

**New Deal for Communities
National Evaluation
Phase 2: 2006 - 2009**

How is the NDC Programme to be evaluated?

November 2006



The 2001-2005 Phase I of the NDC evaluation culminated in an 'Interim Evaluation' published as Research Report 17 by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) in November 2005.

Phase 2 of the evaluation was launched in early 2006. As was the case for Phase 1, the national evaluation team (NET) will be co-ordinated by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR) at Sheffield Hallam University working with a range of partners including Ipsos MORI, the Social Disadvantage Research Centre at Oxford University, Cambridge Economic Associates, SQW, GFA Consultants, the European Institute for Urban Affairs at Liverpool John Moores University, the Local Government Centre at Warwick University, and Shared Intelligence.

This **brief overview** of Phase 2 outlines:

- the key questions Phase 2 of the evaluation is designed to address
- work strands
- outputs
- keeping informed.

WHAT QUESTIONS IS THE EVALUATION DESIGNED TO ADDRESS?

The NDC Programme and the associated 2005-09 phase of the evaluation provide an unprecedented opportunity to address key issues which have impacted on regeneration and neighbourhood renewal for many years. These issues will be explored within **three overarching questions**.

1. Has the NDC Programme been successful?

Using 2002 to 2004 change data, evidence from Phase 1 of the evaluation suggested that:

- there was considerable and positive attitudinal change amongst NDC residents
- NDCs tended to outperform a range of benchmarks: equally deprived comparator areas, parent local authorities and England as a whole
- positive changes were becoming apparent in relation to ultimate outcomes.

Phase 2 of the evaluation will continue to explore the degree to which the Programme has been successful in relation to a range of considerations including:

- Whether and how NDC activities and interventions are leading to improved impact outcomes against local priorities and key floor targets
- The impact NDCs are having on communities
- Variations in performance across NDCs and an exploration of why these are occurring
- The impact of NDCs on neighbouring areas?
- The degree to which NDC impact outcomes are likely to be sustained after the Programme finishes.

2. What is the added value of the NDC community based partnership approach to neighbourhood renewal?

In Phase 1 it was not possible to explore this issue in any great detail. But key headlines included:

- There were clearly advantages but also implications arising from the community based approach: NDCs worked closely with local residents and probably made more steps towards engaging Black and Minority Ethnic groups than any previous Area Based Initiative; however, it was not possible in Phase 1 to suggest that the community focus of the Programme had resulted in identifiable changes in relation to outcomes
- NDCs were working increasingly closely with many agencies; some delivery agencies were actively engaging with NDCs to improve the quality and scope of services; but it was not clear that many NDCs or agency partners had always considered the longer term sustainability of NDC/ agency initiatives and some agencies have had little to do with NDCs.

Reflecting on findings from Phase 1, two central considerations will be explored within this theme:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of the 'NDC model'?
- Has the Programme been cost-effective?

3. What is the most effective way to plan for neighbourhood renewal over 10 years?

The 2001-2005 Interim Evaluation pointed to a range of policy implications and recommendations relevant to the wider neighbourhood renewal debate (Chapter 14 of NRU Research Report 17). In Phase 2 identifying and disseminating lessons for 'effective neighbourhood renewal' will be informed by an increasing array of change data.

Three issues are likely to be of particular concern:

- assessing approaches and activities of Partnerships in order to strengthen the evidence base about good practice in delivering neighbourhood renewal
- exploring the degree to which the neighbourhood is the right level to be tackling the types of problems NDCs are being asked to address
- examining the extent to which NDCs have been strategic in their approach.

WHAT ARE THE KEY STRANDS OF WORK IN THE EVALUATION?

The national evaluation will be structured around **six work strands**. A brief outline of each is provided below.

Strand 1: The Household Survey

In 2006 Ipsos MORI have completed a third household survey following those conducted in 2002 and 2004. The 2006 survey consists of two main elements:

- 400 completed questionnaires in all 39 NDC areas
- in order to provide a benchmark against which to assess progress in NDC areas as a whole, a comparator areas survey of 3000 people in similarly deprived non NDC areas.

The household surveys provide invaluable information to the NET. One reason is because between 50% and 60% of those interviewed in 2004 and 2006 had also previously been interviewed two years earlier. This evidence creates a longitudinal panel of people who stayed in NDC areas for at least two years. This is a vital group in that evidence drawn from

the 2002-2004 panel suggests that they were benefiting more from NDC interventions than a simple comparison of 2004 and 2002 area based data would suggest.

Evidence from the 2006 survey will be made available to Partnerships as soon as possible. Ipsos MORI will also create a dedicated household survey extranet site and undertake associated training.

Strand 2: Collection of local data

The NET will be collating and analysing **Partnership level data** in relation to expenditure and outputs and also evidence with regard to issues such as staffing, size and composition of Boards, etc. This evidence is useful in its own right but it can also help in the process of explaining relative change across the 39.

Strand 3: Collation and analysis of administrative data

The SDRC will continue to collate and prepare an array of Partnership and Programme wide administrative data. These indicators, along with the household surveys, are central in appreciating outcome change over time and hence are vital in isolating the impact of the Programme. Administrative data is an excellent vehicle through which to establish the extent to which NDC areas are:

- closing the gaps with parent local authorities and other deprived neighbourhoods
- having a positive or negative impact on surrounding areas.

Administrative data will cover:

- Worklessness: counts, rates and benefit transitions
- Education and Skills: Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 data; rates of staying on in non-advanced education post age 16; rates of entry into higher education
- Crime: recorded crime rates (violence, burglary, theft, and criminal damage).
- Health: hospital Episode Statistic-based indicators; mortality indicators; mental health indicators
- Housing and the Physical Environment: house prices and turnover.

Strand 4: NDC case studies and practice case studies

In order to understand more about how effective neighbourhood renewal is planned and managed, detailed work will be undertaken by the NET in six NDC case studies: Bradford, Knowsley, Lambeth, Newcastle, Newham, and Walsall. A range of tasks will be carried out in these six neighbourhoods including interviews with key players within NDCs and agencies, focus groups, additional data analysis tasks, project level reviews and so on. It is likely too that evidence of change in these six NDC areas will be compared with what is happening in six similarly deprived comparator areas located nearby.

In order to pick up experience across all 39 NDCs, a series of good practice case studies will be undertaken designed to pull out key 'do's' and 'don't' for those undertaking neighbourhood level renewal. The first two practice case studies are exploring masterplanning and community engagement.

Strand 5: Collective learning and dissemination

This strand of work is designed to ensure the NET:

- maintains close relationships with all NDCs
- supports local evaluation activity
- disseminates findings from the evaluation
- and assist in the overall process whereby Partnerships learn from the evidence base and the wider renewal and regeneration community learns from the Programme.

An **indicative list** of possible activities under this strand of work includes:

- Organisation of targeted seminars aimed at some or all Partnerships within a region or nationally
- Seminars and policy briefings on emerging findings for Whitehall and GO staff
- training events designed to assist NDCs to implement their plans
- support for existing networks of local evaluators.

A **National Evaluation Reference Group** consisting of interested local evaluators has been established to help inform and guide the national evaluation.

Strand 6: Programme Wide Analysis and Synthesis

The NET will pull together all of the evidence from across the evaluation to produce a series of Programme Wide outputs. In 2006/07 these are likely to include reports majoring on:

- the degree to which NDCs are closing gaps with parent local authorities
- the impact of residential mobility on NDC outcomes
- the extent to which NDC activities impact on surrounding neighbourhoods
- the degree to which different types of NDCs tend to achieve different outcomes
- and an overall Programme Wide synthesis pulling together all of the evidence available to the NET.

WHERE WILL OUTPUTS BE PUBLISHED?

The intention is that as many outputs as possible will be published by the DCLG.

HOW CAN I KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE EVALUATION?

The NET evaluation web site will regularly be updated and will provide information on activities, outputs, contacts and so on:

http://www.shu.ac.uk/research/development/RESEARCH%20&%20BUSINESS%20WEB/ndc/ndc_home

If you have any particular issues you wish to raise with the NET, please contact the Director Paul Lawless in the first instance:

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