

Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme 2018-2023 (SICAP)

LDC Annual Progress Report 2022

LOT – Choose an item.



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The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2023 is co-funded by the Government of Ireland, through the Department of Rural and Community Development, and the European Union.

Purpose of the 2022 Annual Progress Report

The purpose of the 2022 Annual Progress Report is to capture the role that SICAP played in responding to the needs of SICAP target groups during the year. In doing so, this report will capture beneficiaries' needs in your Lot in 2022, the approaches used by the programme to respond to these needs, alongside challenges faced and lessons learned during the year. Please include examples to support your answers, where possible.

There is a dedicated section within this year's Annual Progress Report where you can outline the details of the supports that you have provided to the Ukrainian arrivals in your Lot.

There is also a dedicated section to allow you to describe your work in responding to your chosen Lot priority groups within the National Programme Priorities.

Space is also provided for you to reflect on the supports provided by DRCD and/or Pobal in 2022, as well as to outline the types of supports you would like to receive in 2023.

Report size guide: 8-11 pages, excluding Annex 1. A page number guide is provided for each question. This can be adapted slightly to suit your reporting needs.

Two-three photographs can be included (optional), with the understanding that relevant permissions have been received and captions describing the photographs are provided. We would strongly encourage you to include photos and/or links to short videos if possible.

1. Please describe the needs of SICAP beneficiaries in 2022 and, where applicable, your responses to these needs. (3-5 pages)

Guidance: Please consider individuals, LCGs, SEs, children and families, non-caseload individuals, and complete the below table. **Please do not include details on Ukrainians in this section** as there is a dedicated Ukrainian section within this report. The following questions may be useful to reflect on:

- What types of supports did beneficiaries require during the year? What did these supports look like? Please consider **individuals, LCGs, SEs, children and families, and non-caseload individuals**, when providing your answer.
- Please bear in mind the programme’s horizontal principles (i.e., promoting an equality framework, applying community development approaches, and developing collaborative approaches) when providing your answer.

Beneficiary type	Identified needs in 2022	LDC Responses to needs
<p>Individuals</p>	<p>As individuals and communities emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for employment services and industry specific training has increased significantly in 2022 in line with the economic labour market demands of enterprises across most sectors. While the numbers in employment increased overall since the start of the year, there remains a significant cohort of long-term unemployed clients that have not gained employment and are presenting with complex issues emanating from social isolation, poor health, rising cost of living, homelessness, and the other fall out effects of the pandemic. These issues have compounded the situation for those seeking employment with low levels of educational attainment, poor digital literacy, and intergenerational unemployment. Intensifying unemployment blackspots which previously persisted in the catchment area prior to the pandemic.</p> <p>There has been increased numbers of refugees in our catchment area seeking employment support.</p> <p>Similar to 2021 DNP staff noted a need for supports for individuals in relation to mental and physical health. DNPs assessment of individual need was based on ongoing feedback from clients, day to day observation of difficulties facing our target groups and insights from our participation on local networks.</p>	<p>The return to face-to-face support allowed frontline staff to assess the levels of overall needs of the clients and respond appropriately. Additionally, service users with no access to IT equipment or little or no e-skills have been able to attend in person for relevant training courses. a range of individual, and group guidance and training support designed to address the needs of the long-term unemployed, those closer to employment, and those of working age who fall outside the current activation process (including disadvantaged women, people with disabilities and the underemployed). Were designed and developed to address these needs. Referrals both from and to SICAP programmes ensured DNP clients were supported along a continuum of interventions addressing their social, personal and employability needs.</p> <p>DNP’s Employment Engagement officer is currently supporting 10 individuals with the support of the DNP’s Refugee Support Worker to produce a CV, cover letter, to develop employability skills and to secure employment.</p> <p>DNP strive to address the mental health challenges facing clients across our catchment through the provision of low threshold, quality of life enhancement programmes. It is hoped that by participating in wellbeing activities, it will assist this vulnerable group manage their complex personal and domestic environments. In 2021 over 250 participants participated in our individual programmes and over 500 participated in our non-caseload programmes and workshops</p>

<p>Local Community Groups</p>	<p>LCGs presented need in relation to Project Management, developing funding applications, reporting, networking and volunteer recruitment. Groups at pre-development stage required supports in terms of clear identification of aims and objectives, running effective meetings, recruitment, and induction of committee members. More well-established groups were concerned about meeting the requirements of the Charity Regulatory Authority (CRA). Even those who were not registered as charities appreciated the standards of best practice required by the CRA and were eager to attain these standards themselves.</p> <p>LCGs with paid staff presented need for training in supervision skills and in HR.</p> <p>Work with asylum seekers also became a core area of work (International Protection Applicants) with specific needs in relation to English Language support and Employment and Education Access supports. DNP identified a need for supports for LCGs to enable their effective engagement with asylum seekers.</p>	<p>In response to needs presenting, DNP delivered group training on a wide range of topics: Project Management, Grant Writing, Successful Supervision, HR (5 modules), Minute Taking, Volunteer Recruitment and Management (in collaboration with the Dublin Volunteer Centre) Best practice in Intercultural Work, Administration and Reporting, Time Management, Group Promotion (making an effective pitch), social media, Minute Taking, Advocacy and the Requirements of the Charity Regulator. In addition to group training DNP provided mentoring in relation to presentation skills, development of LCG constitutions and standing orders, role descriptions for officers and best practice in record keeping and financial procedures. This work is particularly important for LCGs that are in the process of formation. The Community Development Team also provided mentoring in relation to grant writing and optimal use of social media.</p> <p>Opportunities for networking which facilitated sharing of information and peer learning were provided through the Dublin Northwest Community Workers Network and the DNP Social Inclusion Network. The Community Workers Network met on 3 occasions during 2022 with strong attendance from LCGs, community organisations and statutory agencies. The networking aspect is complimented by presentations by member groups i.e., inputs from Victim Support at Court, the Central Remedial Clinic, CDETB, HSE, Ballymun Community Law Centre and DNP Social Prescribing. In order to support LCGs in their engagement with asylum seekers and migrants DNP collaborated with Partners Training for Transformation on delivery of a 2-training programme exploring best practice in intercultural work. This provided an invaluable opportunity for reflection and development of awareness at an individual and organisational level. Networking was also facilitated through the DNP Social Inclusion Network which met on 3 occasions during 2022. This forum provides an opportunity for sharing best practice in relation to social inclusion work. ‘Celebrating Community Development in Dublin Northwest’, a community development networking event took place on September 28th. The Lord Mayor of Dublin Caroline Conroy opened this event. Minister Joe O’Brien, Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development launched the DNP video ‘Celebrating Community Development in Dublin Northwest’ Video link. Seven LCGs and two Social Enterprises featured in</p>
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		<p>this video which provided an overview of the work done, challenges faced during the pandemic and resilience in overcoming these challenges.</p>
<p>Social Enterprises</p>	<p>Social enterprises presented with a need in relation to one-to-one mentoring and group training.</p> <p>Support with Board member roles and business growth</p> <p>Assistance with strategic business growth</p> <p>Assistance with online promotion and social media</p>	<p>The SICAP Social Enterprise Coordinator met with each social enterprise to establish their need and to create a bespoke support plan which included mentor supports. Mentoring supports were provided under two funding streams: SICAP and the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) funded consortium of Dublin-based Local Development Companies (LDC):Social Enterprise Communities of Practice (SECOP)The SECOP consortium was formed in 2019 in response to a mentor and training funding call from the DRCD.</p> <p>In 2022 DNP continued its collaboration with six other LDC's in delivering a series of mentoring and training events for social enterprises in Dublin city. The members of this consortium are Ballyfermot Chapelizoid Partnership, Northside Partnership, South Dublin City Partnership, Empower, Inner City Enterprise, Fingal Leader and the Dublin Northwest Partnership. The SECOP programme provided training workshops aimed at existing social enterprises and was delivered by the Entrepreneurs Academy which was launched in quarter one..</p> <p>Hair Together is a recently established and rapidly growing social enterprise that requested support from DNP in the form of mentoring. The areas that this business requested support with were board member roles, time management, packaging of programmes for replication, and support with press releases and public speaking. Mentoring was provided initially through the SECOP consortium, with additional mentor support provided under SICAP in quarter 3.</p> <p>Little Fitness, a Ballymun-based social enterprise, approached DNP seeking mentoring in structured business growth strategies and sales lead generation. A suitably experienced mentor was assigned and through a series of one-to-one meetings, this business was provided with a framework for growth.</p> <p>Finglas Childcare is a Finglas based social enterprise which requested support with their website and social media presence. A mentor was assigned through the SECOP consortium to update their online presence and to provided one-to-one social media training.</p>

	<p>Support to promote a social enterprise online.</p> <p>Human resources assistance</p> <p>Conducting a feasibility study</p> <p>Support to establish business sustainability.</p> <p>Introduction to social enterprise for young people</p> <p>Promotion of the social enterprise business model</p>	<p>Innovate Dublin approached DNP seeking support in developing a short promotional video. Through the SECOP consortium a videographer was assigned, and a short promotional video was produced.</p> <p>Eco Mattress requested support with their internal Human Resources processes. A mentor was assigned to assist under SICAP.</p> <p>Responding to a local interest, Crosscare Finglas requested assistance in exploring the feasibility of a managed stables in Finglas South. A SICAP funded mentor was assigned to assist the group in researching the costs, similar horse projects and the suitability of the proposed site.</p> <p>Finglas Community Playgroup Association sought supports in assessing the sustainability of their business. A mentor was assigned to conduct a review of the business and to provide advice on how to progress.</p> <p>Request from Cabra For Youth for a workshop on how social enterprises can address environmental issues. Support provided in the form of a bespoke one-day workshop for 9 young people delivered by the Social Enterprise Coordinator in quarter two of 2022.</p> <p>Through a successful application to the Department of Rural and Community Development's (DRCD) Awareness Raising Initiatives for Social Enterprises (ARISE) programme from the SECOP consortium, DNP offered publicity support to local social enterprises. Local social enterprises, namely: Little Fitness and Hair Together, were offered opportunities to take part in podcasts, newspaper, and radio interviews. A social media campaign in quarter 2 2022 promoted the social enterprise model by highlighting several existing social enterprises in Dublin. The ARISE programme concluded with the launch of a social enterprise resource website (https://socialenterprisedublin.ie/)</p>
<p>Children and families</p>	<p>Consistent with previous years therapeutic and transition supports from primary to secondary schools as well as supports during school holidays were the highest needs for children in 2022.</p>	<p>DNP through SICAP funding supported the delivery of programmes focused on therapeutic, transition and school closure supports to address these issues.</p>

	<p>A parallel theme emerged for frontline professionals on the Regional Educational Network who reported being over stretched due to staff shortage.</p>	<p>A successful mindfulness and meditation workshop was run to support professional selfcare. Feedback from participants was very positive. This is likely to be replicated in 2023.</p>
<p>Non-caseload individuals</p>	<p>Traveller men presented with need in relation to both mental and physical health and addiction.</p> <p>A local Area Based Childhood project- Young Ballymun presented a need for support in relation to opportunity for children to exercise in a safe environment and for children and parents to learn about the benefits of healthy exercise,</p>	<p>DNP collaborated with Pavee Point on delivery of a health and fitness programme for traveller men. Participation in an intensive physical training programme was complimented by participation in workshops with an emphasis on addiction and encouraging take up of cancer screening programmes. Relationships with addiction support services were strengthened and as a result some of the participants engaged in rehabilitation programmes. Thirty-six men participated.</p> <p>DNP worked in collaboration with Young Ballymun, local Area Based Childhood initiative to deliver a fitness programme for twenty-two children aged 4 to 12 years. The programme was delivered by a local Social Enterprise, Little Fitness. DNP is already providing mentoring supports to Little Fitness (see Social Enterprise Supports). This exercise programme for children complimented a parenting programme, also delivered by Young Ballymun.</p>

2. Please provide an overview of SICAP supports provided to the Ukrainian arrivals to your Lot. (1-2 pages)

Guidance: What types of supports did Ukrainians require during the year? What did these supports look like? What challenges or barriers have you experienced? What has helped you overcome these barriers/challenges?

DNP in collaboration with local partners organised three 'Welcoming' events for Ukrainian Refugees. The intention in organising these events was that of providing a welcoming environment for people who had experienced trauma and displacement to a different culture. These events were also identified as an opportunity to provide a safe, social space where representatives of LCGs, residents, sports organisations and statutory agencies could meet with refugees and develop awareness as to their needs. DNP collaborated with DCC (Dublin City Council) local business, the GAA, local youth services and the Ballymun Family Resource Centre (BCFRC). Transport was provided to and from venues, as well as food, music, and various forms of entertainment for children. Ukrainians living in local student accommodation attended these events in July and August. A day out was also organised for families to Tayto Park with transport, costs of entry and food covered. DNP services and supports as well as those of LCGs, statutory and community organisations were promoted at these events. These initial engagements with Ukrainian refugees were envisaged as opportunities for building trust as well as assessing need and disseminating information. However, the majority if not all these refugees were suddenly moved from this student accommodation in August. DNP followed up with phone calls and where possible linked refugees who had moved to other parts of Ireland into LDCs (Local Development Companies) in their areas. Lack of information on the location of Ukrainian Refugees has proved the most challenging aspects of this work. DNP continues to work with partner agencies to identify where Ukrainian families might be located. DNP has developed a collaborative working relationship with The Peter McVerry Trust and information regarding DNP services and supports has been translated into Ukrainian and Russian for dissemination. DNP also collaborated with the Peter McVerry Trust in provision of Christmas gifts to Ukrainian families.

DNP facilitated English language classes in collaboration with the BCFRC centre. Six local people volunteered weekly and over 200 students attended these classes. All students were provided with information on DNP services, including employment opportunities and educational opportunities. It became apparent that there were high levels of trauma anxiety and uncertainty among this cohort and people were not ready to engage in any substantial progression at this point.

Other collaboration with BCFRC included a summer programme for children which incorporated HSE funded Cool dudes healthy eating programme and an exercise programme. This proved very popular as most families were living in one room accommodation.

A cultural event was held in the AXIS theatre in Ballymun. The purpose was to bring the local community together with new communities to build relationships and to bring joy to families dealing with war, trauma, and turmoil in their lives. It comprised an evening to celebrate and welcome new communities to the Dublin Northwest area. The evening consisted of Irish dance, music, and poetry.

1. Please briefly describe the cross-programme, integrated approach that SICAP utilised during 2022 to respond to the needs of SICAP target groups. (half a page)

Guidance: How did SICAP work alongside other programmes during the year? What did this involve, what role did SICAP take and how did it contribute to the overall goal of SICAP?

DNP's approach to work is holistic in nature and the aim is to provide 'Wrap around' supports to individuals and to LCGs. The service user is central to this approach. DNP offers a wide range of supports and has staff from diverse backgrounds with a broad range of skills and experience. This along with complementary funding streams and a strong commitment to integrated practice ensures effective needs assessment and referral across programmes when appropriate. Supports range from group training, mentoring, networking opportunities, and grants for LCGs and Social Enterprises alongside Pre-Employment Supports, Personal Development and Wellness, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), IT training, Education access, Job Search and Employability enhancement programmes and Enterprise training for individuals. These SICAP supports are complemented by HSE-funded supports i.e., healthy eating/cookery programmes, social prescribing and by the DSP (Department of Social Protection) LAES (Local Area

Employment Services) mediation supports and Tús programme. In 2022 DNP was selected for an additional funding stream, The Empowering Communities Programme (ECP)

The DNP Lifelong Learning Hub is funded through the PATH (Programme for Access to Higher Education) funding stream from the HEA and DCU Centre for Education Disadvantage to promote teaching as a profession in the catchment for direct progression and mature students. 2022 The SICAP funded Education Programme Coordinator worked closely with the Hub Coordinator to establish initial links in the community and work collaboratively on all aspects of promotion of further and higher education in the community, including conducting focus groups and support evenings for those new to college.

In 2022 DNP's cross programme work was strengthened e.g., an International Protection asylum seeker attended community social events and engaged with SICAP staff. Relationships of trust were developed, and assessment indicated a need for health-related supports. As a result, she was referred to the DNP Social Prescriber (HSE funded) who supported her to access appropriate services. She also became a volunteer with an LCG working in a community garden.

Within SICAP there was also emphasis on integration, holistic assessment of need and referral across Goals 1 and 2. As part of overall assessment SICAP staff providing capacity building supports to a local men's shed identified a need for additional supports. As a result of needs assessment this LCG were referred for Goal 2 supports and are currently engaging in a Tai Chi class. Similarly, an LCG working with older women was referred for Goal 2 supports, and members are engaging in a Christmas Craft programme as well as a Health Food Made Easy programme.

HSE funding for the Social Prescribing programme has also complemented SICAP provision. Older and vulnerable people participating in LCGs have been provided with information about Social Prescribing and have availed of this service. Similarly, SICAP staff working with older people have been the initial point of contact and having identified specific needs have been able to refer on vulnerable older people to the DNP Community Garden Team which is funded through the DSP Tús programme. Initial consultation by ECP funded staff has highlighted a need for social engagement for older people in the Cabra West ED (Electoral Districts). It is anticipated that in 2023 there will be strong collaboration between SICAP, ECP and DSP (Tús) funded programmes in relation to meeting the needs of older people.

DNP's work with IPAS (International Protection Accommodation Service) asylum seekers in 2022 has required strong integrated practice particularly in relation to Employment and training opportunities. This has required close collaboration across funding streams with employability enhancement supports being provided through SICAP but also from DSP funded LAES guidance staff.

Working in collaboration with six Dublin based LDC's, DNP offered additional mentor and training supports to SICAP social enterprises based in the lot through the SECOP consortium. Through this consortium, social enterprises were offered access to a broader range of mentor supports through the pooling of each LDC's mentor panels as well as being offered opportunities to network with other Dublin based social entrepreneurs at training events.

3. What type of work did LCGs and SEs (supported by SICAP in 2022) undertake in the community in response to the needs of SICAP target groups? Please provide one or two examples. (half a page)

Guidance: Please clearly indicate if the examples relate to an LCG or a SE.

Thirty-three grants were awarded to LCGs to support implementation of social inclusion actions. These grants supported a wide range of actions e.g. a crafts programme for children with special needs to enable development of motor skills, sensory equipment for a childcare facility for children on the spectrum, outdoor equipment for people in a senior citizens housing complex lacking an indoor communal area, support for a group working with asylum seekers in direct provision to enable them to transport asylum seekers to a local weekly park run, support for a community law centre to develop a video explaining the role of the Community Mediation service and support for a local University of the Third Age group to produce a publication of their stories capturing valuable memories. All these actions were aimed at target groups vulnerable to social exclusion and focussed on promoting inclusion and equality by providing supports which addressed specific aspects of disadvantage. With reference to an equality focus an LCG comprised of disabled people advocating on the rights and needs of disabled people received grant aid to develop promotional material to raise their profile and to attract new members. In addition to grant aid a DNP staff member also mentored this group in relation to enhancing use of social media. A group at the pre-development stage also approached DNP

seeking support with formation. This group envisages a national remit focussing on advocating for change in legislation relating to workplace harassment and bullying. This group has a strong equality focus and emphasis on the rights of members of the labour force who are migrants or asylum seekers. There has also been a trend with women's groups emerging as part of a national movement of 'Women's Sheds' but also locally based women's groups. This is a recent development as groups with a focus on gender have not been a feature in the catchment area for some time.

Eco mattress is a local social enterprise which creates Tús positions for the long term unemployed. This social enterprise also supports those emerging from the prison system through employment created through its Community Services Programme.

Little Fitness is a Ballymun based social enterprise that works with children living in direct provision via learning through play workshops. These workshops are run in collaboration with local family resource centres and are designed to provide the parents of the attending children an opportunity to socialise and engage with the staff in the centres.

4. Please provide a brief update on your progress with your Lot Priority groups which you selected in 2021 as part of the mid-programme review. (1 page)

Guidance: Please tell us the agreed priority groups that you are working with and describe the challenges and the successes that you have with this work in 2022

DNP identified older people and people vulnerable to isolation, youth mental health and people who are long term unemployed as Lot Priority groups at the 2021 mid-programme review.

While DNP had always worked with older people, the experience of COVID-19 highlighted the resilience but also the vulnerability of this target group. To deepen understanding of priority need for this cohort DNP conducted 4 focus groups in 2022. One of these focus groups was comprised of service providers whilst the other three were comprised of LCGs with older members. While focus group participants agreed that there were many services and supports available in Dublin Northwest for older people, they identified several barriers including fear of engaging in new activities, poor physical and/or mental health, fear of falling, low income, lack of transport and poor motivation. However, an overarching challenge reported by focus group participants was that of lack of knowledge about supports and services available and how these could be accessed. Methods of disseminating information were identified as being problematic for those who lacked digital literacy. Information is disseminated through social media and many older people do not have the skills required to access information in this format. While there are several programmes available to address this issue e.g., those provided by Alone and Age Action, many older people do not have the motivation or capacity to engage with these supports and do not have sufficient resources to cover the costs of internet access in their homes. A need was identified for development of alternative approaches to information dissemination which would result in enhanced accessibility for older people. A need for coordination and organisation of information on services was highlighted. With information coming from a wide range of sources statutory, voluntary and community, the nature and relevance of the service to the individual can be unclear. A central coordinating role was identified as important if accessibility was to be improve. In response to needs identified DNP appointed a dedicated Older Person's Support Officer in the final quarter of 2022. This worker is in the process of carrying out a mapping exercise of available services and supports. While engaging with LCGs, responses are being developed e.g., LCGs working with or comprised of older people have identified a need for legal information on making wills, power of attorney and grants. The DNP Older Persons Support Officer is developing a response to these needs in collaboration with a local community law centre, the CIC and MABs.

In response to the needs of young people in relation to mental health, DNP identified a need for support for frontline youth services staff as an area of concern. Many are working with young people who have complex needs and in this context self-awareness and recognition of the need for self-care is key to positive mental health and ability to sustain commitment. In recognition of this DNP in collaboration with Jigsaw delivered training focussing on the role of 'One Good Adult' in the lives of young people and the importance of self-care for this one good adult. Training was complemented by grants for proposals which aimed to strengthen youth mental health and resilience. One such programme focussed on decision making skills with a particular focus on decision making in relation to substance use while others focussed on promoting positive mental health through sport and art. Consultation with youth service

staff in the final quarter of 2022 has also highlighted the need for creative responses to bullying and the need to resource youth work staff so that they address this issue through the medium of video. Video has been identified as an effective way of engaging young people on issues which are sensitive and may evoke initial resistance.

While the numbers in employment increased overall since the start of the year, there remains a significant cohort of long-term unemployed clients that have not gained employment and are presenting with complex issues emanating from social isolation, poor health, rising cost of living, homelessness, and the other fall out effects of the pandemic. These issues have compounded the situation for those seeking employment with low levels of educational attainment, poor digital literacy, and intergenerational unemployment. This has led to intensifying unemployment blackspots which previously persisted in the catchment area prior to the pandemic. Referrals both from and to SICAP programmes ensured DNP clients were supported along a continuum of interventions addressing their social, personal and employability needs.

The return to face-to-face support allowed frontline staff to assess the levels of overall needs of the clients and respond appropriately. Additionally, service users with no access to IT equipment or little or no e-skills have been able to attend in person for relevant training courses. DNP continue to provide a range of individual, and group guidance and training supports designed to address the needs of the long-term unemployed, and has designed and developed a number of labour market activation and digital literacy programmes to address these needs

Additional supports provided to this cohort include a biweekly CV review drop-in service, for individuals needing additional one to one support around CV building skills. Regular manual handling training is also provided for individuals, this has emerged as one of the gaps in training needs in 2022 and will continue into 2023.

5. Please outline the challenges faced and lessons learned in relation to the overall delivery of SICAP during 2022. Were you able to overcome any of the challenges? If so, please describe. (half a page - 1 page)

A need to strengthen governance and succession planning continue to present as challenges in relation to LCGS (Local Community Groups). Many have been established for several years with leadership remaining the same over many years. While this ensures rich experience, some LCGs would benefit from this aspect being complimented by innovative ideas and additional skills. In many situations new members are recruited on boards based on lived experience of issues and/or residency in a particular community. Recruitment is not informed by regular skills audits, and this can result in skills being absent e.g., financial and HR skills. While in some cases budgets allow for engaging experts where needed, in others this is not the case. There may also be a lack of awareness as to requisite skills and gaps. Similarly, there can be inadequate succession and contingency planning. DNP provides intensive mentoring support to LCGs in relation to governance and this has been effective in some cases in raising awareness as to areas of need. There have however been challenges for mentors in terms of LCG capacity to take on board recommendations and work with the assigned mentor over a period. Low educational attainment, lack of previous experience and a culture with strong emphasis on front line service delivery and activity often at the expense of medium- and long-term planning have proved challenging. Mentor engagement has been highly effective for new groups starting out who have given priority to areas such as agreeing a constitution and standing orders, deciding on recruitment strategies, and developing skills in recording and reporting. This type of work takes time but in 2022 is proving effective and rewarding for the LCGS involved and the mentor.

As outlined earlier DNP encountered significant difficulty in identifying and reaching Ukrainian Refugees. In cases where Ukrainian refugees were accessible engagement was of a short-term nature due to relocation to alternative accommodation. In some cases, while these refugees were identified as residing in a specific location it proved impossible to make contact due to restricted access policies in accommodation centres sometimes due to understandable concerns about safety of residents. DNP intends to continue to work closely with relevant NGOs to improve this situation in early 2023.

6. Please describe an approach or project that worked well in 2022 that you think would be useful to share with other SICAP implementers. (half a page)

The DNP Lifelong Learning Hub is funded through the PATH (Programme for Access to Higher Education) funding stream from the HEA and DCU Centre for Education Disadvantage to promote teaching as a profession in the catchment for direct progression and mature students. 2022 has been a really successful start with six local young people starting their studies to become teachers; three in the Bachelor of Primary Education, one in Bachelor of Post Primary Education and two starting Bachelor of Arts degrees as a pathway to teaching.

The Lifelong Learning Hub offered a participant centred approach and does not exclude students who were not thinking of a career in teaching. The SICAP funded Education Programme Coordinator worked closely with the Hub Coordinator to establish initial links in the community. They continually fed information and referrals to each other and now work collaboratively on all aspects of promotion of further and higher education in the community, including conducting focus groups and support evenings for those new to college. The leveraging of these activities has also increased the visibility of DNP 's other services and provided opportunities to have a wider reach.

What has happened as a result of the hub is that DNP have been able to identify and work directly with a significant cohort of young people who are interested in progressing into higher education and having the hub has enabled DNP to support young people (and mature students) outside of the school setting. Once students are engaged, the SICAP funded Education Programme Coordinator can build on this relationship and help with information about other supports e.g. financial, apprenticeships, linking with guidance following school. Talks are delivered to students and parents on financial supports in a less formal setting than school with significant improvement in parent engagement. During these talks parents (some for the first time) realise the financial feasibility of college and each time people are discovered who are unaware of (yet eligible for) SUSI, lifting a potential financial burden.

DNP are keen to develop this support and build activities into the SICAP programme for 2023. This project demonstrates how non SICAP funded activities create opportunities to engage and develop relationships and build support in community settings.

7. Please reflect on the programme supports that DRCD and/or Pobal provided to LDCs in 2022. Were they helpful? Would you recommend any changes in approach or content? (quarter of a page)

Guidance: Please consider the SICAP thematic workshops, DTT events, annual engagement meeting, guidance provided around programme flexibility etc.

The annual engagement meeting was useful with an openness from Pobal staff to hearing concerns and offering guidance where appropriate. Pobal staff were very understanding of challenges being faced. Individual LDC meetings offered opportunity for more in depth discussion on challenges. Support provided by the Pobal Development Officer proved invaluable throughout the year. Feedback in relation to Iris training for Super Users has been extremely positive. Similarly support from Pobal staff in relation to Iris issues has proved extremely valuable. Iris support staff respond in a timely manner and have been able to resolve issues as they present.

9 Please suggest potential programme supports that DRCD and/or Pobal could deliver to LDCs in 2023, including programme supports that could assist with working with Ukrainians and/or the programme priorities. (quarter of a page)

Guidance: This could involve technical, or programme supports. Please be specific in terms of the topics / areas of focus and the preferred method of delivery e.g., online learning workshops, capacity building webinars etc.

An area of need for DNP would be in relation to support with reaching Ukrainian Refugees. Lack of accessibility is a major obstacle to progressing work with this target group and ensuring they benefit from available resources and supports. Indications in 2022 in Dublin Northwest suggest that this is an area requiring higher level involvement and development of processes between relevant government departments which alleviate these barriers and support collaboration between the various parties involved. This is also an issue for access to International Protection applicants. With understandably elevated levels of security in local hotels it can be difficult to promote DNP services and to develop a rapport with residents in these hotels. Collaboration between DRCD and IPAS might be a way of overcoming the challenges encountered in 2022. In terms of supports required for IPAS asylum seekers, most requests have been for English language supports and specific employment related training e.g., forklift, manual handling etc.

While many attend SICAP training focusing on enhancing general employability e.g., CV and interview preparation, the absence of a ring-fenced budget for specific training is proving to be a significant barrier to progression.

Annex 1 – Updates to the IRIS database

Please confirm that you have completed the following end-of-year requirements:

Yes	A narrative for each of the 2022 Actions has been input in the Update on Progress field under the End of Year report section of the action record. The <i>Action Progress Report</i> can be generated to view the updates for each action.
Yes	2022 financial and beneficiary data input is complete.
Yes	2022 data quality issues identified on system dashboards and views have been rectified.
Yes	Potential duplicate records have been reviewed and deactivated if appropriate.
Yes	2022 data follow-up has been carried out, as appropriate (e.g., LLL activity outcomes, still in employment/self-employment).
Yes	ESF exit data has been recorded for Individuals who are no longer engaged with SICAP, in particular those who have not received any interventions in 2022.
Yes	ESF 6-month follow-up has been recorded for Individuals who exited SICAP up to end May 2022.
Yes	LDC contact information and staff member listing are up to date.
Yes	2022 End of Year Financial and Monitoring report (including the signed costs charged report, Lot Summary Report and goal outcome reports) has been uploaded to IRIS.