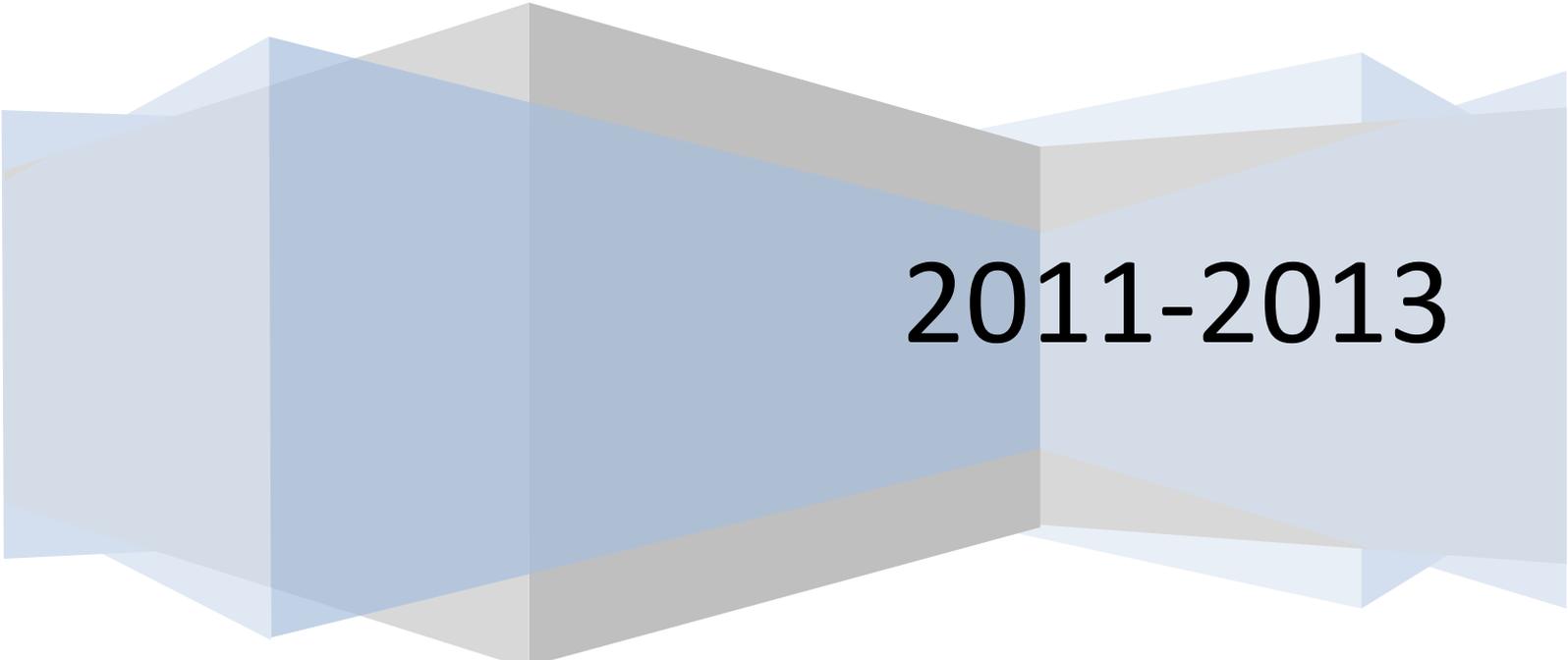


Pobal - FINAL

The Local and Community Development Programme

Strategic Plan Format and Guidance Notes



2011-2013

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Introduction

This guide template was developed by Pobal to facilitate Local Development Companies (LDCs) to develop strategic plans for the Local Community Development Programme (LCDP) 2011-2013. The aim of the LCDP is to tackle poverty and social exclusion through partnership and constructive engagement between Government and its agencies and people in disadvantaged communities. It is important that the template is adhered to as the appraisal criteria for the plans will be firmly based on the data and analysis required under each section of the template. Also it is important from the point of view of transparency and comparability that companies follow this template. Criteria for appraising plans are set out in the *Planning and Assessment Guidelines*. In appraising plans Pobal will draw from its cumulative experience of working with LDCs over the past 15 years.

Each LDC is required to produce **a three-year strategic plan**. The completed plan should be between 40 – 50 pages maximum excluding appendices. Sections 2, 3 and 4 are the key components of the plan and will require a greater volume of information. The page counts should reflect this.

The template is divided into sections with suggestions for the types of information that should be included shaded in green. The rationale is to reserve the main body of the text for the core substantive analytical and descriptive information. This will be of primary importance both in appraising the plans and in assisting LDCs to monitor and review their work.

The plan will be based on the programme guidelines for the LCDP as issued by Pobal. Each local plan must reflect the principles and goals of the LCDP and demonstrate a strong social inclusion and poverty focus. They should be customised to meet the identified local needs of socio-economically disadvantaged communities and specific beneficiary groups experiencing inequality and social exclusion. Plans should be developed based on a local consultation process incorporating the voice and experiences of the programme beneficiaries and should be informed by an internal review undertaken by the organisation.

The development of the plan should reflect an inclusive process whereby all staff, Board members and the wider community are actively involved.

The plan must be approved by the Board of the organisation and in as far as possible all of those consulted about the plan should be satisfied with its final composition.

In keeping with established protocols and practice, it is necessary to have plans endorsed by the County Development Boards (as per revised guidelines issued January 2011). Deadline for receipt of plans is 30th June 2011.

SECTION ONE - ETHOS OF THE ORGANISATION

This section requires information on the operational ethos of the organisation in addition to practical information pertaining to the organisation as a whole. In completing it the LDC should present a strong vision for social inclusion as delivering social inclusion is the key challenge underpinning the strategic plan.

1.1 VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Information at the organisational level is necessary in order to locate the LCDP strategic plan in the context of the overall work of the organisation. Information in this section should include a brief description of the organisation's vision, mission, and values statements and these should be aligned with the aim and principles of LCDP.

VISION STATEMENT

This should be a broad overarching statement that describes in a compact way the type of change envisaged as a result of the work of the organisation.

MISSION STATEMENT

This should be a brief statement about the organisation's purpose and its distinctive role in addressing social inclusion.

VALUES STATEMENT

This should outline the guiding principles that underlie the approach the organisation takes to its work.

1.2 PRACTICAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ORGANISATION

Information in this section refers to the organisation as a whole

- Trading Name of the organisation
- Contact Details for the organisation (Address, Tel, Fax, Email)
- Registered name of the organisation (if not same as above)
- Registered address of the organisation (if not same as above)
- Company registration number of the organisation
- Parent companies to the organisation

INCLUDE AS APPENDIX

1. Details of parent/related companies
2. A list of registered directors (as per companies registration office), the sectors and organisations they represent, last rotation
3. The overall number of staff including titles, roles and sources of funding
4. List of names, roles and location of LCDP staff only
5. Membership details of each substructure identified, list of the organisations that members represent and frequency of meetings
6. A list of members of advisory councils and community fora
7. Information on outreach offices (where applicable)

SECTION TWO - ANALYSIS OF COMPOSITE AREA PROFILE

This analytical section of the plan is of critical importance as it will inform key decisions about the local objective statements developed by LDCs. It will also inform both the internal review and the external consultation processes. In view of this it is important that it is undertaken in a thorough and comprehensive way and that the analysis arising from each section and overall is reflected clearly in the subsequent sections of the plan. In completing this section the LDC should give a picture of the area as it is in 2011 from a social inclusion perspective (i.e. the extent to which social inclusion is facilitated or impeded by the issue being analysed) by providing information and analysis of the socio-economic, demographic and service provision profile of the LDC catchment area.

The profile should paint a picture of the context in which the LDC is operating and should clearly focus attention on the places and beneficiary groups within the area where the greatest levels of social exclusion and poverty are experienced.

It should describe the current position under each heading, highlight significant changes that have occurred, analyse the impact of these changes and, as an outcome of the analysis, summarise the key critical conclusions that create the rationale for the local objective statements outlined in Section 4.

2.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

The socio-economic profile should outline existing industries, services, agriculture, and land use. It should be drawn up from a social inclusion perspective. In other words it should analyse the extent to which this socio-economic profile facilitates or impedes the social inclusion of the beneficiary groups as named in the operational guidelines.

The analysis should identify gaps and describe potential for development.

The following headings should be used to facilitate the analysis:

- describe the current position;
- highlight significant changes that have occurred;
- summarise the key conclusions from the analysis.

2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

This section of the plan should contain a demographic profile of the LDC area, focusing particularly on the beneficiary groups of the programme from a social inclusion perspective.

The demographic profile should:

- describe the current position of the beneficiary groups;
- highlight changes that have occurred since the last strategic plan;
- summarise the key conclusions from the analysis.

Pobal Small Area Maps will be a key aid in developing a demographic profile of the area. However it is acknowledged that these are based on 2006 census statistics. Where available, more up-to-date sources of data should therefore be used, including data generated in local studies currently available to LDCs

Types of data to include

Basic demographic data (total population of the LDC area, number of households, age structure).

Data that indicates the overall extent of disadvantage in the LDC area (e.g. deprivation index, average levels of educational attainment, proportion of households in local authority rented accommodation, number of Medical Card holders, Live Register Statistics etc.)

Data on all beneficiary groups of the programme. This should be informed by the LDCs previous work with those beneficiary groups and other locally or nationally available research and data.

It is important that data should focus on the extent of disadvantage (e.g. not the total number of older people/women/etc., but indicators of the level and incidence of for example cumulative disadvantage). This programme is focussed on those who are at greatest risk of disadvantage and social exclusion.

Data should indicate which geographical districts within the LDC area have particularly high concentrations of disadvantage (for example RAPID/ Clar) and it would be expected later on that the majority of LDC actions will be focused on these priority districts.

Note: The source and year should be stated for all data.

2.3 STATUTORY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR SERVICE PROVISION PROFILE

This profile should be drawn up from a social inclusion perspective and reflect the extent to which local services and facilities contribute to or impede the social inclusion of the programme beneficiaries. The analysis should identify gaps and describe potential for development.

The following headings should be used to facilitate the analysis:

- Describe the current position and highlight significant changes that have occurred;
- Analyse the impact of these changes on specific beneficiary groups;
- Identify gaps and development potential;
- Summarise the key conclusions from the analysis.

The service provision profile has five elements

- i) outlining and analysing mainstream statutory services
- ii) outlining other specialist programmes,
- iii) outlining community or voluntary provided services (other than programmes listed under item ii);
- iv) quantifying community development infrastructure/activity
- iv) describing and commenting on key co-ordinating *structures*. *These structures can include key planning and policy structures that the LDC either leads, has initiated or participated in (for further guidance, see programme guidelines)*

I) STATUTORY SERVICES

These should be outlined and analysed from a social inclusion perspective and should solely reference statutory, state agency or statutory contracted services (such as formally contracted youth services or social services).

II) PROGRAMMES

These should also be outlined and articulated from a social inclusion perspective and should include the Local Community Development Programme itself and should reference programmes such as the:

LES, Early Childhood Care & Education/National Childcare Investment Programme, Rural Social Scheme, TUS Programme, Rural Development Programme , Community Services Programme, EU Equal Initiative and other EU initiatives, PEACE programme and any other programmes

III) COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY RESPONSES TO SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND POVERTY

These should be outlined and described from a social inclusion perspective and should also include responses provided by church/religious groups. The focus here should be on approaches as opposed to strict service delivery - for example, community development responses to addressing social exclusion in terms of capacity building, empowerment etc.

IV) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE/ACTIVITY

These should be profiled and analysed from a social inclusion perspective and should include:

Community groups, Family Resource Centres, community platforms, networks and fora, intercultural networks, issue based community groups including Traveller support groups, refugee/migrant projects, etc. Key community facilities could also be noted particularly where they will be a focus for the delivery of future work.

V) KEY PLANNING AND POLICY STRUCTURES/CO-ORDINATING STRUCTURES

These should be listed and described from a social inclusion perspective and should include:

City/County Development Board, Social Inclusion Measures Committee, RAPID AIT, Local Drugs Task Force, City/County Childcare Committee, the LDC itself and any other relevant structures. The LDC should list which partnership role your company takes on the key planning and policy structure

2.4 SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ANALYSIS OF COMPOSITE AREA PROFILE

This section provides a space and opportunity to synthesise the key conclusions from the analysis contained in each of the above sections (2.1, 2.2 and 2.3).

It should establish an overall picture of unmet needs, opportunities and an evidence-base for devising local objectives.

The outcome of the analysis should result in a very clear rationale for the decisions taken and the agreed priorities including a focus on beneficiary groups specific to the area.

As emphasised at the beginning, this section of the plan is pivotal because it will inform all the other decisions and actions contained in the plan.

SECTION THREE - THE PROCESS OF PREPARING THE PLAN

Section three of the template is concerned with the processes of internal review and external consultation and how their outcomes together with the conclusions from the composite area profile have informed the strategic priorities of the plan. This section requires information on the consultation processes that resulted in the formulation of the strategic plan.

These processes may not occur in the order in which they are presented in the template, for example, LDCs may undertake external consultation prior to internal review and insert the findings from the external consultation into the internal review process, or vice versa.

In completing it the LDC should demonstrate a comprehensive, multi-level, open and transparent consultation process that resonates clearly with the local objective statements outlines in section 4. The LDC may find information in the step by step guide to strategic planning particularly useful when completing this section.

3.1 INTERNAL REVIEW

Information in relation to internal review refers to the process engaged in by the LDC – Board, sub-structures and staff – to review its work under the previous programme and the key findings from that strategic review.

Internal review information should be provided as follows:

- who was involved in the process?
- a description of the methodology used;
- a summary of the main strategic findings and recommendations.

3.2 EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

Information in relation to external consultation refers to the process of involving the local statutory, voluntary and community sector, social partners, public representatives and the voice of programme beneficiaries in the decision-making process relating to the content of the strategic plan.

External consultation information should be provided as follows:

- the level and process of involvement of beneficiary groups/ target areas/ CDP, Clar, RAPID areas/ other stakeholders
- description of how the internal review findings and recommendations were factored into the consultation process;
- description of methodology used;
- who was involved in the process?
- a summary of the main strategic findings and recommendations.

3.3 INTERNAL PROCESS FOR FINALISING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Information in relation to internal processes for finalising the plan refers to what happened to translate the feedback from the internal review and the external consultation process into the creation of the strategic plan.

Information on this section should be provided as follows:

- describe how the strategic plan was devised and how the consultation has informed it;
- outline who was involved in its finalisation and in what way;
- explain how strategic objectives were agreed;
- outline endorsement procedures engaged in with stakeholders.

SECTION FOUR - SETTING LOCAL OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS

Section four of the template is concerned with detailing the local objective statements and their anticipated outcomes and how these reflect and are congruent with the findings from the internal review and external consultation processes and the analysis derived from the composite area profile.

This section is concerned with establishing the local objective statements for the social inclusion work of the LDC over the next three years. It requires information on the rationale and expected outcomes and indicators of each local objective statement, and an indication of which strategies and actions will contribute to meeting Programme Outcomes. Local objective statements will be informed by analysis derived from the following sources:

- the internal strategic review of work under the previous programme;
- the analysis of the composite county/area profile;
- the external consultation process;
- the overall goals and objectives of the National Programme Framework.

In completing this section the LDC should demonstrate how the local objective statements propose to address the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the composite area profile. The following information is required in relation to each statement:

1. **Local Objective Statement** - these should set out what the LDC intends to do to achieve local social inclusion in the context of the Programme Framework. Local objective statements should respond to the analysis of the composite area profile, and should meet national goal outcomes and priorities. They should be tangible and use the language of Goal outcomes to allow clear linkages to the Programme framework to be identified (i.e. To increase awareness and uptake of post compulsory accredited education for lone parents from areas x,y,z by 2014'). The following points may be useful in developing a local objective statement:
 - Each local objective statement will be linked to a Programme goal. LDCs will develop a maximum of 10 statements.
 - Each statement will meet at least one of its assigned goal outcomes.
 - Each statement may meet more than one Programme outcome under an assigned goal.

- Each statement may also meet outcomes from goals that it has not been assigned to.
- It may be helpful to develop separate objective statements within goals for outcomes that have different priorities

For further information on setting local objective statements, please refer to a step by step guide to strategic planning

2. **The Programme Goal that the Local Objective Statement is aligned to** – this refers to the ability of the LDC to align each statement to a Programme Goal
3. **Rationale** – this refers to the ‘why’ of selecting the local objective statement and requires a short logical explanation as to why the local objective statement was chosen as a response to social exclusion issues in the locality. For example, it could be based on research and evaluation evidence, or the experience and track record of the LDC, or a desire to pilot different responses to social inclusion.
4. **Financial cost of objective** – Based on current annual budget, LDCs should identify how much of the three year budget (i.e. current annual budget x 3) will be allocated to the local objective statement. The cost identified should include Goal related costs (excluding administration costs).
5. **Partners to deliver the local objective statement**– LDCs will identify who key collaborators will be in the delivery of local objective statements identified. This section should identify confirmed commitments of partners along with leveraged funding (for 2011 only)/ other supports that will be made available. LDCs will detail what value the partnership approach will bring towards delivering the local objective statement. For example, LDCs may comment on how duplication will be reduced, how there may be a shorter lead in time for actions or how collaboration will lead to more cost effective service provision
6. **List of actions/ Role in Key Planning and Policy Structures** – LDCs are expected to develop activities to respond to the local objective statement outlined. This section requires outline information on activities (including actions and involvement in KPPS) proposed to meet the local objective set. The number of activities will be determined by the conclusions drawn from local needs analysis and size and scale of proposed responses. This section of the plan is important as it moves into operational detail by way of seeking a more substantial account of intended work. Only a broad outline of actions proposed is required here specifically:
 - i) Name of Action/ KPPS
 - ii) Location, also indicating where this targets RAPID,Clár or former CDP areas
 - iii) Brief rationale for the action/ KPPS and description of work, indicating also where this is outreach work
 - iv) Partners involved, including beneficiaries where relevant
 - v) Timeframe
 - vi) Anticipated results
7. **Expected National Outcomes** - this section of the plan will identify the Programme outcomes that the local objective statement has been designed to address. Where one local objective statement meets more than one outcome, some explanation may be necessary. LDCs should also identify what successful progress towards meeting the local objective statement would look like at the end of 2011 and 2012 in order that Programme targets would be met by the end of

2013. This will act as a guide for LDCs towards remaining on track throughout the Programme cycle.

8. **Expected Indicators of Progress** – An indicator is a set of measurements of a specific variable over time (and or location). Indicators are an expression of outcomes in the form of evidence that the outcome is being achieved. LCDP has a defined menu of Programme indicators for each outcome identified in the framework. LDCs will select from the menu of Programme indicators, the most appropriate indicators which best measures the actions proposed to meet the objective set.

9. **Baseline position** - Baseline statements provide information about the trend, situation or condition prior to a programme or intervention. These can be both quantitative and qualitative and identify the ‘starting point’ for work. For each indicator selected, LDCs will establish a baseline based on the best available data to hand. This may be numeric, and based on an LDCs previous work in a particular area or with a particular beneficiary group. It may also be statement based in instances where quantitative baselines are not available (i.e. strategy in place or level of knowledge or awareness of a particular issue)

10. **Local Objective Statement Target** – LDCs will identify a target for each indicator. This will be quantitative where possible and appropriate and will be informed by the baseline established in the previous stage.

EXAMPLE FOR LOCAL OBJECTIVE 1

Sub-headings:

- *Local Objective Statement*
- *Goal Alignment*
- *Rationale*
- *Financial Cost of objective*
- *Partners involved*
- *List of indicative actions*
- *Expected National Outcomes*
- *National Indicators Selected*
- *Baseline Position*
- *Local Targets*

A blank logic model template which may support a graphic representation of your work is available for use if desired.

SECTION FIVE - ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Having clearly described the proposed objectives and actions, the next section of the template is concerned with establishing a picture of the organisation's overall capacity to effectively implement the strategic plan in a way that will enable it to be effective in reducing local social exclusion, and of proposals to strengthen that capacity.

If the LDC is to effectively deliver the strategic plan in line with its vision, mission and the objectives of the LCDP and in a complex and rapidly changing environment, good governance and a culture of organisational learning are essential pre-requisites.

This section requires:

- a) information on LDC systems and structures that facilitate corporate responsibility, transparency, informed participation in decision-making and accountability to stakeholders;
- b) information on how the LDC aims to maintain and develop its organisational capacity as a critical component in the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan. Components of such a culture include: developing its staff's skills and knowledge base, and facilitating ongoing reflection on the development of the work including processes, achievements, challenges and progress towards the realisation of social inclusion outcomes.

The latter (facilitating ongoing reflection on the development of the work) requires systems that facilitate review, monitoring and evaluation of the work. Therefore, information is required on how monitoring and evaluation is incorporated into the organisation as a whole, and its sub-structures. Information on the systems that are used to support this work, and how they do so, should also be provided and may include the following: IRIS database, localised project management database system(s), participation in local research studies/evaluations etc. Please note that LDCs should outline who has overall responsibility within the organization for ensuring that monitoring related information in relation to actions is being collected, recorded and entered into IRIS or securely maintained for future collection/ analysis.

In completing this section the LDC should demonstrate with regard to a) that it has a strategy in place for organisational development over the lifetime of the Plan and b) its structures and decision-making processes reflect the principles of the programme and good governance.

5.1 GOVERNANCE INFORMATION ABOUT THE ORGANISATION

Information in relation to governance should be provided under the headings listed below and refers to the organisation as a whole.

i) How is the Board informed and involved in key decision-making in relation to:

- financial management
- human resources management
- strategic review and planning?
- Coverage of areas formerly served by CDPs?

ii) Please use the following template to outline the Board sub-structures, their role and reporting mechanisms.

| Name of Board sub-structure/ committee and Chair | Role | Reporting Mechanisms to the Board and to representative parent organisations |
|---|------|--|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

iii) Please briefly describe your plans for reviewing and strengthening these procedures over the lifetime of the Plan.

iv) Please describe the ongoing mechanisms you have in place for consulting with and receiving feedback from the local communities and the beneficiary groups of the programme. Please pay particular attention to Goal 4 outcomes in formulating responses to this section.

5.2 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Please describe your overall plan and the various elements of it that will contribute to your organisation being a 'learning organisation' with a commitment to organisational development over the next three years. When outlining your plan please make reference to the anticipated outcomes associated with each action area described.

Examples of actions in this area might include:

- Devise, deliver and evaluate a training plan for staff development.
- Create structures or mechanisms and ongoing opportunities for staff and Board members to reflect on the strategic learning deriving from the work with the view of enabling the 'whole organisation' to understand and be informed about social inclusion issues.
- Establish procedures to improve stakeholder consultation and 'customer' satisfaction.

Examples of expected outcomes might include:

- Improved levels of staff and volunteer retention
- Development of enhanced skills and competencies.
- Enhanced levels of Board participation in the overall work of the organisation
- Improved levels of Board involvement in the strategic management of the organisation
- Increased levels of user satisfaction with the supports and services of the organisation.

SECTION SIX - STRATEGIC LINKAGES WITH OTHER PROGRAMMES/AGENCIES

This section of the template is concerned with demonstrating:

- a) how the strategic plan is itself strategically aligned with other work or programmes that also address social exclusion;
- b) the value added contribution of the LCDP: and
- c) how the plan meets key national policy priorities

This section requires information on the linkages between the strategic plan and other programmes either delivered by the organisation or with which the organisation collaborates. In completing this section the LDC should demonstrate how non-LCDP programmes delivered by the organisation assist the LDC in realising its local objective statements and expected outcomes.

6.1 STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER SOCIAL INCLUSION WORK

Please list and describe how other programmes - Pobal and non Pobal - operated by you contribute to the social inclusion objectives and anticipated outcomes of your LCDP strategic plan.

6.2 STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL POLICY PRIORITIES

Please indicate

- how the plan meets the horizontal priorities of the National Development Plan, where applicable.
- How the plan contributes to NAPS Inclusion targets