



2013 Annual Report

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Overview of 2013

In the last quarter of 2012 we completed our interim review of the implementation of the LCDP programme 2011-13 the findings of this review framed the delivery of the LCDP programme of activities for 2013,. As a result of this review we amalgamated of some of our actions and a strengthened our work in the most disadvantaged areas and target groups in County Roscommon.

Our challenge in 2013 has continued to be to manage change and development in a sustainable way which improves the quality of the life of Roscommon LEADER Partnership's target communities and individuals. Community involvement is a crucial component in this development, whereby communities feel their concerns are being listened to and addressed. Roscommon LEADER Partnership seeks as an organisation to positively impact on the lives of individuals and communities; we effect this change through the Local Community Development Programme. In 2013 we achieved all our Local Community Development Programme goals and objectives which we set for our organisation in 2013. Our achievements under the Local Community Development Programme in 2013 can be summarised as follows:

- We secured the continuation of additional funding from the HSE to deliver a **Traveller Health Promotion programme** in the County. This funding allowed for our company to have an enhanced role in the delivery of services to meet the needs of this vulnerable target group and helps our company address the recommendation of Pobal which were identified under the technical assessment of our LCDP strategic plan 2011-13. The additional funding also secured the continuation of funding for front line service delivery roles and minimised redundancies. We have strengthened our LCDP work with the **travelling community target group** as evidenced by the dedication of a LCDP project worker to work with the travelling community from the last quarter of 2013 onwards. In the last quarter of 2013 the worker carried out related pre development work which in turn developed the action work plan for 2014. This new role will involve the provision of an Education and training support provision for the Traveller and Migrant target groups under the LCDP programme. The work will involve developing and supporting the target group as per devised and agreed work plan.
- In 2013 our capacity building work with the voluntary youth space management committee in the County was realised by Frenchpark, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon voluntary management committees securing €60,000 for the provision of youth spaces under funding provision from the Youth Affairs Unit, Department of Children & Youth Affairs.
- In 2013 we expanded the **Social Car scheme** model and service provision to include one extra service in South Roscommon.
- In the first quarter of 2013, we acted as the facilitator in relation to the successful brokerage of the establishment of a single **Roscommon Community Forum** structure and advised on the new company structure at the request of Roscommon County Council.
- In 2013 we continue to house the independent office of **Roscommon Community Forum** within our building in Roscommon.
- In 2013 we developed and delivered a **targeted intervention for unemployed youth** in the disadvantaged area of west Roscommon. We did this by developing a bridging course to improve confidence and link to follow on accredited course in area where work experience opportunities exist. We delivered courses as local as possible to the target group. We linked with other RLP case studies (employers) to add voice to the need for changes to employer eligibility for JobBridge participation. Overall the most successful module of the course was the Radio production followed by the work experience module and the least successful module was the STEPS programme but the participants over 25 found this module very good. The module on Could I be my own boss where the

participants were joined with others who were contemplating setting up their own business and this proved a worthwhile exercise in helping the multimedia group understand the opportunities and pitfalls of going into business. At the end of our course all the participants were given a one to one workshop with the guidance counsellor of the VEC.

In 2013 we had closer co-operation with Roscommon County Development Board and we went through the CDB approval process well. We worked with Womens Network CDP in relation to this process. In the second and third quarter of the year we worked with the Community & Enterprise section of Roscommon County Council in developing and carrying out the consultation process relating the development of the Age Friendly strategy for the County. The progression of the development of this strategy by Roscommon CDB was hampered by staff changes in the HSE.

The following table outlines our Organisation's contribution to the National Beneficiary Participation Rates under the Local Community Development Programme 2012, which shows that we have exceeded our targets.

Year: 2013

Annual Plan: 2013 / Roscommon Integrated Development Company Limited

BPR	Targets	Actuals
Number of Individuals supported (Caseload)	599	610
Number of young people/children engaged with the Programme	2640	2716
Number of local community groups supported	44	51
Beneficiaries participating in education	47 (accredited)	105 (accredited)
	176 (unaccredited)	160 (unaccredited)
Beneficiaries participating in labour market training	75 (accredited)	66 (accredited)
	217 (unaccredited)	312 (unaccredited)
Individuals supported into employment	23	23
Individuals supported into self-employment	52	57

We addressed a number of **Challenges** in 2013, we had to deal with a budget cut of 9%, and this budget deficit necessitated cuts in administration which represented a challenge which the company overcame in 2013 to the best of our ability.

In 2013 the IRIS system was no longer a challenge as we participated in further Pobal training programmes.

We have grown our **Organisational capacity** in 2013 by continuing to implement a comprehensive development programme for staff and Board. In 2013 RLP continued our commitment to achieving excellence by continuing to develop its internal systems and continuing to delivering a training programme at Board and staff level. In 2013 we delivered a comprehensive programme of Health and safety training.

RIDC under its employee hand book have policies and procedures in relation to developing the skills of its staff and we are committed to fostering staff training and we have a two way appraisal system which encourages staff to put forward their ideas and request for further training and development. This system ensures that we as an organisation enhance the skills and competencies of our staff

RLP adhered to a customer charter and we over the life time of this LCDP programme establish procedures to improve stakeholder consultation and customer satisfaction, this will result in increased levels of user satisfaction with the supports and services of our organisation.

In regard to meeting **the budgeting and finance commitments** of the Local Community Development Programme in 2013, all budget commitments were met. The money allocated to RLP to deliver the programme in 2013 was 645,992.00. We delivered the programme on budget. The Board were happy to recommend that the project action budget in 2013 was agreed at €64,000.00 which was in line with the project budget allocation in 2012 which was €64,000.00

Community Groups Supported in 2013

Action Name (Action)	LCG Name	Development Stage	Counter
G1.1.13 Referral Service			
	Fairymount Parish	Stage 1	1
	Tibohine Parish	Stage 1	1
	Lisacul Parish	Stage 1	1
	Loughlynn Parish	Stage 1	1
	Ballaghaderreen Parish	Stage 1	1
	Monesteraden Parish	Stage 1	1
	Brosna Parish	Stage 1	1
	Derrinacantha Parish	Stage 1	1
	Carracastle Parish	Stage 1	1
	Kilmoeve Parish	Stage 1	1
	Frenchpark Parish	Stage 1	1
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G4.1.13 Support to Networks			
	Roscommon Tidy Towns	Stage 3	1
	Ballaghaderreen Active Retirement Group	Stage 1	1
	Roscommon Meals on Wheels	Stage 3	1
	Strokestown Active Age Group	Stage 3	1
	Ballyleague/Lanesboro Active Age	Stage 3	1
	Roscara Active Age	Stage 3	1
	Boyle Active Age	Stage 3	1
	Rooskey Active Age	Stage 2	1
	Athlone Active Retirement Writers	Stage 2	1
	Four Mile House Active Age	Stage 2	1
	Ballinlough Active Age	Stage 2	1
	St. Peters Active Age	Stage 3	1
	Loughlara Active Age	Stage 2	1
	Frenchpark Active Age Group	Stage 1	1
	Frenchpark Active Age Group	Stage 1	1
	Kilkeevan Men's Grop	Stage 1	1
	Ballaghaderreen Day Care Centre	Stage 1	1
	Castlereagh Active Age	Stage 1	1
	Drum Active Age	Stage 1	1
	Gorthaganny Active Age	Stage 1	1
	Aughrim/Kilmoeve Active Age	Stage 1	1
	Kiltoom Active Age	Stage 1	1
	Lisacul Active Age Group	Stage 1	1
	Fairymount Active Age Group	Stage 1	1
	Fairymount Active Age Group	Stage 1	1
	Monksland Active Age	Stage 1	1

	Breedogue Active Age	Stage 1	1
	St Assicus Active Age Group	Stage 1	1
	St Assicus Active Age Group	Stage 1	1
	Elphin Active Age	Stage 1	1
	County Roscommon Older People Network	Stage 1	1
	Woodlands Evergreen Club	Stage 1	1
	Ballagahderreen Rural Men's Group	Stage 2	1
	Dysart Rural Men's Group 07-10	Stage 3	1
	Roscommon Friendly Call Service	Stage 2	1
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G4.2.13 Development Support for Groups			
	Frenchpark Voluntary Management Committee	Stage 1	1
	Frenchpark Social Club	Stage 1	1
	d'UMBRELLA Youth Space Voluntary Management Committee	Stage 3	1
	Ballaghadereen Young Parents Group	Stage 1	1
	Cruachan Crafters	Stage 2	1
	Project Match Castlerea	Stage 2	1
	Arigna Youth Cafe Management Committee	Stage 1	1
	Curraghboy Youth Café Management Committee	Stage 1	1
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G4.3.13 Capacity Building & Development Supports for Residents Associations			
	Castlehill Residents Association	Stage 3	1
Summary			1
			44
			55

Funding Received on Collaborative Actions

Goal	Action	From	Annual Plan Target	Actual Amount Received (€)	Reason for Difference
2	Playbus	HSE	65,737.00	65,737.00	N/A
1	Roscommon Age Friendly Strategy & Social Car Scheme	Fundraising	2,750.00	2,902.00	Higher than expected fundraising income
2	HSE – Jigsaw Clinical Co-ordinator	HSE	80,000	80,000	N/A
2	Traveller Health Initiative	HSE	96,000.00	96,000.00	N/A

Volunteering Ring-fenced Budget 2013: Report on Activity

In 2013, there was €5,244.41 spent on volunteering initiatives by RIDC under the LCDP programme. The following actions were those which focused on volunteering under this specific fund:

- Increased Recreational Opportunities
- Social Car Scheme
- Roscommon volunteering
- Older Peoples Network

Features and Outcomes

All of the above named initiatives had active volunteers involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the activities of the projects. All volunteers under the initiative received training during the course of 2013 and supports to acknowledge their input and ensure that they felt valued. Debriefing and other supports were available where necessary for any volunteer that needed extra support as a result of their involvement in the action or as result of an issue that was presented to them in their course of volunteering. All relevant policies and procedures and volunteer handbooks were reviewed and amended during the year.

Befriending for people with mental health difficulties

This initiative, which is part of the G1.2.13 Increased Recreational Opportunities for Older People Action, builds the capacity of people who have been through the mental health services to play a role in the community by befriending current service users. The project focuses on individuals from across the entire County. The project offers befriending in a social environment which in turn supports people with mental health difficulties to enjoy recreational and cultural activities in a safe way.

County Roscommon Community Forum

We provide an independent office and facilities to Roscommon Community Forum within our Head Office in Roscommon Town.

Roscommon Friendly Call Service

Roscommon Friendly Call Service had 138 clients in 2013 with 10 volunteers operating the service. All volunteers took part in up skill training in late 2013. This training provided information on how best to signpost clients to services such as HSE, County Council etc. and how best to manage needs and also listening skills.

Development of Youth Spaces in Rural Areas

Between the three areas in 2013 there are currently 50 volunteers committed to the Youth Spaces at management level, who are involved in service planning and day to day running of the facilities. Training and up skilling of the volunteers is on-going to suit the ever changing demands and needs of the role. The involvement of volunteers demonstrates community endorsement and investment in the project and what it is trying to achieve. This continued support leads to a better chance of sustaining the Youth Spaces into the future. Involving volunteers is also a way to tap into the viewpoints of people who may feel freer to be critical and express themselves than paid staff, new ideas and fresh insight is vital to sustainability and growth of the service. Volunteering in the youth spaces offers a rewarding experience, a sense of belonging and helps members to contribute in a positive way to their community. In the current economic climate community projects need volunteers to survive and also with so much uncertainty and insecurities promoting community spirit, involvement and well-being should be a priority.

Social Car Scheme

In 2013 Roscommon Social Car scheme had 14 volunteers who gave of their time to take passengers to non-emergency medical appointments. This scheme is operated solely by volunteers with the support of 3 local community groups. All volunteers received induction training and most of them completed manual handling training, to support them in their volunteering role. Ongoing support was provided to all volunteers and there were volunteer representatives present at all committee meetings. When conducting an evaluation of the service volunteers were consulted and they all indicated their contentment with the service.

Roscommon Volunteering

The ultimate aim of this project is establish a volunteer centre & hubs and service which would reach all the target groups in the Rural County of Roscommon. It is anticipated that the project will involve volunteers and not for profit organisations. This project will establish a network of over 250 people who will be directly or indirectly involved in Roscommon volunteering. This project will provide a blueprint of how volunteering in Roscommon will evolve and develop in county Roscommon over the next 10-15 years based on an extensive social partnership framework. Funding was leverage from Roscommon LEADER Partnership to promote and develop this project.

Local Objective Statements & Case Studies

Goal 1

Case Study

G1.1.13 Referral Service

LOS G1.1: To increase awareness, knowledge and uptake of financial, advocacy and Family Support services by Low Income Families, Older People and Lone Parents

The Referral Service is designed to deal with the most marginalised of the target groups. It deals with issues/ queries such as welfare, farm payment, rights and entitlements, training / employment opportunities, isolation, health, mental illness, and much more on a one to one basis at RLP locations.

RLP supports the dissemination of information for services locally through Ballaghaderreen Resource Centre and the Marts Project. This is done by local newsletters mass bulletins, posters, leaflets and through our contact with local community groups. RLP works with providers e.g. CIC, MABS who will deliver these services.

Community Education programmes is a joint initiative with Roscommon Citizen Information Centre to deliver information sessions on identified issues in the community. While lack of information is hard to quantify numerically it is still by far one of the greatest barriers in preventing people from accessing their rights and entitlements. In all too many cases the client opts to do without as opposed to seek help.

Referral Services

One of the issues facing people who wish to access services is a knowledge deficit in terms of knowing (a) what is available and (b) where/when it can be accessed. The Community Resource Centre in Ballaghaderreen circulates on a weekly basis services available from the resource centre i.e. CIC, MABS, Adult Counselling, computer courses, and other courses on offer from RLP to ten community groups through the church bulletins, local papers and local information leaflets placed in strategy places in the community e.g. Community centres, health centre, notice boards in supermarkets etc

Community Education Programme

This is a joint initiative between RLP and Roscommon Citizen Information Centre. RLP through its engagement with community groups are best placed to identify community groups who require information on a specific topic. RLP organise the venues for these programmes and promote the events through newsletters posters, web site and face book etc.

Two Community Education Programmes were held in 2013. Both of these were on SUSI – (Student Universal Support Ireland) re Grant application for 2013/2014, the events were held in Boyle and Ballaghaderreen. Both events were well attended.

The next Community education programme will take place in January 2014 and all promotional material, venue etc has been circulated. The C.E.P is on “Making a will won’t kill you”

A printer and ink was supplied to the Community Resource Centre in Ballaghaderreen for the printing of poster and information leaflets for the above programmes. **Total cost was €651.50**

Goal 2

Case Study

Arigna Youth Café Computer Project

The Young people from the Arigna Youth Café building a computer

This project would not be possible but for financial assistance from Roscommon LEADER Partnership



Arigna Youth Café has matured and advanced in the last three years establishing itself as the “place to be” on Friday nights in the Arigna area. There are many and varied activities engaged in by the young people in the Café together with special interest outings, intergenerational projects and project based charity support fundraising.



One of the most innovative, inspiring, progressive and indeed special projects undertaken by the Youth Café members is the Arigna Youth Café Computer Project. This project is inspired and led by Michael Layden founding member and volunteer with the Youth Café and the project was brought to life through funding from the Roscommon LEADER Partnership.

This project is a testament to the work of a community development organisation and a computer genius both with passion for real and ground-breaking development in a altruistic and people focused way as follows;

- The vision, understanding (of both project development with youth and volunteers) and support of the LEADER Partnership through their community development focus with a “bottom-up approach” understanding both the needs and the challenges which face young people in one of the most geographically remote and socially challenged areas of County Roscommon. Also the support and encouragement to volunteers to provide a focus and opportunities for young people in remote rural Ireland. This was facilitated through the funding of a computer facility for the youth café. This support has been a life-changing opportunity and the project would not have got off the ground without this assistance.
- The Arigna Youth Café Computer Project is the brainchild of local computer expert, businessman, entrepreneur and Youth Café Volunteer Michael Layden. Michael sourced, assembled and programmed the computers for the Café and with endless patience and respect Michael provides regular programming and IT sessions for the young people



The Arigna Youth Café Computer Project has similarities with the CoderDojo volunteer led movement which is orientated around running free not-for-profit coding clubs and regular sessions for young people.

In the Arigna Youth Café young people between 10 and 17 learn how to build a computer from scratch, code, use apps and programmes, and lots more. Other volunteers are also learning and taking the initiative in other areas. One volunteer, an IT tutor has initiated an intergenerational IT experience where the young people help with computer training for adults who are not computer literate. In addition to learning computer tech young people have a new interest outside of school and home in the new CoderDojo type arena.



This learning to code and build IT stuff is fun, sociable and an experience which would have been missed by young people in the Arigna area without this project and the dedication of IT expert Michael Layden, the Youth Café volunteers, the young IT enthusiasts all made possible by the financial support, advice and guidance of the Roscommon LEADER Partnership.

Above photo is a typical computer youth Café night. The Arigna Youth Café Computer room has 10 computers and 4 laptops. The facility is comfortable and spacious and has an “operating table” for the coder team, whiteboard, spacious workspaces, etc.

The computer facility has also afforded training to rural dwellers in the area new to the IT world on a voluntary basis and testimonials are many and varied in praise of the facility, the young people, the volunteers and Roscommon LEADER Partnership who have made it all happen.

Case Study

Youth Engagement /Youth Work Provision

Local Objective Statements and Case Studies

Goal 2 – Increase awareness and support access to opportunities for educational, recreational and cultural development

Local Objective Statement 3 - To increase awareness and uptake of informal (to include youth work and non-accredited post compulsory education or training) educational opportunities for disadvantaged young people and older people.

Progress on meeting outcomes:-

To date young people across rural areas in County Roscommon have an outlet in their local environs which will assist in promoting social, educational and recreational opportunities for those aged 10 to 25 years.

Volunteers are supported to oversee and run the youth spaces, these volunteers are trained to a high level and also benefit personally and professionally from the experience of volunteering.

A very positive outcome is that young people are involved in their community this in itself promotes a more positive community spirit. Through the adult volunteers the young people gain from the establishment of positive partnerships between adults and young people. It is anticipated that long term the activities and supports implemented will positively impact on the personal, social and educational life experiences of young people in the area. And also it will enhance the well-being of young people by providing access to meaningful social and recreational outlets.

Progress against the target indicators:-

Under this particular action the expected targets set for the National Programme indicator were set at seventy five young people and three local community groups.

Between the youth spaces there are 75 registered members, and the voluntary management committees are being supported to manage and run these community based facilities in Arigna and Frenchpark.

In addition a total of twenty six volunteers have been recruited in the three areas and they are vetted and trained to ensure the facilities are adequately staffed and supervised at all times.

In Castlerea we are in the final stages of a needs analysis with Young People in the local community. The needs analysis was identified by Project Match. So far we have held 3 focus groups. Two with the 15 -18 year old category and one with the 18-25 year old category to find out their views and opinions and their experiences of Castlerea. The results of the focus group will form the basis of a questionnaire, which will then be circulated to the wider population the results of which will inform service provision in the area.

Methodologies to measure progress:

The methodology used to measure this progress is through the use of the logic model, this lists the inputs and outputs and the linkage to the final outcomes. Monitoring and evaluating through continuous consultation and focus groups with the young people and volunteers involved in the service is also a good method to use in this setting.

Measuring and gauging the participation and involvement in the Youth Space based on numbers attending and the overall level of engagement also aids in the measuring the progress of the Youth Spaces.

Critical Success Factors:-

The most critical success factor in achieving the outcomes is the involvement and consultation with young people and their local communities from the onset. The need has to be identified within the community as being a “need”, this ensures the commitment and interest in seeing the project through which in turn ensures the sustainability once the project is set up. The community development workers role is one of support and guidance, the community and young people are given the platform to shape the service. Everyone is encouraged to actively participate.

Another success factor is being aware that what worked well in one area may not work as well in another area, this I feel has allowed the service to fit into the community and meet their identified needs.

Factors that hinder delivery of outputs and outcomes:-

The main hindrance under this action is the sustaining and securing of suitable premises in rural locations for the Youth Spaces. The lack of viable options that would be low cost for the community to sustain is a problem , currently the youth spaces operate from youth centres and offices but the ideal would be to have a youth space specifically for the young people of the locality.

Unintended Outcomes:-

Volunteers and young people develop a keen interest in doing more in their own communities.

One young person through face painting at a Youth Space event has now developed her own weekend business by face painting at birthday parties and events.

Volunteers see the importance of allowing young people the time to build up relationships among their peers as a way to alleviate behaviour problems.

Being approached by other communities to set up similar projects in their areas.

Experience of people who have used the service:-

In the evaluation process when the young people were asked if they felt that the Youth Space was working well there was a unanimous response of “yes”. This indicated that they enjoyed meeting their friends there and that it was a fun experience, and that everybody seemed to go.

They would like more activities, more outings, wifi and internet and new DVDs Activities and these ranged from canoeing and walks, to volleyball, football and swimming. They felt the youth advisory committee was working well and all of the young people rated the facilities as excellent or good. Other comments included ‘it’s good fun’.

Volunteers have had mostly a positive experience; it takes some longer than others to take on a supervisory as opposed to a parental role in the youth spaces.

Collaborative partners such as Youth Work Ireland, VEC and Foroige all feel the services are working well and have good attendance.

Group that has benefitted from actions under this Local Objective Statement

Frenchpark Youth Space Frenchpark, Co Roscommon



Frenchpark Youth Space has been established in Frenchpark , Castlerea Co Roscommon. The primary function of the Youth Space is to act as a venue for young people to hang out and socialise with peers in a comfortable and safe environment. The Youth Space offers young people an alternative to loitering on streets or hanging out in public houses. Above all the Youth Space is a recreational outlet for the young people of Frenchpark and the surrounding areas. Approximately 35 young people are currently registered in the facility with attendance of between 17 -25 young people using it on a Friday night. The facility offers games, pool, and table

tennis, volley ball, listening to music and availing of refreshments.



In 2013 the young people in Frenchpark also participated in arranging a successful fundraiser in their youth space, which included a cake sale /book sale/face painting/nail **painting and tea/coffee.**



Some of the Young People involved in face painting at the Fundraiser in Frenchpark Youth Space

Pool Competition

The pool competitions ran in the 3rd and 4th quarter of the year against neighbouring Youth Clubs namely the RAD project Roscommon, d'UMBRELLA Youth Cafe Elphin and The Phoenix, Ballaghaderreen, Co Roscommon. The first leg of the competition took place in d'UMBRELLA Youth Cafe Elphin, followed by a presentation night in Frenchpark Youth Space. Certificates were presented to all members and the winning team received the Roscommon LEADER Partnership Perpetual Cup.



Roscommon LEADER Partnership- LCDP Supporting Youth Perpetual Cup and Certificates

A presentation night was hosted in Frenchpark Youth Space with Roscommon's GAA star Fergal O Donnell making presentations of certificates to all

Pool Team members on all teams and the trophy to winners in acknowledgement of their true sportsmanship in participating in the competition and also to reward the winning team on their achievement on Friday the 18th October 2013.



The winning team from d'UMBRELLA Youth Cafe in Elphin after the presentation by Fergal O Donnell. Also in photo Gail Murray Community Development Officer RLP and Christine Kelly (d'UMBRELLA).

Management Structure

Frenchpark Youth Space is ran by a Voluntary Management Committee and staffed by a panel of volunteers. Roscommon LEADER Partnership provides a supportive role, advising and guiding the management committee on everything to do with the Youth Space to aid in this group's development and progress them through the development stages. This local community group is the Frenchpark Voluntary Management Committee and they are currently in the development stage between 1 and 2. This voluntary management committee has been enabled to be responsible for the day to day running of the Youth Space and related activities and for the future development of the Youth Space.

Volunteers

Frenchpark Youth Space is staffed by a panel of 8 volunteers. Recruitment of the volunteers was the responsibility of Roscommon Leader Partnership with assistance from this provided for within the locality. In a collaborative approach the Youth Spaces are advised to affiliate to a National Youth Organisation for good practice and sustainability reasons, in this instance Frenchpark Youth Space have affiliated Youth Work Ireland. Youth Work Ireland has responsibility to provide the relevant training and Garda vetting affordable insurance for the year. The Youth Work Ireland training as mentioned above has covered the below topics:

- Introduction to Youth Work Ireland
- Defining Youth Work
- Defining Youth Club
- Considerations in setting up a youth club
- Participation
- Club Management
- Programme Planning
- Child Protection
- Best Practice
- Insurance
- Projects

The course usually takes place once a week for an hour and half, per session, for 6 weeks. The Child Protection module is separate to this.

Following this - each club is its own entity and Youth Work Ireland will be there to support them on request. Insurance and affiliation must be renewed each year.

The LCDP project role as Community Development Officer is to staff the premises and to organise activities for the Young People, to ensure the Management Committee and Volunteers are fully supported until all are comfortable in their roles.

Youth Advisory Committee

Once the Youth Space is opened it is beneficial to have a Youth Advisory Committee in place, with the members aged between 12 – 18 years of mixed gender. In Frenchpark Youth Space there are currently 7 members on the committee, 4 females and 3 males. The idea is that the Youth Advisory Committee will take an active role in ensuring that the Youth Space is providing for the needs of the Young people. To date the Youth Advisory Panel have been active in helping to organise the fundraiser /presentational night and disco , designed posters and distributed posters, took photographs. Having a youth led recreational space is one of the main aims of the initiative, providing support to empower the young people to voice their opinions thus ensuring that the service is catering for the ever changing needs of young people.

Policies/Procedures

Policies/Procedures/Registration forms/Parental Consent Forms/Volunteer Contracts/Incident Report forms are all provided by Roscommon LEADER Partnership and Youth Work Ireland.

Premises

One of the first steps was to find and secure a suitable venue for the Youth Space in Frenchpark. Through consultation with the local development group, the Young people were offered the use of the Community Hall for €10.00 rent per week.

At the end of 2013 we were successful in securing €60,000 funding from the Department of Child and Youth Affairs for the improvement of the youth provision in Frenchpark. This is a great development and welcomed by the community.

Jigsaw Roscommon and Youth Engagement

Jigsaw is a community-based system of care that supports young people aged 15-25 to achieve better mental health and wellbeing through brief intervention. It is a partnership between Health **Service Executive, Headstrong** – (the National Centre for Youth Mental Health) and **Roscommon Leader Partnership**.



Above – YAP Members and below Decor of premises in Jigsaw Roscommon



Central to Jigsaw is that it is Youth Driven and Youth Friendly and to assist with this young people are encouraged and supported to become active participants in advising the service through participation on a Youth Advisory Panel. Currently Jigsaw Roscommon have a panel of 11 young people being supported 6hrs a week on the Youth Advisory Panel by a Youth Engagement Officer. This has involved them in making presentations to a Youth Learning Network arranged by Headstrong, attending Young Voices Event in Sligo, sitting on interview panels, assisting in writing up story boards for a virtual tour of the Jigsaw Roscommon Service and assisting in the recruitment plan for new members onto the panel so it will be more representative of the whole county.

Youth panel member “The majority of our panel have been involved with the Jigsaw project since 2008 , initially we all got involved as Jigsaw was something different and now we have an interest in helping to shape and influence services aimed at our age group . Mental Health of young people is a really important topic and getting the service right to meet the ever growing needs is vital to help improve lives and strengthen communities”.



Jigsaw Stand at Training and Education Fair in photo Gail Murray Youth Engagement Officer and a member of the Youth Advisory panel

Case Study

Playbus

Local Objective Statement

LOS G2.3: To increase awareness and uptake of informal (to include youth work and non-accredited post compulsory education or training) educational opportunities for disadvantaged young people and older people

- **The progress made in meeting the outcomes of this local objective statement.**

To date the bus provides access to informal educational and family supports for Children within Toddler/ Preschool and Primary School age. The basic aim of the project is to deliver play sessions for children who are socially disadvantaged with a specific focus on Travellers and New Communities in isolated rural areas based on the High/Scope curriculum. The service emphasises the importance of Early Childhood Development, supporting the family and creating a positive experience of education.

The service is provided in four areas through County Roscommon three being urban (Boyle, Monksland, Roscommon Town) and one rural (Ballyforan). Within those areas the bus provides such services to two Group Housing Scheme for the Traveller Community (Ballyforan and Cluan Airne). While Cluan Airne is located on the outskirts of Roscommon Town both display similar characteristics of isolation.

The Playbus is coordinated through the Traveller Health Programme by Traveller Health Co-ordinator and is supported by staff from Community Employment Department of Social Protection and Rural Social Scheme. The Family Support work of the services is supported by Family Support Worker.

In 2013 approximately thirty nine Children accessed regular educational supports through Homework Clubs based in three areas (Ballyforan, Boyle and Cluan Airne).

A further fifty one Families have accessed Family Support through holistic play sessions and Parent and Toddler Groups. To compliment this, the service provides an space for Adult Education through the provision of Driver Theory test practice.

Throughout 2013 Playbus also provides supports to a number of community events and activities with the overall aim to increase an interest by Children/ Young People and Families in Early Childhood Development, making education fun and encourage the importance of play (and the positive impact of which has on the whole family). Events included Four Mile House Community Childcare Summer Camp, Lamb Festival, Hillstreet Community Day, Kingsland Community Day, Brideswell Pattern Day and Ballyforan Community Fair. Throughout these activities over three hundred Children accessed the service with information provided to Children and parents on the work of the services and its timetable.

A positive outcome of the bus has been the increased involvement of Traveller parents in the bus through the provision of Health Promotion information sessions. In 2013 two sessions were provided:

First session was by a Speech and Language Therapist in which information was provided on helping the child's development of speech and language through everyday activities and play, how to access services and how speech and language therapy can help with difficulties. The session also provided an opportunity for parents to speak to the therapist one to one on any concerns they had about their Child's speech. From the session there was four referrals made into the Speech and Language Service in the County. The session was held in both Group Housing Schemes and a total of eight families participated.

The second session was facilitated by a Vaccinations Nurse and provided information on the required Vaccination Calendar for babies, the reasons why Children should be vaccinated, how to follow up on missed vaccinations, how to

access the service and information about Infant and Childhood Diseases. Again the session gave an opportunity for parents to speak one to one with the Nurse about any concerns and receive more information. From the session there were five referrals made into Community Services. The session was held in both Group Housing Schemes and nine families participated.

The Playbus also supported two Sports and Arts activities for Traveller Children in Roscommon Town during Summer and Halloween in total over the two activities sixty two Children were supported.

The service continues to have a Healthy Eating theme. An activities group have been facilitated in making fun healthy snacks and fruit tasting. The feedback from the Children was very positive and these activities will continue. Any activity facilitated by the service in which may include a snack is always fresh fruit and water to encourage positive connection for Children of having fun and enjoying healthy snacks.

- **The progress against the targets set for the National Programme indicators of this local objective statement, with attention on progress against the indicators that are and are not recorded on IRIS at action level.**

LOS G2.3: To increase awareness and uptake of informal (to include youth work and non-accredited post compulsory education or training) educational opportunities for disadvantaged young people and older people

Children and Young People who use the service engage through a number of educational activities (Homework Club, Parent Toddler and Play Sessions) this engagement through play and activity is based on the High Scope model. All activities are provided as informal education on the mobile service, by doing so provide access hard to reach and isolated families. All progress is recorded is on IRIS with individual service user progress recorded by staff as best practice in Early Childhood Education.

- **The methodologies used to measure this progress.**

Progress is measured against quarterly milestones and programme evaluations.

All Children/ Young People and Families who use the service are registered therefore all those using the service are signed in for each activity. From this data quarter reports are developed of numbers accessing the service.

On-going evaluation is facilitated by consultation with Children/ Young People about the activities on the bus. In 2013 evaluation was facilitated focusing on the Homework Supports provided on the Playbus. Survey and interviews were carried out with Parents, Schools and Young People; feedback from schools was very positive all schools reported positive changes in the Children's Homework (more organised, completely more frequently, improvement in overall standard), schools noted an increase in interest of the Children in Arts and Crafts, improved interaction with other children and treatment of learning materials (books). Overall parents felt their Children were more confident about their school work and noted the small ratio of Children to Staff. The Young People identified the need for more games and activities to do when homework is completed including Music and Drama.

Changes since the evaluation; Teachers felt extra support on literacy was needed; the Playbus now uses Jolly phonics books to help Children with their literacy. There has also been an increase in the range of books in the library with the promotion of the county library service to families through the mobile library. The Young People identified the need for other activities to suit Older Students and activities such as music and drama have been developed. Staff continue to check in with parents when Children are dropped to the Homework Session.

Staff continue to check in parents during Play Session and Parent and Toddler to check the overall enjoyment of each Child. This also gives an opportunity to identify with the parents/ guardians any support needs the Child may have.

- **The critical success factors in the actions implemented that have supported the outputs and outcomes being achieved.**

Critical success factor in achieving the overall outcome (increased access to educational opportunities for target group).

Outputs

The Playbus operates on a three day service due to the nature of the service a team of three staff are required on the bus each day. As the programme has a focus on providing a personalised support to Children/ Young People using the service for Homework Supports a group of ten Children/Young People are supported by four staff to ensure those in need of one to one support can be accommodated. Throughout these three days a total of eight separate sessions are provided.

Staff

The Playbus has a dedicated team of three staff members unfortunately in 2013 the service lost its TUS worker and a suitable candidate could not be found through the TUS programme. All three staff are passionate about the service and work very well as a team. All of the team also are parents themselves and have a wealth of knowledge and can relate to parents using the service. The service is supported by both the Traveller Health Co-ordinator and the Family Support Worker for specific activities.

Interagency Work

From its infancy the Playbus has been an interagency initiative with HSE Children and Family Services, Roscommon VEC (Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board), Roscommon Traveller Development Group, Roscommon County Council, Brothers of Charity, Roscommon Childcare Committee and Department of Social Protection. Through 2013 the bus has been supported by a strong steering group which has helped to expand the services to area of needs and ensure that isolated families are being supported. In particular support from Galway Roscommon Training and Education Board in the provision of laptops for Adult Education and Roscommon County Council through the support of the County Library. This year

there has been increased focus on work with Community and Health Services as part of Health Service Executive.

Involvement of parents in the project

Parents were consulted as part of the Homework Supports evaluation and throughout staff place emphasis on interaction with parents through 'check in's'. Particularly with Parent and Toddler group's parents have encouraged other parents to access the service.

- **The factors that have hindered ability to deliver on outputs and outcomes of our local objective statement.**

Staff Provision

Due to the nature of staff provision with Community Employment and TUS programme sometimes we may only have a staff for one year. This has an effect on the overall service in particular the relationship with Children/ Young People and Parents. As we only have maximum four spaces for staff the service can only be on the road three days per week. This year we were not able to be provided with a suitable replacement for our TUS Childcare Worker. Therefore we were down a staff member.

Nature of Vehicle

As the Playbus is a mobile service the outputs can often be hindered due to bad weather (frost/ snow / high winds). To ensure the safety of all those who use the service the bus cannot go out onto the roads in snow or ice due to risk of an accident. Also due to the height of the bus the bus cannot be used in high winds. Therefore the services can be hampered in the winter. However in 2013 there was only one occasion which service was prevented due to bad weather.

Mechanical

Mechanical difficulties on the bus can occur periodically; therefore the service cannot be operated in these times. To ensure there is lessening of breaks in service all maintenance is carried out when the bus is not scheduled for service (Thursday and Friday). To ensure the overall upkeep of the bus and health and safety for those using the service the Bus Driver carries out weekly maintenance and safety checks. In 2013 there was no disruption to service due to mechanical difficulties.

- **The unintended outcomes (both positive and negative) which were not anticipated at the outset.**

Through interaction with the Playbus some parents have identified that their Children using Play and Parent and Toddler sessions are excited about starting school. With Children and Young People from Homework clubs being linked in with local Youth Services. In particular with the groups that we are targeting through the service up take of Early Childhood development is lower therefore the service provides the first step for families in accessing these services.

- **The experience of the stakeholders is as follows:**

Parents have reported increased confidence in their Children from interaction with other children and staff on the Playbus. In particular with the Homework Supports parents identified that service was an ease to their worry about homework being completed correctly. Teachers identified there was a marked improvement on the overall standard of homework on days which Children are accessing the service. Children and Young People using the service reported they were overall happy with the service but that new activities were needed for older group after homework was finished and in school holidays.



Goal 3

Case Study

Local Objective Statement “ The long term unemployed and the underemployed are better prepared to enter labour market, through training work experience and job placements in Boyle, Castlerea, Ballaghaderreen, Roscommon/ South Roscommon & East Roscommon areas before end 2013”.

Future Options Training Programme

- **The progress made in meeting the outcomes of this local objective statement.**

This action is directly connected to the action ‘Supported into Employment’ and complements the ongoing work with employers. (See case study on employers) In 2013, Two ‘Future Options Programme’ (FOP) was delivered for individuals who are Long Term Unemployed (LTU) in emerging areas of employment namely;

- Catering & Bar Skills
- Sales & Customer Services Training

The programme aims to;

- a) Provide Long Term Unemployed (LTU) individuals with recognised accreditation in areas of potential employment
- b) Engage and design accredited training programmes in consultation with employers
- c) Provide work experience and career progression opportunities for participants
- d) Support and match individuals to employment (see article on ‘Supported into Employment’)
- e) Assist course participants in the setting up of small businesses related to up-skilled areas as necessary on the BTWEA Schemes

A lot of on the ground consultations were conducted with perspective employers in the proposed training areas identifying and obtaining key information such as;

- a) What & where are the employment opportunities locally
- b) What level of skill is required for participants to secure employment in this area
- c) What experience/backgrounds would be most desirable for the job
- d) What other transferable skills could be included to enhance participants competitiveness in the employment arena

The method of delivery on the FOP varied from programme to programme depending on the nature of training required and the resources available. Programmes were targeted and delivered in areas of greatest disadvantage in the county on an outreach basis where possible. The intended outcome of the action was to up-skill long term unemployed jobseekers to a level where it was possible for them to secure employment in potential growth areas. With this in mind it was necessary to ensure all participants on training programmes were motivated towards progression and in order to ascertain suitable jobseekers interview system was put in place. The purpose being to establish levels of motivation, job readiness and interest levels. All programmes were co-ordinated by Roscommon LEADER Partnership.

Catering & Bar Skills Training:

15 individuals have participated a six week course in Catering & Bar Skills Training programme delivered in Tully Hotel, Castlerea. On completion participants received certified accreditation in food hygiene, manual handling and occupational first aid. Other aspects of training included; bar skills, communication skills, job seeking skills, self-employment options, business planning, marketing, and two weeks work experience.

Sales & Customer Services Training:

This accredited programme was delivered over 6 weeks from the Teagasc Centre, Castlerea with 13 LTU participants taking part. Training included various sales techniques & methods, marketing, food hygiene, health & safety, job preparation skills, and work experience.

- **Progress made against the targets set for the National Programme indicators of this local objective statement, with attention on progress against the indicators that are and are not recorded on IRIS at action level.**

Targets vs. Outputs:

Targets:

- 75 LTU individual will have participated in Labour Market Accredited Training

Outputs:

- 75 individuals participated in 'Labour Market Accredited Training'
- 25 individuals progressed on to full/part employment
- Approximately 300 employers consulted on a one to one basis

Case Study

Future Options Programme (FOP) & Individual Skills Training (IST)

Introduction:

An Employment Inter Agency Group, consisting of the Department of Social Protection including Employment Services, VEC, County Development Board, County Enterprise Board and RLP was established with a view to develop labour activation programmes based on research findings. Clearly, a need to up-skill and re-skill the long term unemployed in potential employment sectors was a priority while avoiding potential areas of duplication.

The future options programme under the guidance of the Inter Agency Group of RLP consists of organised training programmes for the long term unemployed combined a work placements offering, with further training and self-employment options.

The main focus of this case study is to highlight the benefits to participants of collaboration in all aspects of progression. This includes involvement at various strands from support agencies, employers, jobseekers and delivery bodies. RLP are committed to provide long term unemployed job seekers with an opportunity to up skill in areas where real employment exists

The FOP programme is a programme that is modelled to have maximum impact on supporting jobseekers to improve their current labour market situation.

- **The methodologies used to measure this progress.**

Progress is measured against quarterly milestones and programme evaluations. Pre course consultations with employers to establish sectorial employment needs, inform programme content and employer expectations. Progress was also greatly improved through pre training assessment for eligibility and suitability of participants. We had ongoing evaluation through the Employment Inter-Agency Group throughout.

- **The critical success factors in the actions implemented that have supported the outputs and outcomes that you have achieved.**

Three key outcomes to this initiative was firstly, the involvement of engaging with relevant employers and obtaining their input in the design and content of the programme, secondly, onsite work experience for participants in the programme, thirdly, the availability and the simplicity of both the 'employer incentive pack' and the 'job vacancy pack'. This approach ensured that employers were aware that labour activation programmes were taking place and the employer incentives available. Whilst, participants were equally aware of the standards required by employers in securing employment in advance of training and what employment opportunities existed locally and regionally.

The programme was designed to provide participants with the following outcomes:

- a) Obtain accredited training in a variety of areas to meet the needs of mainstream employment
- b) Obtain the knowledge and skills to consider self-employment/alternative enterprise as an option
- c) Obtain soft support skills i.e. communication, dealing with change, interview skills, personal effectiveness etc.
- d) Engage in work experience

The in house development of 'participant profiling' of LTU jobseekers across all programmes proved very beneficial as it provided increased access to a bank of jobseekers category by category i.e. food & catering, admin, construction etc.

- **The factors that have hindered ability to deliver on outputs and outcomes of your local objective statement.**

Many of the challenges encountered related to the economic state of our economy and lack of jobs. This was reinforced by the complete lack of knowledge or awareness of the employer incentives programmes. This in many instances required the need to discuss and identify job creation opportunities with employers along with filling the information deficit gap and later be in a

position to provide a matching service between the jobseeker and the employer with the vacancy.

Another real challenge identified was the motivational levels of LTU jobseekers attending training. All too many had issues about dealing with change, being unemployed and finding themselves 'in a place where they hadn't planned on been in'.

The identification of suitable training venues posed a real difficulty due to the nature of facilities required for the training provision. Both the lack of and accessing affordable transport proved a real challenge for participants attending training venues; for example, the only available training base to deliver 'Chef Training Course' was situated in Roscommon Town. However, while course participants were targeted from geographical disadvantaged areas the majority of them resided a considerable distance away such as, Boyle, Castlerea and Ballaghaderreen.

The in house database of 'participant profiling' of jobseekers needs to be completed and fully operational for 2014.

- **The experience of the stakeholders is as follows:**

As previously mentioned the Future Options Programme is an initiative of the LCDP and supported by the Employment Inter Agency Group. Through this collaboration, each partner can contribute where possible to the single objective of providing holistic up skilling of LTU individuals. This also ensures that no duplication of services exists. Collaborative partners are regularly updated with feedback and evaluations related to the project.

LCDP staff have collectively worked together to ensure all stands of work relating to Goal 3 are achieved to obtain measurable outcomes for our target group. Final evaluation of training programme is conducted with participants.

**Future Options Training Programme & Individual Skills Training
Summary Report
2013**

Course	Venue	Number Participants Started	Participants Completed	Progression	Full time Emp.	Part time Emp.	Casual Emp.	Further Education / Training
Food & Bar Skills Training	Castlerea	15	15	3	1			2
Sales & Customer Services	Castlerea	14	13	7	2	3		2
Train the Trainer	Strokestown	8	8	6	2	3		1
Superviso ry Managem ent Skills	Strokestown	4	4	2	1	1		
LUGS Training	Roscrea	1	1	1	1			
Professio n Driving Tuition	Sligo	1	1	1			1	
Cycle Coach Trainer	Roscommon	2	2	2		1	1	
Personal Effectiven ess	Ballaghaderreen	8	8					
Total		53	52	19	8	8	2	5

Case Study

Supported into Employment:

Introduction

The main focus of this case study has been the greater engagement of employers in the progression of long term unemployed into employment. During the consultations and preparation of our Strategic Plan ('11-'13) the need to engage with employers was identified. The Employment Inter Agency Group and the Enterprise & Employment Planning Group of Roscommon Leader Partnership have continued to support this strategic approach. The Employment Inter Agency Group, made up of the County Development Board, the Department of Social Protection including Employment Services, VEC, the County Enterprise Board & Roscommon Leader Partnership (RLP), have all been very supportive of the actions undertaken to engage with employers.

During the last programme a number of actions have further progressed engagement with employers further which include the launch of the Employers Recruitment Incentive Pack, the Jobs Vacancy Pack and the development of an in house database of employers. Furthermore a key action has been supporting the linkage between jobseekers, employers and employment opportunities.

A detailed Employment Trends Survey Employment Trends Survey was commissioned by Roscommon Partnership Company in late 2008. The research concluded that new employment opportunities could lead to small scale enterprise development and job creation in areas like Tourism, Leisure Industry, Information Technology, Further Education Targeted at Employment, Forestry, Agriculture & Food, Organic Horticulture, Environment, Energy, Eco Building , Construction, Creative Industries, Crafts and Services.

Actions & Progress

Employment still remains a difficult challenge for jobseekers as for many they find themselves in a place they never planned on being in. The action 'Supported into Employment' is a direct hit at tackling unemployment. It is part of the accredited training action where the two go hand in hand.

Engagement is made directly with as many employers as possible in the county generally through one to one contact as the needs and concerns of employers vary. The initial contact with employers is to obtain their input into the course content of the proposed training. This is an opportunity to let employers know training in their area of employment is happening, inform them about employer incentives, work experience and having suitably trained staff available for employment if they have a vacancy.

From a participant point of view they obtain greater awareness around the skills base employers are looking for and it boosts jobseekers confidence in searching for employment or work experience.

The introduction of the 'Job Vacancy Pack' proved to be a useful tool for identifying job vacancies. The purpose of the job vacancy pack is to simplify access to job vacancies for jobseekers. It consists of fortnightly updates highlighting a wide range of jobs available in the region as opposed to looking at possibly one local paper with very work opportunities. Recruitment websites, local & regional press and other media formats are researched to identify the jobs that are currently available. A Tus placement worker under the guidance of a project worker collects and produces the Job Vacancy Pack. This is then circulated to our database of LTUs and to other Tus workers who will soon be leaving their work placements. It is also circulated to Tús supervisors who are well placed to support Tus workers in their search for employment. The RLP project worker can make direct contact with employers informing them of the various employer incentives such as; Revenue Job Assist, JobsPlus (replaced revenue job assist in July 2013), the Employer Job (PRSI) Incentive Scheme and Job Bridge

Below is a breakdown of the various job vacancies that were recorded in the region

Regional Employment Vacancies through this project 2013

Jobs	Office & Admin	Food & Catering	Sales & Customer Services	Health Care	General Operatives	Hair & Cosmetic	Professional Sector	Total Number of Job Vacancies
2013	104	216	211	138	151	42	18	881

Vacancies are a combination of part and full time employment.

Employment Trends 2013

(Numbers recorded through this project in Roscommon & bordering Counties)

Jobs	Office & Admin	Food & Catering	Sales & Customer Services	Health Care	Hair & Cosmetics	General	Professional
Advertised	78	185	177	124	34	113	18
Unadvertised	26	31	34	14	8	38	0
Total	104	216	211	138	42	151	18

*General Employment – consisting of construction, plumbing, lorry driving etc.

Outputs and Outcomes:

- 25 individuals supported into employment
- Production of successful job vacancy pack

- Better linkages with delivery bodies, employers and jobseekers

Challenges:

A number of challenges arise from the activities above:

- Creating awareness among employers around the recruitment incentives
- Monitoring & follow up in regard to the uptake of the incentives
- Individuals that come off a social employment programme i.e. Tus, to take up paid employment cannot be counted on iris as they are deemed to be employed whilst on the programme
- Massive time input and capturing the work that is undertaken with employers through KPPs
- Need for greater linkages between the service providers of incentive schemes. For example RLP has identified the need for an incentive package approach where an internship through JobBridge can be a building block to full time employment using other incentives like the revenue job assist & PRSI exemption schemes
- Lack of awareness among LTU job seekers of their eligibility for the incentive schemes
- Low self-esteem & motivation among some of our target group
- Few jobseekers aware of the benefits of employers qualifying for incentive schemes
- Matching suitable LTU job seekers to vacancies
- Ineligibility of sole trader owner managers with no current employees to take on interns through Job Bridge

Recommendations:

- Develop a new Key Planning & Policy Structure in 2013 to capture the work with employers and their input into RLP & government policy. This KPPs will act as a forum for employers to articulate their needs , what supports they require & what policies would best assist in the recruitment of the unemployed
- Individuals that come off a social employment programme i.e. Tus, to take up paid employment before their term is complete they should be able to qualify an employer to obtain support under for the employer incentives.
- Pobal should consider creating a BPR category under individuals supported into internships as this is a progression route to full time employment
- Due to the high proportion of sole traders/owner managers with no full time employees in rural areas, policy needs to change to allow their eligibility for internships
- Promote awareness among LTUs & those on labour market schemes like Tús about their eligibility to participate in the recruitment incentives along with their personal additional entitlements

Collaborative Training Opportunities for LTUs

Our on-going consultation with the unemployed highlighted a big interest in Healthcare Training which resulted with us contacting Solas (formerly FAS) who agreed to run a Fetac Level 5 in Healthcare Support, subject to numbers. An information session was held with presentations from Solas on course content etc. The event was attended by 40 unemployed in Ballaghaderreen Resource Centre and those attending were informed that the course will be

- Fulltime for 40 weeks
- On the job work experience each week
- Participants will have to get work experience sponsorship

The course is due to start with 20 participants in Feb 2014 and we will continue to support this group as we have identified a considerable number of job opportunities in this area of work from trends in our Job Pack.

Overall Action Outputs

Our annual output for this action was 60 LTUs attending an Employment Information and Training Event. Because of the changes to the way the action progressed, we ended up engaging with 75 LTUs. All of the participants were exposed to a range of local training opportunities.

Of the 35 LTUs under 25 years who attended our quarter 2 event, a considerable number of these engaged with the Receptionist Course, Bar Skills Course and Multi Media Course. Of the 40 LTUs participating in the quarter 4 Information Event on the Healthcare Support Course, we are confident that 20 of these will progress onto the course. Twenty employers were informed of the JobsPlus incentives and also had a practical input on how best to use the incentives from an employer. Seven employers who had either attended the event or telephoned for information are currently engaging in follow up activity.

Overall this action has proved a major success with us working very well with agencies, employers, unemployed and other groups. In fact it would be fair to say that a Community Development approach through the LCDP programme allowed us the flexibility in this action throughout the year to successfully respond to training opportunities and information as it emerged.

Goal 4

Case Study

G4.1.13 Support to Networks

LOS G4.1: To establish effective structures and processes to promote dialogue between policy makers, providers and local communities

Older People Network

Background

The needs of older people are diverse and multifaceted; these range from the need to access information and services, to transport, social contact and reducing isolation.

Roscommon is the 11th largest county in Ireland. It has a very high age dependency rate and dispersed population and most services are located in the main towns. At present there is no structure / network which are representative of all older people. County Roscommon has 16 Active Age groups and a County Executive for Active Age. This network will engage a large representative grouping of older people and would ensure that the more disadvantaged older people would be represented through the rural men's group representation, nursing home representation and friendly call service representation. The total population aged 65 years and older in the 2011 census represented 14.66% of the population of the County at 9,396. This figure represents an increase of 7.5 % or 681 on 2006 census. The census also shows that Roscommon has the highest average age of population in the Country – 38.3 years, compared with the national average 35.6 years. The population over 65 in Ballaghaderreen is 15.4%, Castlerea 19.46% and Boyle 20.83%

A key indicator of disadvantage is the percentage of persons aged 65+ and living alone as a percentage of all households. This group makes up over 8.2% of the national population and 11.8% in Roscommon. The majority of EDs in the north and west of the county contain in excess of 12% in this category.

- **The progress made in meeting the outcomes of this local objective statement.**

The Older People Network (OPN) have engaged with a range of groups supporting older people in county Roscommon, i.e. local Active Age groups, Rural Men's group, Friendly Call Service, Ladies clubs, day care centres, Meals On Wheels. The Network feels that some more work needs to be done to engage other organisations i.e. the Carers Association and other organisations supporting elderly people.

The aim of the OPN is to provide a voice for older people and to raise concerns and lobby on issues as identified by the network with relevant agencies and bodies.

- **Membership**

Membership of the network is open to all organisations and individuals committed to improving the quality of life for older people in the county.

The OPN to date have concentrated on:

- a) building and developing the network itself
- b) empowering its members to engage, and lobby
- c) engaging with both voluntary and statutory organisation to promote the network

The OPN have looked at other networks that were up and running in the country i.e. Wicklow, Waterford, Kilkenny and Louth Older People Network. Roscommon Older people network visited the Wicklow project in November 2012. This day was extremely beneficial to the group. This was followed by an information seminar on Elder Abuse awareness.

In 2012 the Network were involved with RLP on an Age Strategy for the county, carrying out research on the ground on key areas affecting older people e.g. transport, health, communication, and housing. The network felt that the finding from

this research would drive their work. Roscommon County Council took over the lead on the strategy in 2012.

In May 2013, the OPN agreed to hold focus meetings to progress the idea of the Network and to be as inclusive of all areas as possible. All local groups and the general public were invited to attend. These strategic meetings were held in Elphin, Ballaghaderreen and Roscommon. The feedback from Ballaghaderreen and Roscommon was very positive and newly elected representatives from both group joined the committee. However unexpectedly, Elphin was not a success and we hope to revisit these areas in the near future.

In the December the meeting adopted the constitution which the group had been working to throughout the year. The group had anticipated launching the network at an event in May 2013 with the publication of newsletters.

2013

Age Strategy

The network felt very strongly that it needed to be involved in the proposed strategy and invite staff from Roscommon County Council to a meeting, to outline how the strategy would engage with older people in the county. The Network raised the following queries with the Roscommon County Council:

- Will the OPN have any role in the consultation?
- What role will the OPN have in the strategy?
- How will the RCC implement the strategy?

The network agreed to delay the launch and to concentrate their efforts into getting representation from the Network onto the Steering Committee for the Age Strategy. The first meeting of the “High Level Group” was to be held on Wednesday 17th April. The Network through Roscommon LEADER Partnership lobbied for members of the Network to be a part of this committee. Following the April meeting it was agreed that

the Network would have two members at the Higher Level Committee for the age strategy.

Six public consultation with older people were planned by Roscommon County Council on six key areas of their lives

- a) Housing and outdoor spaces
- b) Transport
- c) Information and communication
- d) Recreation and social inclusion
- e) Safety and security
- f) Healthy ageing and social care

Roscommon County Council held the public consultations on the Age Strategy in November 2013. The Older People's Network had notified all the groups of the upcoming consultations and had encouraged the people to engage with the Council. The Network also assisted the council staff in conducting these consultations and took the opportunity to inform all present about the role of the Network.

The Network has also engaged with Roscommon Citizen Information through Roscommon LEADER Partnership in organising a launch and an information seminar entitled "Making a will won't kill you". This is scheduled for January 14th. Advocacy training for the committee is organised for February 2014

- **The progress against the targets set for the National Programme indicators of this local objective statement, with attention on progress against the indicators that are and are not recorded on IRIS at action level.**

LOS G4.1 “To establish effective structures and processes to promote dialogue between policy makers, providers and local communities.”

(G4) 2.1 Opportunities for LCGs to contribute to policy and decision-making

The OPN, while still a new idea and structure in the county, have successfully engaged with RCC and lobbied for and obtained representation on the High Level Group of the Age Strategy.

- **The methodologies used to measure this progress.**

Progress is measured against quarterly milestones and programme evaluations

Outputs and Outcomes

There are currently 35 groups participating in the Older People Network, It is evident from the groups involved that there is a need for a voice for older people in the county. By identifying the need to be on the High Level Group overseeing the Age Strategy, lobbying for this and succeeding has given the group great encouragement.

Challenges

The biggest challenge facing the network is funding. In order for the group to develop and to be heard it requires funding. The group have organised the launch of the network for January 14th 2014. Further training is organised for the Committee in February around advocacy and an Elder Abuse Awareness session is scheduled for May 2014.

This group while still in its infancy will need to be bedded in before it is in a position to establish effective structures and processes to promote dialogue between policy makers, providers and local communities

Evaluation recommendations

Work of this nature can be slow to progress, but it is hoped through the launch of the Network in January 2014, to recruit more members. This then will be followed by training on advocacy in February. The group needs to establish how best the network can ensure an adequate flow of information from the executive to the member groupings. The executive may consider a topic that they would 'champion' for 2014 that impacts on the daily lives of older people and hold an information event, inviting key stakeholders and speakers thereby attempting to influence/ lobby policy and decision makers.

Impact of the Rural Economy

It is envisaged this action will have a positive impact on the rural community as it paves the way for up-skilling individuals to fill employment opportunities as they arise. The improvement in income through employment or the creation of a new enterprise will contribute to the local economy in the form of increased spending power and possibly the creation of additional employment. Roscommon by nature is a rural county and many employers are still very dependent on opportunities stemming from the agricultural sector. By up skilling and re-training job seekers, they have a greater chance of obtaining employment or developing an alternative enterprise. This in turn provides increased household income thus generates more money in the local economy while adding to the sustainability of rural areas. The farm diversification training programme as an example has provided participants with a more positive outlook on future prospects, where without this type intervention much of this group may have immigrated.

The **Rural Men's Group** engages with approximately 100 older men in the county many who either live alone or with an elderly relative. The nature of the work being done with older on this project through information sharing, advice and contacts is in some way ensuring that older men have an improved health status and quality of life. The economic impact element of the programme is contributing to the fact that older men, particularly men living alone, are better placed to remain in their own homes longer as opposed to requiring residential care. Furthermore, this initiative has greatly contributed to addressing the negativities of rural isolation such as depression, loneliness, substance abuse to mention but a few.

Future Options Training programme and **Individual Skills Training** both play an important part in our local economy. Through identifying potential local employment and up-skilling participants, the programme aims to support the newly up-skilled participants to secure employment. Therefore the knock on effect of this programme contributes to the local economy by increasing household income.

Wageningen University is another example of a project that is complimentary to the local economy and the LCDP programme. This joint initiative between Wageningen University and Roscommon LEADER Partnership, benefits approximately 40 local families in the county each year. Students studying Rural Development are hosted by families for two weeks while researching local topics. Hosts are reimbursed for out of pocket expenses to cover costs of hosting the student. This project generates additional household income.

The BTWEA scheme contributes greatly to the rural economy as many of the new business start-ups are located in rural areas. The scheme plays a key role in creating sustainable & viable enterprises that create badly needed employment & self-reliance in rural communities. The majority of businesses are in the services sector where individuals target niche markets in the rural economy & bring services closer to the rural based communities.

Impact on Gender

The work of Roscommon LEADER Partnership has always placed emphasis on inclusion of the most marginalised in our community. Gender mainstreaming is about recognising and addressing the policies, processes and practices that bring about inequalities between women and men. The Irish Government in the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016 acknowledges gender mainstreaming as a key objective in achieving gender equality. In County Roscommon we work closely with the Roscommon Women's Network who are also funded under the Local Community Development Programme.

In terms of our company's **policy and planning**, our Board is committed to having a gender balance on our Board. The Board have demonstrated this commitment as in December 2013 we invited Roscommon Community Forum to send two female board directors to represent the new community forum on to our Board. However due to the resignation of both Christine Sheehy and Margaret Charlton from the Board of our company we have not achieved the required 40% female representation on our Board despite all our best efforts. Also in relation to the replacement of the State Agency; Enterprise Ireland nominee Margaret Charlton we have struggled all year getting an alternative State Agency board nominee and we failed to get our most preferred state agency representatives. We asked the Department of Agriculture and the HSE to send a representative to our board and asked for a female if preferable. Both agencies failed to send a representative.

The Board will continue to pursue the recruitment of females to sit on our Board of Directors as we rotate Directorships.

We have under taken the following **specific actions out during 2013 under the LCDP**, these actions have had an identified impact on Gender. These actions are outlined as follows:

- **RosWIN**

RosWIN was established to foster entrepreneurship among women in County Roscommon by providing a forum/network where they can make contacts, promote their business, develop their knowledge through training, business mentoring, network together and meet other women in business or who are considering starting a business. Since its inception, RosWIN has worked in conjunction with RLP and (Roscommon County Enterprise Board) RCEB to increase the numbers of female entrepreneurs in Co. Roscommon through exploiting their existing supports for the small business sector. RLP provided development fund grant aid while RCEB provided financial support for some of the running costs of the network. RosWin had regular network meetings & hosted seminars with invited guests on a broad range of topics supporting entrepreneurship throughout 2013. It has an active social media presence and its website is www.roswin.ie

- **Rural Men's Group**

The Mission Statement of Roscommon Rural Men's Project is:

“to improve the quality of life for Marginalised Rural Men, and their communities, throughout the county by providing opportunities for increased social interaction and tackling isolation, loneliness, awareness, mental and physical health issues among this target group”

The aims of the programme are to:

- Provide social opportunities for marginalised men to reduce isolation (both physical and social)
- To Provide educational opportunities for the men
- To provide information on rights and entitlements
- To provide advocacy for the men in certain situations

Roscommon County has the highest age dependency ratio in the Country, and there are a significant number of men living alone in the County. RLP recognised the need to develop their capacity to shape their future in a similar way to which women's groups are structured. There are approximately 100 rural men engaged with 3

groups across the County and over the last number of years it has been evident that the support and encouragement they receive through the group has enhanced their self-esteem, improved their quality of life. This action has an impact on gender equality.

RAPID

Roscommon LEADER Partnership does not currently work within a RAPID area.

Board and Staff Working Together

Developmental Work

The Board of RIDC had facilitated sessions on the LCDP through-out the year, key staff members were invited to make presentations to the Board on a regular basis.. In 2013 we developed and delivered a comprehensive child protection procedures manual and training programme so that we are compliant with new legislative requirements this came into effect in March 2013.

Advisory Councils of RIDC

The sub structure of RIDC allows for information to be communicated to the Board following each of the planning meetings. The following are the groups that relate to the LCDP:

- Community Development, Youth and Families Planning Group
- Employment & Enterprise Planning Group
- Rural Sustainability Planning Group
- Strategic planning and policy Group

The chair of each of the sub committees is a board member who in turn provides feedback reports to the Board from each meeting.

These planning groups remain well briefed on the goals and objectives of the programme by relevant staff. A number of staff participated in professional development training throughout the year In relation to the attendance at planning group meetings from external persons there was poor attendance. Therefore due to this poor attendance the proposal is for 2014 onwards that the planning groups have new members with an amalgamation of planning groups.

- There were 12 Board meetings held in 2013.
- The AGM took place on the 30th of January 2014 in relation to 2013 that being a 15 month time frame from the last AGM, the delay was to accommodate the

merger of the Community Forum from two structures into one unified County Structure, this related to the election of two community directors replacing Kevin Mc Brien and Bernie Kearney

Co-operation, Collaboration Linkages:

The information required on Roscommon LEADER Partnerships involvement on networks and key planning/policy bodies has been captured through IRIS. Please reference hyperlink Iris system - Key Planning and Policy Structures.

Leverage Funds

Source of Funding	Amount (€)	Purpose
Wageningen University	2,500.00	Student Exchange
National Lottery	2,000	Young Carers
Katherine Howard Fund	1,500	
Leargas	8,000	
Bag Packing , church gate collection	1,738.00	Friendly Call Service
Irish Prison Service	17,792.84	Outreach Roscommon
National Lottery (transferred to Outreach	3,000.00	
Roscommon Bank Account		