

Annual Plan Report

Year:	2019
LCDC:	Meath
Lot:	Meath County (11-1)
Local Development Company:	Meath Community Rural and Social Development Partnership CLG



Annual Targets	
KPI 1	48
KPI 2	290
%KPI 2 Living in Disadvantaged Areas	17.00%

G1.1 Building Stronger Communities

Goal 1

Location

Navan, Trim, Duleek, Enfield, Ashbourne, East Meath, Athboy, Kells, etc.

Description

Communities, whether geographical or interest based, are complex and have a range of characteristics that define them. The SICAP Team recognises that often the very things that create disadvantage, poverty, lack of educational opportunity, poor health, and poor transport links, also create barriers to bringing about the empowerment that is one of the key ingredients for bringing about real change. When we propose to support 'empowered' communities, we mean a community that is organised to take action to bring about change that is of benefit to those that live there or supported by the community of interest. This is our objective for 2019 under this action. In this context, community capacity building is a critical step in laying the foundations for community empowerment. Our collaborative partners will be requested to continue to work alongside us to invest time, resources and skills into our work in supporting community capacity building across Co. Meath.

Whilst much of the support provided to community groups and organisations through SICAP in 2019 will involve providing facilitated access to the resources they need to operate effectively, capacity building also involves working with local groups to help them understand decision making processes and to develop their ability to inform and influence decisions that affect them directly or indirectly. In this sense, community capacity building is not simply a technical process of providing access to buildings, equipment and funds, but a developmental one where people and groups participate on an on-going basis to develop their learning and expertise so that they are better able to improve their quality of life. For Meath Partnership and the SICAP team, these support processes will be underpinned by community development principles and the horizontal themes enshrined in SICAP.

- In 2019 we will undertake the following activities:
- Mentor and assist LCGs on both an individual and where appropriate a collective basis to plan, implement and evaluate their work which will allow the group to develop and reach their full potential in line with the agreed objectives.
 - Capacity building of community groups by providing a range of training as identified through the implementation of the Building Stronger Communities Development tool.
 - Support groups to implement the newly released Charities Governance Code Principles - advancing charitable purpose; behaving with integrity; leading people; exercising control; working effectively; being accountable and transparent.
 - Connect the community infrastructure within County Meath and promote the work of the sector so that service users, community organisations, agencies and policy makers are aware of what is happening on the ground and have an opportunity to target resources most effectively. One approach to this is to create and circulate an e-newsletter with information to assist LCGs in their work such as free training, events, funding opportunities and new initiatives introduced within the county
 - To assist groups to network and take effective joint action to bring forward into local communities

In 2019, our concentration will remain on working with LCGs which include people from the SICAP target groups whilst also building the capacity of local stakeholders, organisations and agencies to understand and address local communities' concerns and needs. We will develop tailored support plan for each LCG identifying resources available, resources required, action steps necessary and a pathway for linkages to local and regional decision making structures. It is estimated that 23 LCGs will avail of this training and mentoring support in 2019 under this action. Where necessary, external training specialists will be contracted to assist the SICAP team in delivering this action.

G1.2 Community Alliance Navan

Goal 1

Location

Navan Urban and Navan Rural

Description

In 2019 we will continue to operate a dedicated SICAP Outreach Office in Oaklawns, Navan facilitated by the Respond Housing Association. This will assist in addressing weak local community infrastructure, will enable direct engagement with low income households, disadvantaged families and children, jobseekers, older people and negatively affected new communities.

Community Alliance Navan (CAN) is working across 33 housing estates in Navan, many in the footprint of the former Navan RAPID Programme. Given that community spirit within many of these estates is at a low ebb the community demographics need further evaluation in order to improve our understanding of the communities involved, to assist local residents and local groups in actively designing and implementing projects and actions to ensure that such projects effectively assist in strengthening community spirit. Similarly an evaluation of the community's physical characteristics and social facility environment will assist in planning for community engagement and community well-being .

Our objective in 2019 is to support the development of a better organised and empowered community with the ability to identify the things that most matter to them, the know how to create a community agenda towards a better future and with the capacity to plan for change, to promote and implement change and to sustain change through whole of community buy-in. These activities will be supported through a targeted CAN grant scheme as a follow-on to the grant scheme launched in 2018. Such activities will focus on the community achieving a better understanding of the nature of their community, should contribute to a shared description of the community and its immediate needs and should encourage a sense of community control of the local environment in general. Specifically, 2019 actions will include the following:

- Develop community leadership potential and assist in defining short to medium term community need
- Support the establishment of estate level community organisations networked across all estates
- Assist local groups with funding applications to address identified community need
- Design and deliver a community capacity building programme to strengthen community leadership leading to enhanced community empowerment
- Design and deliver a Community Learning Festival with a focus on lifelong learning opportunities, the enhancement of community skills and the promotion of participation with a special focus on disadvantaged adults
- Through the recently established Outreach Office, design a needs-led programme of activity for both Clogherboy and Windtown with sufficient flexibility to provide for needs emerging from the on-going engagement process
- Where service delivery requirements are identified, the relevant service providers will continue to be linked to the appropriate local groups for effective engagement with emerging clients

G1.3 Integrate Community

Goal 1

Location

Navan, Ashbourne and Mosney Reception Centre

Description

From a migrant integration perspective, our ongoing work through the Meath Intercultural Network continues to highlight a number of key challenges facing new communities in Co. Meath in terms of social, civic and economic integration. Firstly, there remains a significant information gap as migrants experience a lack of knowledge about their new social and civic systems and are often unaware of the civic and social processes within Ireland and Meath.

Secondly, there is a network gap as although migrant-led community groups may help to build or solidify networks within migrant communities in Meath, they do little to tie these organisations to groups outside of the migrant communities. While migrant-led LCGs create bonding social capital within their own communities they are not supported necessarily to achieve bridging social capital with the host community or other migrant communities in the county. Integration is a two way process, building mutual acceptance and trust are key conditions to social cohesion and will be addressed through SICAP under this action.

In 2019, we will work with at least five new and emerging migrant-led LCGs to promote and embed the concept of bridging social capital and carry out the following two activities:

- deliver training to volunteers, staff and front-line workers in LCGs and migrant support organisations on the themes of social, civic and political integration - these programmes will have a train-the-trainer element so as to provide a cascading training impact within the LCGs
- facilitate two cultural awareness and celebration events led by the migrant LCGs with support from the SICAP team.

In 2019, Meath Partnership will also continue to support the Meath Intercultural Network to achieve its aims and deliver a number of inter-agency actions.

G1.4 Families First

Goal 1

Location

Navan, Kells, Trim, Ballivor, Duleek, Laytown, Bettystown

Description

Meath Partnership continues to support the ongoing development of 3 newly established community-based family support LCGs in Meath using the principles and approaches of community engagement and in 2019 aims to add an additional 2 LCGs under this action. These LCGs are very much at the predevelopment stage as per the Community Development Matrix. From our work in 2018, we recognise that there is a much greater likelihood of obtaining a good understanding of the collective views of disadvantaged families if they meet regularly and have opportunities to share experiences and develop more informed opinions about what they need. Providing parents with these opportunities also has direct benefits for parents by building social networks. In addition, it also makes it easier for the community to engage with the services and vice versa. These LCGs also function as channels to provide information, training supports and one-to-one mentoring for local families and in 2019 we will facilitate the following workshops and programmes:

- Dealing with challenging behaviour
- Communicating positively with your children
- Looking after your own well-being
- Building resilience in children
- Dealing with Bullying
- Positive Discipline

All of these training topics were identified as input needs by members of the LCGs and those parents that attended the Family Focus event in October 2018. In addition, the team will deliver two Parents Plus Adolescents Programmes. The SICAP Team is trained in delivering early childhood development programmes centred on language development, behaviour and parental well-being and the Parents Plus programme; therefore this training will be available to local families through the LCG structure in 2019. If funding is available, it is our intention to run the Family Focus Conference in 2019 making it an annual event and working toward the strategic objective of Meath becoming a Family Friendly County by 2020.

Under this action, Meath Partnership will continue to support the implementation of the Meath Tiny Talk Initiative - an inter-agency collaboration between the HSE Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) Department, Meath County Childcare Committee and Meath Partnership providing early intervention supports centred on the development of speech, language and communication skills of children.

G2.1 Teach Mná

Goal 2

Location

Navan, Athboy and Ashbourne

Description

The aim of this project is to support the personal development of disadvantaged women, experiencing exclusion, lack of confidence, low self-esteem and mental health issues, to address and enhance their current quality of life. This intervention will encourage this target group to become more active members of their communities. The Teach Mná participants will engage in activities selected and designed by women for women with effective local control. These activities will be embedded with skills supportive of personal development, communication, confidence building and positive mental health. Participants will be supported in addressing matters requiring specialist professional assistance through guidance and mentoring.

As part of this initiative, Meath Partnership intends to organise 'skills swapping' workshops to encourage skill sharing with other women; it is intended that this activity will be linked in with the Community Learning Festival described under CAN as a potential showcase event. Skills swapping connects your skills to another's needs, for each hour you contribute in this respect you in return will receive an hour of help linked to a skill you require. This is a very effective approach to service provision, growth in self-confidence and personal engagement.

Teach Mná provides a valued community based space for women to meet, learn, network and socialise with each other. In 2019 Meath Partnership will offer the following activities:

- Activities that enhance women's independence in meeting very practical day to day challenges to addressing more serious longer term life issues
- Activities which demonstrate the benefits of team work and how close friendships can relieve stress, achieve better outcomes and enhance the benefits of mutual reliance
- Provision of collective access to health specialist, information provision services and instruction on hobbies and recreational activities designed to promote personal wellbeing.
- Counselling activities designed to overcome loss or trauma - be it recent or hidden in memories of past events
- Provide information sharing and networking opportunities for disadvantaged women
- Build alliances with other organisations to challenge the marginalisation of the hard to reach within this target group

Through a greater understanding of people's lives, life situation and lived experience, Meath Partnership through personal action plans will build form this reality for sustainable improvement. Sustainable improvement will focus on participants skills, knowledge, experiential learning and support their application through skills swapping and skills sharing. In 2019 our pre-development work with disadvantaged women will include women parenting alone, carers, migrant women, those that are economically inactive and traveller women. Target group members will be requested to complete a skills and personal interests audit the outcome of which will inform the development of their personal action plans. This information will enable the SICAP team to develop activities which focus on targeted information provision, guidance and support on beneficial educational recreations and cultural activities that respond to their needs and which can be made available. There are currently three active Teach Mná locations in Co Meath namely Athboy, Navan and Ashbourne. The objective for 2019 is to improve the profile of these three start-ups by further developing membership across the SICAP target group and by broadening the activity base in line with the audit outcome. The aim is to successfully engage with 40 disadvantaged women as a SICAP target and to measurably improve their quality of life.

G2.2 Integrate Project

Goal 2

Location

Navan, Mosney Reception Centre, Ashbourne, Kells

Description

From an economic perspective, often the first priority of migrants is to secure employment and access the local labour market as it enables them become part of the county's economic fabric and confers social standing. However migrants almost always enjoy worse socio-economic outcomes than native born and are often exploited within the labour market. Overall Ireland's employment rates for highly educated migrants are very good but conversely very poor for the lowly educated. Migrants are less likely to be self-employed and migrant employment within the public sector in Ireland is extremely poor. It is worth noting that in relation to migrant women, specifically those between the ages of 15 to 34 years of age; they are twice as likely to be economically inactive compared to the native cohort.

In 2019, we will focus on the provision of the following services to support the economic integration of migrants, new communities, refugees and asylum seekers with stamp 4 as follows:

- Work-based learning courses that focus on English language for the workplace, career mentoring, guidance, and job skills preparation
- Pre-development and activation work with the residents of Mosney Reception Centre as they secure leave to remain status and transition to the local employment market within county Meath
- Pre-activation supports for economically inactive migrant women including supported access to bridging vocational training to improve their skills profile and employment potential

There is a need for grassroots development work with local communities, with agencies and with representatives of new communities to build a positive narrative in relation to the impact and contribution of new communities to the economic fabric of Meath and we will begin to address this through the showcase of positive case studies and the facilitation of integration workshops.

Migrant Employment and Self-Employment Support Service:

We will continue to facilitate a mentoring and training programme for migrants in county Meath wishing to set-up a business or secure employment. We have developed a range of tailored start-up workshops with business language learning embedded throughout. We will support and/or train 15: nascent migrant entrepreneurs, unemployed migrant jobseekers and eligible asylum seekers in the county and facilitate their access to a number of State schemes promoting self-employment as a route out of unemployment and/or poverty.

G2.3 Engage

Goal 2

Location

Navan, Kells, Laytown, Stamullen and Trim

Description

The Engage Project is an out-of-school support programme for school refusers, early school leavers and those at risk of early school leaving between the ages of 15 and 17 years old. Using established youth work approaches, this voluntary programme is open to young people living in County Meath who have disengaged from mainstream education on either a short or longer term basis. Engage, which is fully funded by SICAP, provides a tailored programme aimed at enabling up to 12 young people, at a time, from county Meath to re-engage with education and/or training and employment, to develop life skills that foster good relations and build self-confidence and resilience. The Education Youth Support Officer, as part of the SICAP Team, works directly with young people, their referrers, families, schools and other agencies to support the individual needs of each young person based on an agreed personal action plan.

The support and activities offered by the project are grounded in evidence-based interventions and comprise a mix of individual sessions and small group work and activities. We are using a range of tools and educational resources to support young people with literacy, numeracy and digital skills, communication and conflict management, life skills such as cooking and craft-making, personal development and goal setting. The Write-On programme, a fully accredited online learning platform developed by NALA is being utilised with great effect with some young people given the flexible and dynamic nature of the programme. We will measure and track the soft outcomes achieved by the young person and re-enforce the achievements to build confidence and validate skills.

In 2019, we will also offer short programmes of group activities bringing together participants; these programmes will be delivered in two hour sessions across eight weeks focusing on confidence and resilience building, self-advocacy, pride of place, up-skilling and community involvement. This training will be provided by external trainers working alongside the EYSO.

This is a collaboration project with the following agencies and stakeholders: Navan School Completion Programme, CYPSE, Probation Services' JLO and Navan Young Peoples Development Project, Education Welfare Officers, SUST Counsellor and LMETB Youth Officer.

G2.4 Information and Advocacy Service

Goal 2

Location

Co. Meath

Description

In 2018, we completed an action based research initiative to identify the range of housing and accommodation issues impacting on SICAP target groups in Co. Meath. This research initiative provided an evidence base for the development of wrap-around supports proposed under this action for those that are currently homeless, those at risk of homelessness, vulnerable adults and those experiencing mental health problems. We recognise that advocacy plays a critical part in safeguarding vulnerable adults. SICAP clients who lack capacity will be offered a person centred safeguarding support with defined outcomes. Enabling clients to learn about their rights and be more confident in promoting them will be central to this individualised Information and Advocacy Service. By offering person-centred support which "reduces opportunities for abuse, enhances respect, develops people's confidence and improves quality of life", the SICAP team are targeting and working with the most vulnerable people in our society.

In 2019, the SICAP Team will deliver the following activities:

- Provide advocacy and information clinics through the Soup Kitchen in Navan and through similar services supporting vulnerable adults acting as a broker to facilitate access to mainstream supports and services
- Offer a tenancy sustainment service to meet the needs of those vulnerable to homelessness or those recently housed having emerged from homelessness. It will focus on providing supports to maintain tenancies, support the development of life skills and facilitate access to health and social services.
- Support individuals in ways that increases contact with friends, family and community reducing their vulnerability as well as reducing isolation.
- Operate the Haven Breakfast Club offering a safe and homely place for families in emergency accommodation to drop-in for breakfast between the hours of 8am and 9am and then an information and support clinic from 9am to 10am for these parents. The breakfast club is located in Navan and operates 3 mornings per week
- There is a small cohort of SICAP clients, mainly those that are homeless and those with mental health issues, that could also be categorised as high intensity users or "frequent callers" who repeatedly show up in Navan's A&E or contact out-of-hours GP services at least 12 times in a period of three months. Many of these clients have mental health and addiction issues and from our experience have not been linked in with the appropriate services. As part of SICAP's Advocacy and Information service, a client who has been identified as a frequent caller will be referred for support which will include personal mentoring and one-to-one coaching, linked in with appropriate services, and provided with a non-emergency number to call.

G2.5 Meath Employment Service

Goal 2

Location

Co. Meath

Description

Meath Employment Service will work predominately with job mediation clients providing one-to-one career coaching and career guidance. The service offers career coaching and preparation services as well as targeted support to help jobseekers access appropriate bridging vocational training and short-term activation courses. This service is tailored to the specific needs of the unemployed, prioritising personalised supports, developing client capacity and assisting individuals to access mainstream services and employment opportunities. As part of a multi-faceted approach to working with unemployed clients, providing pathways for a client to become self-sufficient as a self-employed person plays a key role. Through this action, Meath Partnership will continue to support jobseekers into meaningful self-employment through the Business Options Service and facilitated access to the BWTEA Scheme.

This service operates on a flexible outreach basis across the county addressing access barriers in terms of transport costs and public transport availability.

In addition, to job mediation clients we will also continue to work with case management clients i.e. those who need intensive, tailored support as a result of multiple employment obstacles. Unemployed persons with complex profiles will be offered a reinforced service called Catalyst: Employment-oriented Case Management. Support will be primarily delivered through one-to-one interventions and a distance travelled tool will be extensively used. Where appropriate, group-based interventions will be delivered that focus on motivation, promotion of self-esteem, and the development of personal and social skills.

Interagency collaboration and cooperation with local employers is imperative to support and activate LTU individuals facing multiple employment barriers. Our experience in this field demonstrates that the approaches taken by the SICAP team to activate their clients matter; personalised counselling and job-search monitoring are important pillars of effective activation, requiring ongoing and persistent face-to-face contacts with LTU clients.

Finally in 2019, we will host and facilitate a series of Job Preparation Workshops across the county in co-operation with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.