

Department of Finance,
Unit 2,
Central Business Park,
Tullamore,
Co. Offaly

**RE: Evaluation of the Local & Community Development Programme(LCDP)
by the Department of Finance & the NDP Monitoring Committee**

29th August 2008

Dear Nelius,

Please find attached our submission in respect of the evaluation of the Local & Community Development Programme (LCDP). Following consultation with our members, we would like to make the following outline comments as a supplement to our attached submission.

- The four key issues being addressed in the evaluation, are areas that Partnership companies have a strong focus on, specifically in regard to delivering targets against projected outcomes under the LCDP.
- PLANET requests that the prioritization of funding for social inclusion measures in areas of most need should not be diluted due to the fact that the LDSIP has been a national programme since the beginning of 2007.
- Under the cohesion process, new integrated structures are being established. We would argue that these new structures are the most appropriate vehicle for the deliver of Local and Community based initiatives.
- Linked to the above point, PLANET argues that the administrative requirements under the LCDP measures should be reviewed with a view to streamlining the administration procedures in order to ensure programme delivery on the ground to maximum effect.

- A key element of the LDSIP is to enable the progress / achievement of national strategies, such as the goals of the national Action Plan for Social Inclusion, through work at the local level. The LDSIP can not deliver this element on its own as many determinants lie elsewhere, for instance with FAS, the Department of Education and Science or the Department of Social and Family Affairs. The effective integration of NDP Programmes is key to its success.
- There are continuing challenges in relation to the interaction with NDP measures outside the Programme. Effective interaction needs to be enabled and facilitated.
- Coordination and cooperation are key approaches to all partnership working – it needs to be resourced. Partnerships have practice and experience in coordination.
- Performance measurement should include both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Target setting is key and requires good baseline data and realistic ideas about the effectiveness of actions.

If you require any further information from us, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Carty

Co-ordinator

PLANET – The Partnerships Network

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INVESTING IN CIVIL SOCIETY 2007-2103

The Needs of Communities

Planet believes it is now particularly timely to address the way in which Ireland, as a wealthy, post-modern European state will value civil society in the next five to ten years.

It is important in the context of 'Towards 2016' and of the National Development Plan 2007-2013 to consider how the State's resources will be invested in **civil society** alongside other areas for investment such as industry, infrastructure, enterprise, health, etc.

We believe that a new programme of '**Investment in Civil Society**' needs to focus on seven main areas of concern and that these could form the basis of the successor to the Area Based Partnership's Local Development Social Inclusion Programme, (LDSIP), namely;

- Investing in Equality
- Investing in People Development
- Investing in Civic Participation
- Investing in the Places Where We Live
- Investing in Community Based Economic Activity
- Investing in Community Health
- Investing in Voluntary Effort

The scope of these measures in a new Local Development Social Inclusion Programme of the National Development Plan might be as follows;

Measure 1 Investing in Equality

Addressing the needs of those most excluded in our communities through LDSIP equality programmes and initiatives by Partnership Companies with ;

- *Older People*
- *People with a Disability*
- *Travelling Communities*
- *New Communities*

- *Young Offenders, Ex-offenders & Ex-prisoners*
- *Lone Parent*
- *Alienated Young People*
- *Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals*
- *Advocacy Initiatives*
- *Activation Measures, (NDP)*

Measure 2 Investing in People Development

Life-long learning, education, training and work for people who have not benefited from such opportunities through LDSIP education and training programmes and initiatives by Partnership Companies such as:

- *Early Childhood Education Initiatives*
- *Prevention of Early School Leaving Initiatives*
- *Work with Parents in Education*
- *Work with Lone Parents*
- *Education & Training Initiatives for Young People who have left school early*
- *Education & Training Initiatives for Long-term unemployed Men and Women*
- *Youth Work Initiatives*
- *Third Level Access Programmes*
- *Adult Education & Training Programmes*
- *Language Training*
- *Local Employment Service, (LES)*
- *Activation Measures, (NDP)*
- *Back to Work Enterprise Allowance, (BTWEA)*
- *Enterprise Supports for Individuals*

Measure 3 Investing in Civic Participation

Bringing about dialogue, social change and development by enabling a voice and participation for those affected by problems and the proposed solutions to those problems, LDSIP initiatives by Partnership Companies can include;

- *Community Development*
- *Capacity Building in Local Communities*
- *Developing Community Structures*
- *Developing Community Leadership*
- *Advocacy Training*
- *Needs Assessment*
- *Social Analysis*
- *Resourcing Community Activity*
- *Strengthening Democratic Participation by Communities e.g. CDB, SPC's etc.*
- *Community Voice*
- *Civic & Voter Education*

Measure 4 Investing in the Places Where We Live

Building sustainable communities through planning and development, LDSIP can work through Partnership Companies in the following ways;

- *Community Involvement in Planning Processes and Decisions*
- *Community Facilities*

- Youth Facilities
- Childcare Facilities
- Improvements in the Built Environment
- Urban Regeneration
- Rural Regeneration
- Rural Transport Programme

Measure 5 Investing in Community Based Economic Activity

Developing opportunities in the 'Third Sector' or 'Social Economy for employment, enterprise and services in communities is a role for LDSIP through Partnership Companies;

- Social Economy Enterprises and Community Businesses, (e.g. Speedpack , WARM Project, Organic Farming etc.)
- Supported Employment Schemes ; C.E., J.I., C.S.P., R.S.S.
- Special National Drugs Strategy C.E. Schemes
- Special Traveller C.E. Schemes
- Rural Transport Programme

Measure 6 Investing In Community Health

Tackling physical and mental health issues through community can be achieved through LDSIP in Partnership Companies including;

- Community Health Needs Assessment
- Community Health Planning
- Community Participation in Primary Health Care Teams, (HSE)
- Health, Poverty and Social Exclusion
- National, Regional and Local Drugs Strategy Initiatives
- Traveller Primary Health Projects
- Addressing Fuel Poverty
- Suicide Prevention
- Positive Mental Health Initiatives
- Rural Transport Programme

Measure 7 Investing in Voluntary Effort

Civic engagement and social capital which builds an inclusive society and tackles inequality is a role for LDSIP through Partnership Companies;

- Developing Volunteering in Communities
- Volunteering in Marginalised Communities
- Developing Volunteering in New Communities
- Training Programmes for Volunteers
- Volunteer Bureau
- Promotion of Volunteering
- Supporting and Resourcing Volunteers
- Technical support to Community & Voluntary Organisations