



Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (2018 – 2022)

Case Study - Goal 1: Working with Local Community Groups

Pathways to Participation and Representation

Northside Partnership - Lot 2.3

 Northside Partnership

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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

Background

Northside Partnership

The Northside Partnership is a Local Development Company working with individuals and communities in North East Dublin to bring about positive changes in their own lives and in the community. Northside Partnership (NSP) is committed to working across Lot 2.3 to identify, develop and invest in the skills, capabilities and assets of the people we work with, whilst working to reduce structural inequality.

Purpose of the initiative

The purpose of this initiative is to bring local groups who work with young people, or are drugs focused projects, together to develop local integrated services responses for young people who are impacted by the drug economy, violence and gang related activity. Like other areas in Ireland, the North East of Dublin has experienced a number of high profiles murders, recently the murders of young men in the Darndale and Kilmore area has brought into sharp focus the devastating effect this has on the individuals themselves, their families and the community at large. It is widely recognised that the illicit drugs economy, and associated crime and violence, has a significant impact upon communities including:

- + Increased fear and intimidation
- + Reduced social cohesion/connectedness,
- + Increased anxiety,
- + Impact on services and supports
- + Reputational damage for the wider area

The long-term aim of this initiative is to offer opportunities, coordinate effort and disrupt the potential for young people and other community members to be impacted negatively. This project sits within a wider work stream to address the impact of criminal networks.

Origins of this initiative

The Northside Community Forum has a membership of over 50 Local Community Groups (LCGs) and has a role in developing and providing opportunities for people to engage and become involved in their local community. NSP, holds the secretariat function of this group and convenes a small steering group of forum members, who meet on a bi-monthly basis to ensure that the Forum remains relevant and is planning in line with the needs and aspirations of LCGs. This Forum provides a space for networking, involvement in community planning and service delivery.

The Northside Community Forum has run in Lot 2.3 for the past 17 years and since its establishment in 2003 it is a space where local opportunities and challenges are brought to the fore. In 2019, members of the Forum raised the challenges that the community across Lot 2.3 are facing regarding the impact of the drug economy, violence, and gang related activity. The Forum, through conversations, gave NSP and the Local Drugs Task Force a mandate to hold community conversations to explore possibilities for local integrated services responses for young people at risk due to this activity, so as to offer opportunities, coordinate effort and disrupt the potential for young people to enter the illicit drugs economy.

In 2019/2020 SICAP funds, enabled NSP to mobilise this effort. Starting firstly, with a trusted Local Development Officer from NSP, who approached eight groups who work with young people or are in drug focused projects. Through sitting down and really engaging with these groups a rich understanding was gleaned about the issue locally and the seeds were sown for action.

These groups were willing and eager to come together, to work and to collectively understand what could be done to make a difference. Sphere 17, Edenmore Drug Intervention Team, The Dales, Kilmore West Youth Project, Kilmore Youth Reach, Kilbarrack Coast Community Programme (KCCP), Darndale Community Training Centre and Dublin North East Drugs Taskforce were the projects that were approached and that agreed to work together. This highlights that there are committed, busy services and supports in the area, but a challenge to be mindful of is ensuring that

these services and supports are reaching all the community. This issue is referenced in the 2019 report by Young People at Risk Dublin North Inner City [YPAR], entitled 'Reach Out' where it was stated that "I think one big one is for the very hard to reach, the cohort who is engaging with drugs and crime, I think it is intimidation. The image and front they must project on the street, for their peers, to be seen to engaging in these services, might be seen as weak. So, that is one big part of it." (Reach Out, 2019: 85).

The Journey so Far

These groups have come together, with NSP as the backbone organisation, to start to explore what can be done and how we can work together. It emerged through the discussion that the groups would like to work on "messaging", essentially a campaign that would reach out to young people across social media platforms when they feel most at risk.

From the initial facilitated meeting in March 2020 members of the group responded immediately in

their active participation and production of images. The production of imagery was led by KCCP, who produced five striking images and the KEEP project in Kilmore West Youth Project have also produced one of the images. Each of these images have been developed through discussion with young people who are involved with their project and focused on imagery that would be impactful on those who may find themselves caught up in this. The images all give a phone number, of a local project to call for advice.

Some of the images were designed for the 'shock' factor, however some organisations felt uncomfortable sending out some of the images especially given the level of fear and intimidation that is being experienced by residents and workers in the area and the sensitivities for communities around anniversaries of victims of violence. Therefore, it was decided that a range of additional images / messages would be developed that had a more nurturing and educational focus. The campaign will also incorporate spoken word and engaging with local rap artists as well as interviews with people who have been involved in the drugs industry previously.

This is highlighted in the themes below

1. High Impact Crisis Response Imagery & Messaging:
2. Affected Families – softer and more empathetic imagery telling the story of loss/ grief/personal tragedy
3. Avoidance Messaging – Targeting children/ young people at risk of entering addiction
4. Challenging Messaging – Lifestyle: messages that may make young people think about the real cost of this lifestyle.
5. Success Stories – of people who have come through challenging situations.

In June 2020, a test image was sent out via Facebook by KCCP to see what kind of response we would get. The image that was sent out by KCCP had a reach, according to their Facebook page analysis, of 12,109, of which 817 engaged with 63 shares and 133 likes.

The same image on NSP's Facebook page had a reach of 547 with 14 reactions, comments and 4 shares.





Don't let this be your last #selfie

*When you've had enough
of drug addiction or
drug debt intimidation
we are here to support you*

K . C . C . P .



"A community caring for its community"

085 806 6827 *CALL/TEXT our support line today*

All participant projects have agreed to post messages at the same time to broaden reach across the community.

Through this initial test case the group identified the need for social media training; five Local Community Groups participated in three workshops on Developing a Social Media Strategy, using Facebook and using Instagram. It is envisaged that each organisation will have an active social media account that will aid in the messaging.

We have developed a marketing and communications plan with a marketing expert from NSP’s mentor panel. The aim being that a unified message will go out from different community organisations using the images / messages that have been produced by the members of the group. Different media will be used to get different messages out. We will use social media, print media, radio, and video.

Outcomes and Outputs

To date 6 images have been produced and members of the group are collating other images or using other media to produce a library of messages. Traction on social media has been positive.

The images that have been produced have been designed by the representative organisations engaging with young people who attend their service. They have been produced through discussion around the issues of drugs and violence and exploring what images may be impactful to young people who may find themselves caught up in this situation.

The coming together of organisations has been a huge benefit in facilitating communication and collaboration among the Local Community Groups represented. The process has allowed for stronger referral pathways between organisations.

The group has an ambition to continue to expand on the work and to run this campaign into 2021. The group have formed their mission statement which is **“we are here to get a message out that there is another way”**

The group are choosing priorities from their marketing and communications plan to focus on in 2020-2021. In the future the learnings from this

campaign may influence other geographical areas and could be scaled. This group will also be viewed as a key stakeholder locally to inform and influence the roll out of other projects or strategy pieces relating to drugs and violent crime.

A young person involved in the project design from KCCP said **“it’s something that is really needed to be told to everyone and to young people”**

KCCP staff member noted **“We are here to design a campaign, to try to get more people to interact with the services, like ourselves and to try to give them some direction, rather than getting involved in drugs, running up debts and then maybe getting involved in some crime to pay for the debts or being so intimidated that they take their own lives”**

SICAP contribution

Target Group are people living in Disadvantaged Communities

SICAP Outcomes	<p>G1-2.2 LCG’s have a greater capacity to address the social inclusion needs of the communities and they serve or represent.</p> <p>G1- 3:1 SICAP target groups and community groups are represented and actively participate in decision making structures</p>
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NSP is the backbone of this group. This initiative is funded through the NSP’s SICAP programme under the Department of Rural and Community Development. This funding has covered all NSP staff time on this project. The funding has also covered the Social Media training for Local Community Groups and the mentor hours on the initial consultation, facilitation and development and the marketing and communications plan.

The SICAP programme under the Department of Rural and Community Development, also receives funding from the European Social Fund under the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020.



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