall purpose of the collaboration and, in particular, CEF's original guiding questions.

This short report captures the process that occurred in the CBPR project between CEF and UCC that led to the emergence of four umbrella themes. Through discursive techniques and continuous trust building, CEF members articulated key areas that CEF would like to action, and important points that require the organisation members to reflect upon. The CBPR collaboration between CEF and UCC was wrapped up in a final summation session in UCC's Environmental Research Institute, where this report was further developed with CEF members. Before the module's end point, new connections and off-shoot projects had already began to form between the module's staff, students and CEF participants. Additionally, CEF is considering bringing in outside facilitation to expound upon the primary points that emerged in this participatory process and to capitalise on the key learnings experienced as a result of part-taking in the CBPR project. Following this period of further exploration and reflection, CEF may choose to connect with UCC, in particular CARL to potentially explore research questions identified in this phase of the partnership.

Appendix: Emerging themes

This table reflects much of the discussing and themes emerging from the early to middle stages of the process. The information or 'raw data' in the table below helped to inform much of the partnership's latter discussions and conclusion, which form the basis of this report.

Theme 1: CEF has a unique brand or flavour	**Key questions arising**	**Group 1**
CEF has its own identity and culture ● Pride and modesty ● How we talk to one another **Its *who* we are** ● We are well known and respected - an earned respect ● We have a wide breadth of interests and are involved in a lot of different groups ● "We punch above our weight" ● We "never give up". "Some of our brave members put their houses on the line" for the environment. **Organisational values and ethos** ● Collaboration, enthusiasm, connections. ● Membership involves responsibility, it is demanding, it is rewarding, being a representative, being committed. ● Empowerment and being inclusive	How can CEF develop, communicate and leverage its unique brand (or flavour), values and ethos? ● Role of design? ● Publicity? Social Media (link to behavioural change)	Finola Bernie Kenneth Richard Maria Emmy
Theme 2: CEF has Organisational Strengths - it works well when we:	**Key questions arising**	**Group 2**
Focus on relationships ● Both external collaborations and internal organisational ● That are empowering and inclusive. "Being part of CEF empowers you for involvement in our initiatives". "Everyone can nominate for the awards". ● That build a dynamic, optimistic, positive outlook. ● That celebrate our continuity and being 20 years in existence and open to constantly changing. ● That focus on successes and celebrating learning from sharing. **Communicate** ● Communicate with society and community especially ● Positive messaging works well. **Have objectives** ● CEF's objective is to achieve objectives ● That take a top down *and* bottom up approach: A philosophy and ability to affect behavioural change. ● That are pioneering ● That are pro-active over re-active? ● That see the big picture and links between different policy issues. ● Secure funding **Deliver programmes** ● Social Enterprises e.g. Boomerang ● Stakeholder engagement: Direct action such as tree planting, rebel pedals etc; Coast Watch Survey; Seminars; Position Papers; GAP Training; Children Thematic Workshops; Networks; Influencing Policy.	Is there a need for CEF to develop a clearly articulated statement that can guide its future development? ● mission ● goals ● objectives ● strengths	James Fred Darren Shelbi Catherine Rosie

● Education, learning from each other, promoting awareness, act as a forum for raising concerns. ● Public Education, e.g. GAP Programme. Especially around food waste, dumping, consumption and organic food. "Education is a basic solution". ● Hold events and event days ● Engage in conversations and learning ● Promote informal spaces to gather, share and discuss. ● Host Awards that celebrate who in the county and city are environmentally aware and active e.g. environmentally responsible businesses.		
Theme 3: CEF has internal organisational aspects that require reviewing:	**Key questions arising**	**Group 3**
Organisational development ● CEF has moved from a mode of storming / performing in the beginning to norming / performing now. Is there a history and timeline of CEF's journey available? Are key milestones and achievements captured and articulated, perhaps graphically, especially for new members? **Capacity** ● "Are we (CEF) in danger of being busy fools"? "CEF is scattered and spread thin". e.g. the "Water Collection controversy was a lost opportunity". ● Capacity means 1) impact 2) action 3) volunteers 4) knowledge sharing 5) publicity. ● We need to quantify <u>impact</u> better. How is CEF's impact monitored? Who, when? What is prioritised? Who and how is this decided? What does success look like? Is it more volunteers and collaborations? ● Slow change ● Chase the incinerator decision ● Funding **Roles** ● Roles? Are there clear roles within CEF? Are these defined? Should roles rotate? ● Management Board rotation and diverse membership. What constitutes diversity and how is this being addressed? ● CEF Coordinator is a key position helping to drive and coordinate, that is valued by members. **Volunteers** ● "Volunteerism is the lifeblood of CEF". "We need to tap into this more". It builds "morale". Volunteer capacity is flexible, it has positive and negative aspects. ● Are more specific volunteer positions needed with clear commitments and responsibilities? **New Members** ● Rotation and turnover of members is an issue (can be a good and bad thing). ● New member programmes and orientation needed. How are new members oriented to CEF and mentored once they join? ● Business representation needs consideration. Is more representation from Business needed? If so, who? **Accountability for CEF Position Papers** ● A focus on accountability is needed for particular environmental issues CEF is addressing. Perhaps a point person is needed to drive specific policy issues / positions? ● Overemphasis on reports and position papers. ● How can these become more relevant? **Internal Communication** ● CEF is a hard organisation to explain, it is involved in a lot of things which are hard to grasp. ● Meeting Agendas are too packed and hard to follow. ● Can meetings be more dialogue than agenda driven?	How can CEF strengthen its internal capacity through focusing on? ● Its history ● Social connections ● Impact ● Volunteers & new members ● Accountability ● Internal communication ● Enabling roles	Sarah Ruth Aoife Gwinyai Angie Helen Anna

Social Connection ● Social aspect to CEF is important, such as 'Green drinks' and other social networks. ● More social connection needed (but not forced) ● Can a regular calendar of social events be put in place and agreed for the year?		
Theme 4: Public Policy / Local Power	**Key questions arising**	**Group 4**
CEF is a nexus point of the environmental and conservation community ● Central player in many collaborative activities and partnerships. It focuses on 4 sectors: Business Community, Voluntary / Communities, Individuals, Public Sector. ● Its activities include: Coastwatch, Boomerang, St. Patricks Day Parade, Rebel Pedals, Awards, PPN's, SPC's, Water Boards, SWAN, Transport Mobility Forum, Newsletter, GAP, Tree Week, Parking Day, Petitions; also involvement with CHASE, Learning Cities, Tidy Towns, Bantry Bay, Stop Climate Chaos, Vegan etc. ● Social inclusion focus. ● "There is hardly anything that CEF is not involved with in regards to environmental issues, especially those that impact human health and well-being". **What is today's big campaign?** ● Is it addressing consumption: "This is where all the shit begins"; "Everyone needs to consume". "Maybe it's about promoting responsible consumption." **Public mood** ● There is a public appetite for change: "Public mood has changed in favour of the environment". "Social media is a big influence". "Ordinary people have woken up." "Vested interests need to be challenged". **Policy Influencing** ● Policy influencing is difficult. "Communities are pushing against gravity". The local is secondary to national, EU and International policy. However, the council now do take feedback from CEF. There is clearer communication between the two. ● How do we make policy submissions sexy? **Research to action** ● There is a need to improve relationships between researchers and policy makers to get research expertise taken on. "Science is not shared widely". "Where we Irish were previously policy borrowers, we are now (and need to become more) policy makers" e.g. ocean plastic study Irish Marine Centre **Tap local power and knowledge for global influence** ● "Maybe CEF does not see its power enough" "The local can make a difference". "It's amazing what local action can do". However, "nobody asks the farmer", "nobody asks the people and if they do, people are ignored". **Dialogue** ● There is a need for a Cork Dialogue Centre to encourage spirituality in communication. This involves meetings with no agenda where listening to others helps us to make constant adjustments in how we see things so as to fine tune our understanding of one another. **Values based funding** ● Funders values need to align with CEF	How can CEF renew and further leverage its role, as a nexus point of the Cork environmental and conservation community, for change? ● Connections ● Campaigns ● Public mood for change ● Challenging vested interests ● Policy influencing ● Research to action ● Local power and knowledge ● Dialogue ● Values based funding	AnneMarie Murielle Connor Aodhan Lucas John Martin