

Better LEADER practices for Local Development Strategies across the EU

This Infosheet is part of a series of relevant practice examples that Managing Authorities and Local Action Groups have used while implementing the LEADER approach in the 2007-2013 period. The series aims to extend the reach of rural development policy by highlighting what works well in the design and delivery phase of Local Development Strategies (LDS).

Making LDS goals easily measurable to capture LEADER's added value

N.04



Country, Region: Ireland, County Cork

Organisation: Local Action Group- IRD Duhallow

AT A GLANCE



Objectives

The objective is to promote coherent links between the broad goals of the Local Development Strategy (LDS) and the actual projects undertaken so as to improve targeting and monitoring and thus enhance the measurability of LEADER's added value.



Key elements of the approach

The most important aspect of this practice is to split the broad objectives of the LDS into smaller, measurable elements. The main goals of each LDS are attributed a specific list of measures which are animated and monitored by the LAG's Thematic Working Groups (WG) covering more than one measure and cooperating on topics of shared interest.



Lessons learnt

Local needs and LDS targets can often be too complicated and diverse for the European Commission's Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF) to handle. The solution is to pay close attention to the design and monitoring of the LDS level objectives, targets and indicators – and to consider the linkage to the regional and national Rural Development Programme (RDP) reporting along with the CMEF indicators.



Objectives and background

LEADER has been criticised for its inability to demonstrate the results achieved and its added value. The LDS has a hierarchy of aims ranging from broad goals (e.g. enhancing the quality of rural life) to more precise objectives (improving the youth and education work) as well as concrete project actions and outputs.

Sometimes the links between the hierarchy of goals and objectives are not obvious or missing – making monitoring and thus the documentation of LEADER’s added value a difficult exercise.

IRD Duhallow’s practice illustrates how a broad objective can be sub-divided into smaller and measurable pieces.

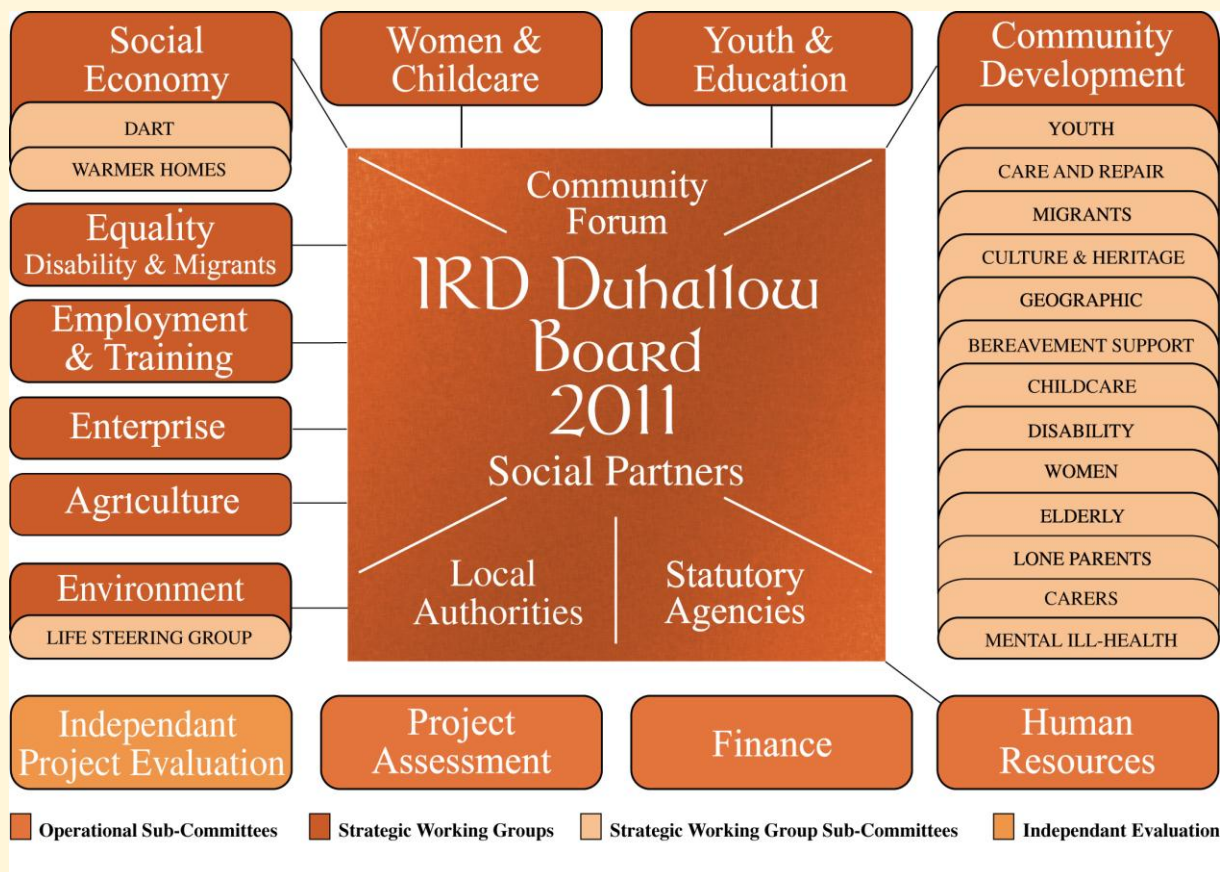


Key elements of the approach

The IRD Duhallow’s LDS is based on four main areas of development: improving quality of life, fostering creativity, economic growth and living environment.

The development of the plan involves a long process of consultation with

communities, businesses and state agencies in the region. The LAG Board structure with its Sub-Committees and Working Groups greatly facilitates this process:



A needs assessment of the region's social, economic and environmental/natural resources is carried out by using the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, which places the focus on the development of the region's assets and potential assets. This sets the Strategic Framework which can be adopted for particular bids, e.g. LEADER would address the programme measures, LIFE+ addresses biodiversity in the environment, etc. By developing a broad strategic plan each EU and national programme will complement each other and synergies occur.

A broad objective can be split into smaller, measurable elements. Each LDS goal has a list of measures animated and monitored through Thematic Working Groups (WG) covering more than one measure and cooperating on topics of shared interest. The WGs are responsible for their own target-setting but subject to LAG Board approval that can request changes to targets to be achieved.

Communication aspects

The Local Development Strategy objectives, targets, and monitoring practices (including indicators) are created through a participatory process involving local inhabitants and the Working Groups

The targets must be factual and measurable and LAG staff continuously monitors them with output indicators.

Attachment 1 shows an example of the target-setting of the Youth and Education Working Group

The Youth and Education Working Group has 20 members consisting of local schools, youth organisations, police and young people themselves. The 27 targets set are measurable: 10 new youth clubs, 4 youth cafes, 20 trained youth leaders etc.

The defined output indicators noted: 3 youth clubs, 0 cafes and 30 trained youth leaders achieved by June 2011. The Working Group itself has its meetings 8-9 times a year where the target achievement is analysed and the next steps planned for improvement.

and they are approved by the LAG Board of Directors. Monitoring can be done by following the project reporting and documenting the results in a table format for example.



Lessons

learnt

Benefits

The clear definition of LDS objectives, targets and output indicators has improved consistency and the ability to initiate and coordinate local development work in the IRD Duhallow territory. The results can be reported, e.g. to the local media and authorities, at any time and be easily compared with the LDS goals and objectives.

The up-to-date output indicator table also keeps the LAG well aware of the areas where it should increase the animation work and encourage the new initiatives in order to meet the LDS targets.

Barriers

A clear definition of the different level LDS objectives and their respective monitoring systems saves rather than adds to the LAGs' administrative burden.

Lessons learnt

One of the major criticisms of the LEADER method has been its inability to demonstrate its added value. The IRD Duhallow case indicates that the local needs and LDS targets are often too sophisticated and diverse for the Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF) to handle. This is why in many cases the CMEF fails to catch the full LEADER impact and thus provide true aggregated EU level results.

The solution is to pay more attention to the design and monitoring of the LDS level objectives, targets and indicators – and their linkage with regional and national level RDP reporting along with the CMEF indicators. The diversity of the LDS indicators should not become an administrative headache but it should reflect the diversity found in rural territories and LEADER's ability to answer their needs.

The information included in this Infosheet is primarily coming from case studies carried out within the ENRD Focus Group 4 on Better Local Development Strategies. It has been compiled by the Contact Point on the basis of the information collected in the EU Member States and regions and takes into account views expressed by the Focus Group. This notwithstanding, the content does not necessarily reflect the official position of the EU institutions and national authorities.

LEADER

Attachment 1: Youth and Education Working Group- Strategic Aims 2009-2013

5 year Targets LEADER/ LDCP Targets	Achieve to June 2011	Remaining to Achieve in 2011- 2013	Comments
10 new youth clubs	3 – Newmarket, Tullylease, Boxing Club	7- Freemount, Rockchapel expressed interest	Youth Leadership training will be provided for new and existing volunteers
4 Time to Talk, Time to Listen Gardens	2 – Rathmore and Kanturk	2 Gneeveguilla / Kanturk possible locations	
4 Youth Cafes	0	4	Newmarket has been suggested as a suitable location
20 youths trained as youth leaders	30 trained – achieved April 2011 ‘Your Turn Programme’	90	This target has been increased
75 youths engaged in entrepreneurship training	112 students – LEADER YEP	90	This target has been increased
35 young people members of the Volunteer Bureau	10	25	
2 youth clubs in one TNP Project	1- Secret Music Festival (22 students)	1	This is on next week in Öland
Establish the Sliabh Luachra Summer School Master Class	1 achieved – 30 students participated	0	
1 School Creativity Programme –	0	1 – Duhallow Schools Folklore Project commencing in Sept 11	
Start Your Own Business Programmes in 3 schools	5 achieved - YEP	0	Currently considering how we should roll out next year
5 Recycling Education Programmes – 125 students	1 Arts Education Programme achieved with 29 SCHOOLS	0	
Promote 3 intergenerational Learning Projects	1 – Memory through Media (Macra na Ferime)	0	
Run 6 Traditional music summer camps	4 achieved – Bruach na Carraige	2	
Duhallow Countryside Initiative – developing children’s knowledge of the working countryside	1 Workshop for 36 primary schools facilitated.	0	
Green Schools in 25 Primary Schools	14 achieved (first after-schools in Ireland to get green flag!)	11	

5 year Targets LEADER/ LDCP Targets	Achieve to June 2011	Remaining to Achieve in 2011- 2013	Comments
Environmental Awareness Programmes	2 achieved in conjunction with an Tasice	1	LIFE + will include class visits, field visits and also a project targeting all 33 primary and 5 secondary schools in Duhallow.
Support to 2 established youth clubs	2 Duhallow Boxing Club & Banteer Youth Club	2	
Development of Youth Lead Section on IRD Duhallow website	0	1 section- will be led by youth forum	
1 Youth related Seminar facilitated.	2 – Literacy Resources, CIT info day	0	
Annual Careers Exhibition facilitated.	0	1 – September 2011	
4 social and personal development courses	2 – Peer Support Education Programme (Boherbue and Rathmore)	2	
2 Literacy Support Class (Jan & Sept)	1 achieved		
1 Literacy Support Summer Camp	0	2- August 2011	
1 Early School Leaver Intervention Programme	0	1 – September 2011	
1 parent support group	1 – supported through parent advisory clinic	0	
1 Youth Forum	0	1	
5 summer camps	0	5 – 2 x Laugh and Learn, 2 x IT support, 1 x Sliabh Luachra Summer Camp	