



Monaghan Integrated Development CLG (Lot 34-1)

LINC

(Linking Irelands New Communities)

Theme – Goal One Projects

Target Group – New Communities

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2022 is funded by the Irish Government through the Department of Rural and Community Development and co-funded by the European Social Fund under the Programme for Employment, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020”



The notes below are to accompany LINC (Linking Irelands New Communities) the MID SICAP video case study for 2021

The Target group: New communities.

The context: Through Fáilte Isteach, SICAP and other LDC programmes, MID were aware of access issues arising between new communities members and state services. In Co Monaghan, Tusla were seeing above average referrals from new communities.

The challenge: how to bridge the cultural and linguistic gap between state services and new communities. The challenge was identified through SICAP programme work with Fáilte Isteach and Tusla.

Note: SICAP did not set out to establish a Social Enterprise. This evolved naturally as the work of the programme unfolded.

The interventions put in place were:

- To establish a steering group for the project to:
 - Resource and co-ordinate the project
 - Identify potential leaders, community or cultural champions, within the new communities

The committee comprised Tusla, Fáilte Isteach Monaghan, ISPCC, the FRCs, Monaghan Integrated Development (SICAP and Volunteer Centre) and New Communities representatives. At the first meeting it was decided to call the project 'Connecting Communities'.

- 12 cultural champions were identified by the committee
- Initially, each champion was Garda Vetted (by Monaghan Volunteer Centre), then provided with:
 - training in Parenting (Parents Plus), Child Protection and Advocacy (QQI Level 6). This training was funded by CMETB and Tusla.
 - €700 in funding to host an event (s) that would help them to build their profile within their community and give them a platform to explain and publicise their role. This funding came from QCBI Innovation Fund: *Enhancing Children's and Young People's Outcomes*.
- In 2019/2020, the champions were supported to form a social enterprise. At this point they received training in:
 - Legal structures for Social Enterprise
 - Employment Law
 - Health & Safety and
 - GDPR
 - OCNi interpretation/translation (funded by CMETB and Tusla)

They were also assisted with:

- Making funding applications (securing €19,000 for their venture)
- Finally, they were supported to register their enterprise as a workers co-operative called LINC (Linking Irelands New Communities) and to employ an admin worker on a CE scheme.

What worked

- The collaboration with other agencies/groups
- Identification and training of champions and the ability of champions to fulfil their role
- Tusla's provision of an SLA with LINC, demonstrating faith in the champions ability.
- The ability of the LINC to access additional funding for training and equipment (c. €19,000 to date).
- The ability of LINC to access a CE support worker.

What did not work

The intention was not to start a social enterprise. However, initial payment structures proposed did not work so the workers co-operative model was the outcome that evolved.

The role of SICAP

- The SICAP team had a history of collaborations with the main project partners through previous work within MID.
- Through its previous engagement work with new communities, SICAP was able to identify all the potential champions.
- MID administered the QCBI funding and the SICAP team provided the support to each champion to spend their allocation and report back on their events.
- The SICAP team was able to work with Monaghan Volunteer Centre to ensure Garda Vetting proceeded smoothly, as both programmes are part of the Local Development Company (Monaghan Integrated Development).
- SICAP was absolutely critical in supporting the social enterprise start up. SICAP found the most suitable SE structure, held the group together during start up phase and helped them access funding and other SE supports. **Without SICAP support, the group could not have successfully established their social enterprise.**

What is next?

- LINC is currently marketing its services to other agencies. Clones Family Resource Centre has accessed their services to engage with Syrian Refugees who have been resettled in the town.
- There is scope for LINC to work with the Justice Department, Social Welfare and others in the years ahead.

Outputs

- 11 fully trained cultural champions working as members of LINC
- 1 Social Enterprise – LINC (Linking Irelands New Communities) currently providing part-time employment for 6 people

Outcomes

To date LINC has provided:

- Formal case management support to 55 families for Tusla
- Translation support to 7 new community families for Clones FRC
- Support with the development of the County Monaghan Migrant Integration Strategy

Tusla have stated "The work the cultural champions do helps keep families together. We know that in some cases some children may have ended up in foster care system but the work cultural champions has done has helped those families to stay together."