

Annual Plan Report



Year:	2020
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%

(2020) 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.

In this context, community capacity building is a critical step in laying the foundations for community empowerment and progressing local community groups along the community development matrix. Essentially, community capacity building is the SICAP supports that community groups access to help them address issues which are important to them. In 2019, we delivered a training programme to LCGs on community leadership and in 2020, we are seeking to build on this training and identify a number of projects and local initiatives that can be trialed to advantage our local communities. Our community development officer, will work alongside these LCGs to define specific projects and then mentor and support these LCGs to take the lead on locally defined and conceived actions. To further build capacity, these newly trained community leaders will be offered further training in areas such as mediation skills, negotiation, networking skills in order to place them in a position to mentor new emerging community leaders and build a new network of support for community leaders in Co. Meath. Our collaborative partners will be requested to continue to work alongside us to invest time, resources and skills to support these communities to achieve their goals.

Whilst much of the support provided to community groups and organisations through SICAP in 2020 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 structures within the county (such as the LCDC, PPN, Strategic Policy Committees, CYPSC, etc.) and to develop their ability to inform and influence decisions that affect them directly or indirectly.

In 2020 we will undertake the following activities:

- Mentor and assist LCGs on both an individual and, where appropriate, a collective basis to address local social inclusion and equality issues outlined in the support plans building on their newly acquired leadership skills. This activity will take place throughout the year.
- Capacity building of community groups by providing a range of training as identified through the implementation of the Building Stronger Communities Development tool. Training will be delivered in two blocks from February to June 2020 and from September to November 2020.
- To assist groups to network and take effective joint action to address local issues

It is our intention to organise and facilitate a Building Stronger Communities Conference in November 2020, to showcase the range of community activities taking place in County Meath specifically activities with a strong social inclusion focus, to support the networking of these groups and provide a space for information exchange and learning; This non-caseload activity will engage 20 LCGs and their representatives. In 2020, 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 continue to develop and support tailored support plans 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 21 LCGs will avail of this training and mentoring support. Where necessary, external training specialists will be contracted to assist the SICAP team in delivering this action.

Goal 1**Location**

Navan Urban and Navan Rural

Description

In 2020 we will continue to operate a dedicated SICAP Outreach Office in Oaklawns, Navan facilitated by the Respond Housing Association. This will assist in bolstering local community infrastructure, will enable ongoing direct engagement with low income households, disadvantaged families and children, jobseekers, older people and negatively affected new communities. We will continue to offer a range of SICAP services and programmes from the office in Oaklawns throughout the year for these target groups.

Over the past 18 months we have witnessed a marked improvement in community spirit and dialogue within and across these estates, but there is still a significant amount of work to be achieved under this action. Our full-time presence in Oaklawns is assisting local residents and local groups in actively designing and implementing projects and actions that address and promote community spirit.

In 2020, our priority is to work with our collaboration partners to begin to address the community's physical characteristics and social facility environment to enhance greater community engagement and community well-being. We have worked with the local community to identify the things that matter most to them and create a community agenda and one of the top priorities this year is to begin to address the physical environment within the estates. This is also an opportunity for SICAP to begin a conversation in terms of climate action, sustainability, environmental care and upkeep, protecting biodiversity and promoting the UN Sustainable Development goals specifically Sustainable Communities (SDG 11); responsible consumption (SDG 12) and Climate Action (SDG 13) in a practical and targeted way that engages families, young people and children to get involved and take pride in their local estates.

Some of these activities will be supported through a targeted CAN grant scheme and will focus on the community achieving a better understanding of the nature of their community's physical environment, this should contribute to a shared understanding of how to improve and use open spaces and should encourage pride in the local environment. Specifically, 2020 actions will include the following:

- Working with and supporting 10 local community groups; this will be ongoing throughout the year
- Support the creation of a community garden in Oaklawns in Spring/Summer
- Encourage estate level clean-ups and the formation of tidy estate committees working with the tenancy liaison officers within Meath County Council - this will be planned throughout the year, with the first clean-up scheduled for April.
- Assist local groups with funding applications to create local estate management plans with our collaboration partners; this will be ongoing throughout the year
- Design and deliver a community information campaign with practical workshops that promotes awareness of how the physical environment can impact (positively and negatively) on community health and well-being. This is planned as a non-caseload event in September 2020.
- Deliver a short activities-based summer programme for disadvantaged young people to encourage and support their inclusion locally and get them involved in local actions at estate level. This action will be delivered in collaboration with local youth organisations in August 2020.

(2020) G1.3 Integrate Community

Goal 1

Location

Navan, Ashbourne and Mosney Reception Centre

Description

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 social and cultural fabric of Meath and we will begin to address this through the creation of local opportunities for migrants and new communities to get involved in local community activities. Working with migrant-led community groups throughout 2019, the evidence of a networking gap among LCGs especially those that involve migrant-led or migrant involving organisations is evident with few opportunities for these groups to come together either thematically or geographically.

In 2020, with additional funding secured through the Department of Justice and Equality, the SICAP Team is proposing to bring together 12 LCGs (8 migrant-led and 4 local LCGs) from across the cultural spectrum using the medium of food; a recommendation put forward by the LCGs in 2019. The reason being is that across all cultures, food is about sharing, community and connectivity. Food is an international language, often the unspoken ambassador of integration. County Meath is host to significant Eastern European, African, Asian and Syrian communities and through this action we would like to create opportunities for learning, exchange and sharing; creating a space to exhibit and experience both Irish and migrant cultures, promote intercultural awareness and begin to build relationships, contacts and informal networks between LCGs. With access to the Lismullin Culinary School, we will host two food making and cultural training workshops in Q2 with these LCGs in order to enhance intercultural awareness and local community capacity; improve the understanding of the contribution that migrants make to social and civic life in county Meath and to recognise the diverse cultures that are present in community life in Meath.

This initiative intends to help build and solidify networks within LCGs in Meath recognising that integration is a two way process, building mutual acceptance and trust are key conditions to social cohesion and will be addressed under this action.

In 2020, we will continue to build the capacity and work with 8 migrant-led LCGs on a one-to-one basis also in order to promote and embed the concept of bridging social capital and carry out the following activities:

- ongoing support and training input in of good governance, access to local grants and supports, linkages to other LCGs; this activity will be ongoing throughout the year.
- link the LCGs with local decision making structures and encourage their involvement in the PPN and other representative networks at county level such as the Later life Network, Meath Intercultural Network, and others.

Meath Partnership will support the implementation of the new Meath Louth Integration Strategy to achieve its aims and deliver a number of inter-agency actions where appropriate.

(2020) G1.4 Families First

Goal 1

Location

Navan and Kells

Description

Meath Partnership continues to support the ongoing development of 5 recently established community-based family support LCGs in Meath using the principles and approaches of community Meath Partnership continues to support the ongoing development of 5 recently established community-based family support LCGs in Meath using the principles and approaches of community engagement. These LCGs are at the pre-development stage as per the Community Development Matrix. From our work in 2019, 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 2020 we are proposing to address a number of themes related to health literacy and health promotion within the family, such as:

- Preparing nutritious food - cooking on a budget
- Developing healthy lifestyle - low-cost family activities
- Looking after your own well-being and parenting styles
- Building resilience in children and using social media
- Engagement with local health services - knowing where to seek help
- Health Promotion and managing chronic diseases

All of these training topics were identified as input needs by members of the LCGs throughout 2019 and will delivered as monthly workshops from March 2020 until October 2020. Our collaborative partners, will be invited to participate in these workshops and share information with local families in attendance.

In relation to the Tiny Talk programme, a decision has been reached with our collaborative partners (HSE and MCCC) that the Speech and Language department within the HSE will mainstream this service from January 2020, therefore SICAP supports will no longer be needed in 2020.

(2020) G1.5 Teach Mná

Goal 1

Location

Navan, Athboy, East Meath and Ashbourne

Description

The aim of this project is to support the establishment and development of local community groups specifically focusing on the needs of disadvantaged women experiencing exclusion, lacking confidence, low self-esteem and mental health issues, in order to address and enhance their current quality of life. This intervention will encourage this target group to become more active members of their communities through the development of local Teach Mná LCGs. Through the LCGs, 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.

As part of this action, Meath Partnership will support the established Teach Mná in Athboy, Ashbourne and Navan and in 2020, intends to support the establishment of a new Teach Mná in East Meath to address local identified needs. Our work will focus on building the organisational structures within these LCGs through committee skills training, governance support and action planning.

Teach Mná has proven to be a valued community-based space for women to meet, learn, network and socialise with each other.

In 2020 Meath Partnership will offer the following supports to these LCGs:

- Provide capacity building and organisation development training to these LCGs through the linking of the four Teach Mná; this activity will take place throughout the year.
- Small grants to each Teach Mná to provide 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. The small grant scheme will launch in March 2020.
- Build alliances with other organisations to challenge the marginalisation of the hard to reach within this target group and support the establishment of other Teach Mná across the county through information seminars. It is envisaged that our collaboration partners will play a role in supporting the delivery of these information seminars.

(2020) G2.1 Integrate Project

Goal 2

Location

Navan, Mosney Reception Centre, Ashbourne, Kells

Description

The objective of this action is to enhance the integration of Third Country Nationals', refugees and migrants through their participation in the social and cultural life of the host communities of Co. Meath and to foster capacity-building of local communities on successful integration via volunteering and cross-community cultural actions.

Working alongside Meath Volunteer Centre, we intend to engage and support 25 migrants, refugees and TCNs to participate in local community activities and volunteer in local community organisations in order to promote their social integration. We will work directly with many of the newly arrived Syrian refugee families under this action. Work on this action will commence in January 2020 and we hope to have all 25 migrants placed in new volunteering roles by September. Our collaborative partners will be asked in some instances to host migrants as cultural ambassadors in their new volunteering roles.

We will create and implement project-based actions to increase the target groups' engagement in the volunteering sector, as active members of their local community. We intend to foster knowledge and experience sharing, as well as implementing a training programme focusing on their skills, volunteer potential and integration. We will support the empowerment of these target groups to increase their participation in local community life and finally develop partnerships and cooperation among stakeholders and all actors involved in promoting integration at community level.

(2020) G2.2 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. 51% of young people we are working with seek help from the Education Youth Support Officer for anxiety caused by parental separation, traumatic experiences, peer pressure, exam stress and identity uncertainty. In 2020, specifically in Q1 and Q2, we are proposing to run a therapeutic programme that will support young clients to address and manage their anxiety.

The support and activities offered by the project are grounded in evidence-based interventions and comprise a mix of individual sessions and when appropriate 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, coping strategies, 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 continue to measure and track the soft outcomes achieved by the young person and re-enforce the achievements to build confidence and validate skills. In 2020, 35 young people will be supported through this action.

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

(2020) G2.3 Information and Advocacy Service

Goal 2

Location

Co. Meath

Description

In 2020, we will offer wrap-around supports for those at risk of homelessness, those recently housed (moving out of homelessness), vulnerable adults living alone and those experiencing mental health problems which threaten their tenancies. We recognise the role that advocacy plays in safeguarding vulnerable adults and we will continue to work with local and state agencies to advance the needs of our clients. We believe that the approach taken by the SICAP team under this action, is making a positive contribution to how some of the key services working in the housing, homelessness and mental health services are responding to our client group.

Many of the 45 clients supported through this action, lack the necessary life-skills and resources to manage their tenancy sufficiently. Enabling clients to learn about their rights and be more confident in promoting them will be central to this individualised support. 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 2020, the SICAP Team will deliver the following activities:

- Provide information clinics through county Meath supporting a caseload of 45 vulnerable adults acting as a broker to facilitate access to mainstream supports and services, where the service exists
- Offer a tenancy sustainment supports 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. We will address the following three areas: 1). core or basic skills (e.g. numeracy, literacy and information technology); 2). independent living skills (e.g. managing a household, budgeting, appointment keeping and contacting services, dealing with bills and correspondence); and 3). social skills (e.g. interpersonal skills, avoiding or dealing with disputes, developing self-confidence and social networks).

Tenancy sustainment supports will be offered on a one-to-one and small group basis and external trainers will be engaged to support the SICAP Team to deliver this programme. All activities under this action will take place throughout the year based on the needs of the client group. Collaborative partners will act as both inward referral and outward referral agents to this action.

(2020) G2.4 Meath Employment Service

Goal 2

Location

Co. Meath

Description

Meath Employment Service will work predominately with job-mediation and case-management 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. 50 clients will be supported in 2020.

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, referred by DEASP, into meaningful self-employment through the Business Options Service and facilitated access to the BTWEA Scheme. This service operates on a flexible outreach basis across the county addressing access barriers in terms of transport costs and public transport availability. 60 clients will be supported in 2020 and Meath Partnership will engage the services of sub-contractors to offer tailored 1-2-1 business mentoring and coaching and accredited QQI start your own business training.

In 2020, we will support the economic integration of 30 migrants, new communities, refugees and asylum seekers with stamp 4 as follows:

- short work-based learning courses, career mentoring, guidance, and job skills preparation
- Pre-development and activation work with the residents of Mosney Reception Centre and newly arrived members of the Syrian community
- Facilitate mentoring and training programmes 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.

Interagency collaboration and cooperation with local employers is imperative to support and activate long-term unemployed (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.

(2020) G2.5 Youth Employment Initiative

Goal 2

Location

Navan, Trim, Oldcastle, East Meath

Description

Building on a pilot project funded in 2019 under the Dormant Accounts Fund with LMETB and the Youth Employability Initiative, we will offer a one-stop guidance and activation service for 50 young people in vulnerable situations in county Meath. The service will provide personal guidance and career coaching to young people who have completed school in county Meath between the ages of 16 to 24 years. For this client group, especially those that have completed school and are now 16 to 18 years of age, it is evident that there is a dearth of supports and services available to them mainly due to the eligibility restrictions of state services that only become available once you are over 18 years and in some cases, with more than 1 year unemployment. This action is a bridging action between Engage and the Meath Employment Service.

We will focus on areas such as self-esteem, resilience and life-skills assisting and supporting the young person until a more long-term or permanent solution has been found in terms of a job, study place or other type of activities. When young people in vulnerable situations start work, it is important that follow-up support is provided to ensure that they are gradually building basic employability skills. Providing on-going support and training once young people are in work to help them retain their employment and secure on-going career progression is also important. This support will help ensure sustainable employment; by developing the skills necessary to retain a job or improve mobility within the labour market.

The development of employability skills through coaching and workplace training opportunities is an important component of labour market supports for young people. However off-the-job supports are also incredibly important and they can take many forms such as referrals to various health, education and social services; access to financial support for obtaining stable housing; support in the form of public transport vouchers and meals; informal counselling about further education and training; and financial support for additional training programme fees.

The collaboration partners listed for this action will provide referrals to Meath Partnership and will also assist the SICAP Project Officer to create suitable progression plans for the young person supported.