

5. OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

5.1. *The Cluster Concept*

The objectives, strategies and concepts proposed under the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 seek to build on the progress achieved and the successful strategies and competencies developed and implemented under successive LEADER programmes in the period 1991-2008. In essence, the development strategy of the West Cork Development Partnership seeks to leverage optimal competitive advantage for the region through the development of high quality goods and services reflecting local distinctiveness, tradition and innovation. A comprehensive cluster model is presented as a natural progression and enhancement of previously successful development strategies, the core objective of which is to achieve and sustain regional competitiveness and community vibrancy. The capacity of the West Cork region to achieve such competitiveness will be determined by the productivity with which the cluster employs and develops its aggregate human, capital and natural resources, both in terms of its value (uniqueness, quality, etc) and its efficiency. The cluster model is predicated on the move from a factor driven local economy with low value/cost inputs to a unique value, innovation driven local economy. For the purposes of definition, the cluster concept in West Cork is viewed as a continuing process of successive upgrading, in which the business environment evolves to support and encourage increasingly sophisticated ways of competing across a variety of mutually supportive economic sectors. It does not rely on a mere agglomeration or on collective incidences of sectoral development activity but requires a specific geographic concentration of interconnected enterprises and sectors, specialised suppliers and related industries, service providers, sophisticated local consumers and a strong development, educational and institutional framework linked by commonalities and complementarities. Furthermore, a central tenet of the West Cork cluster strategy is as a knowledge generating process based on co-operative and competitive relationships between enterprises in the region. In and of itself this requires a broadening and deepening of the scope and sophistication of the key local economic sectors to encompass more advanced activities.

The core principles of the West Cork cluster model are as follows:

- Use of strong local resources in agriculture, marine, food, tourism, craft and services as nodes for cluster development.
- Leverage all existing commercial and non-commercial assets (including social & environmental capital) in an integrated development strategy.
- Capitalise on established local proficiencies, competencies, networks and innovation capabilities.
- Strengthen inter-company and inter-sectoral co-operation in R&D, production and marketing.
- Emphasise cross-industry linkages and complementarities in developing market access.
- Embed and diffuse best practice initiatives and skills training.
- Facilitate productive and focused dialogue between public and private sectors.
- Re-focus locally relevant development strategies/institutions for cluster development and support.
- Improve the business environment through joint identification and reduction of barriers to productivity growth.
- Adapt and refine vocational training to target the development of specific local know-how, efficiency and competence.

The proposed cluster model, its components, competencies, synergies and dependencies is outlined in Figure 5.1:

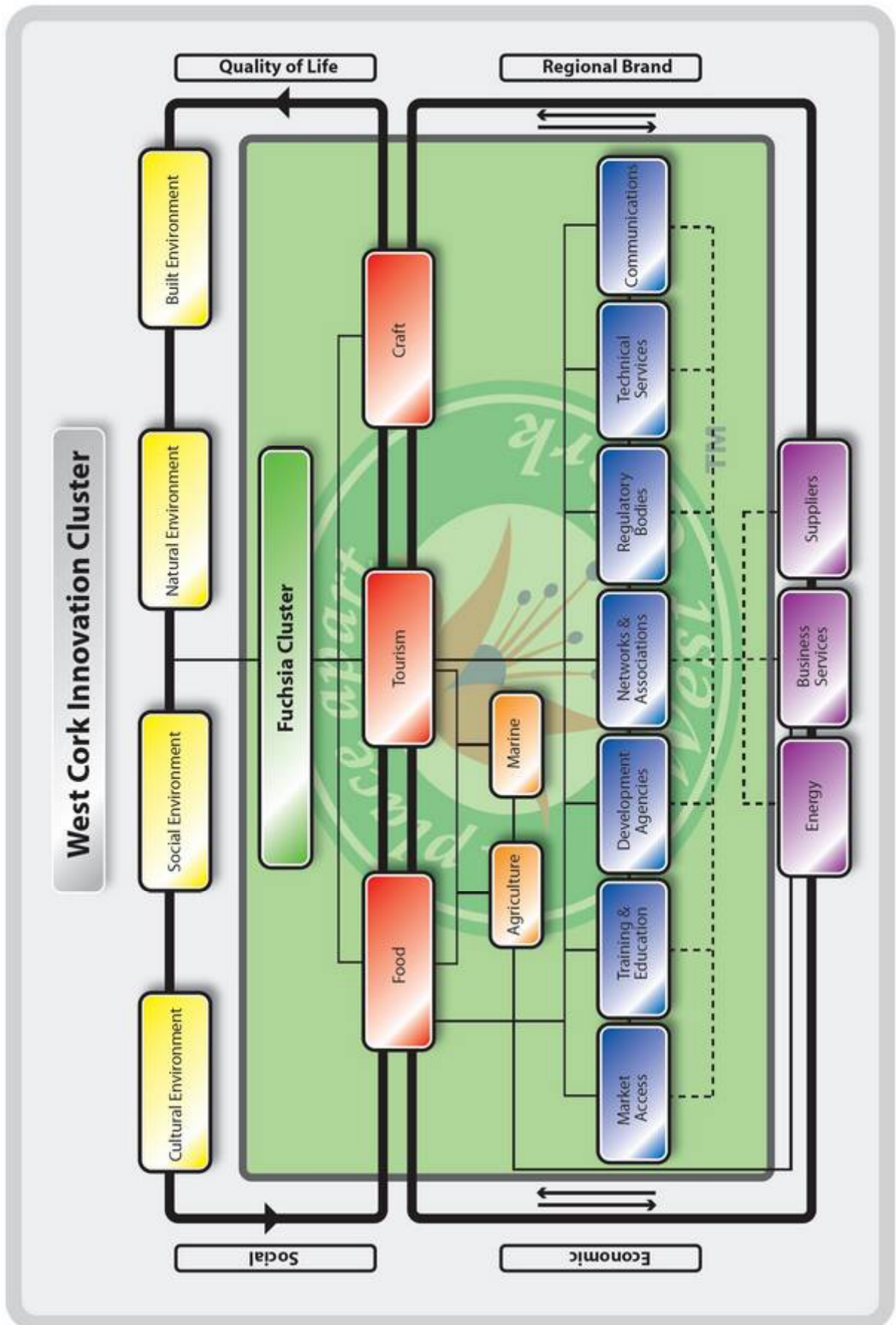


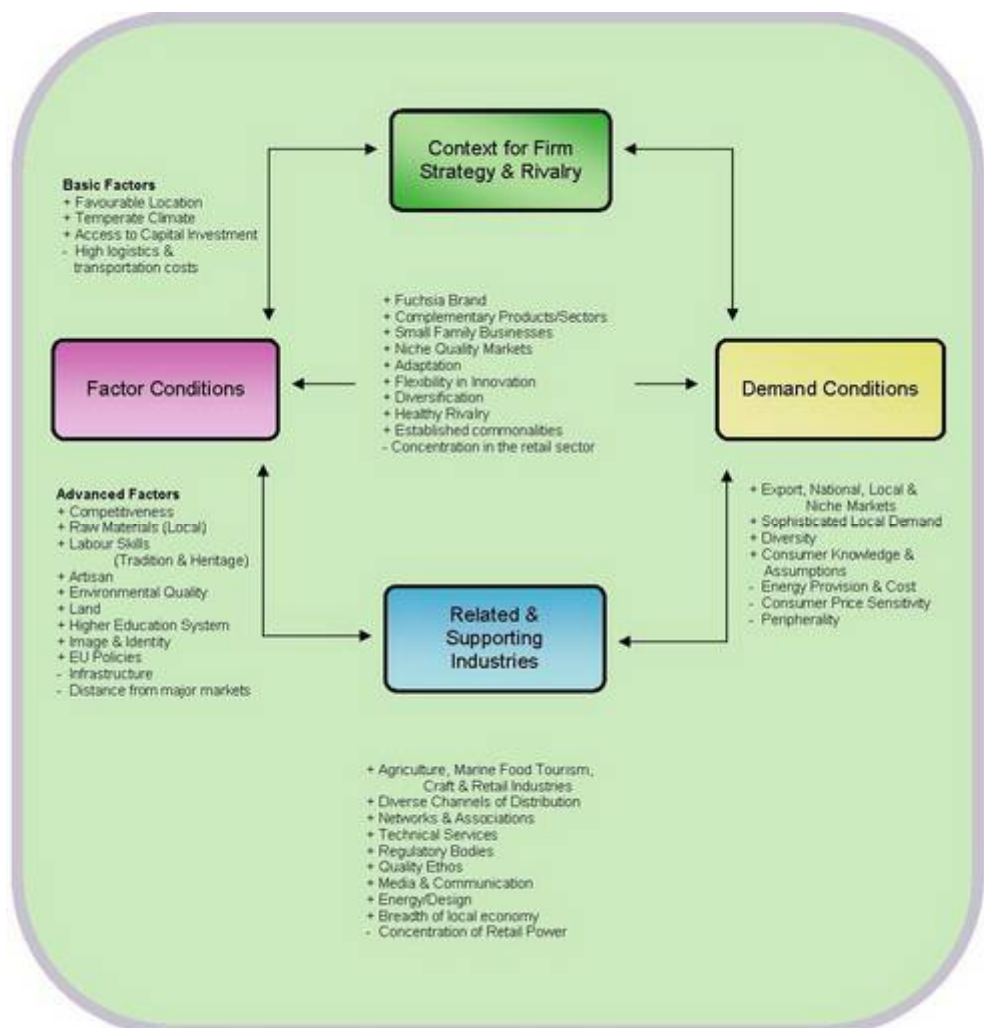
Figure 5.1: West Cork Innovation Cluster

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The West Cork cluster concept should be viewed as a system of interconnected sectors, firms and institutions, the whole of which is greater than the sum of its parts. In a rural development context, it represents a new and complementary way of understanding a local economy, organising and supporting development and establishing policy and supports. The progression towards a formal cluster model is designed to reflect the many possible synergies and dependencies between a number of key local economic sectors and activities, all of which have the capacity for LEADER programme support. Considerable interactions already exist between the sectors and formal development agencies as well as with informal networks and associations. A central objective of the cluster model will be to further reinforce and develop these inter-relationships particularly in terms of building greater expertise and knowledge capacity within the West Cork region through a series of formal strategic alliances and partnerships. A key challenge in doing so will be to broaden the scope of development activity from production and marketing within interdependent economic sectors and consider how capacity and competence can be developed in ancillary knowledge based training and skills, technical, regulatory, marketing and business services in order to re-balance local enterprise activity. In this regard, the West Cork Development Partnership will fulfil the role of Institution for Collaboration (IFC) and anchor the cluster model.

It is instructive to use the concept of Porter's Diamond Model, which cites the four determinants of competitive advantage, to explain the rationale for a cluster concept for West Cork. A cluster competitive analysis for West Cork is set out in Figure 5.2:

Figure 5.2: Cluster Competitive Analysis – West Cork



5.2. *The Fuchsia Brand*

An invaluable instrument in supporting the West Cork Development Partnership to anchor and advance the cluster strategy concept and in assisting the region in achieving competitive advantage is the West Cork Fuchsia Brand. The presence of such a business development network facilitating integrated and co-ordinated relations and linkages is fundamental to the proposed cluster model. Indeed it is evident that the Fuchsia Brand, its scope, activities and impacts currently encapsulates many critical elements of a defined cluster model.

The principal objectives of the Fuchsia Brand initiative are to:

- Develop a branded identity for local goods and services reflecting distinctive regional origins and product quality.
- Create a critical mass of growth, collaboration, competition and opportunities for investment and knowledge sharing.
- Develop high quality goods and services, using local natural resources, to satisfy specific market needs.
- Integrate the development and marketing of complementary economic sectors.
- Achieve greater degrees of collective action by the public and private sector in local development.
- Harness the distinctive image and identity of the region to aid local competitive advantage.
- Promote the region with emphasis on the unique environmental, cultural and heritage resources of the region.

Since its commercial launch in 1998 (following four years of planning), the development and marketing of the brand has been a prime component of the LEADER rural development strategy in West Cork. As such, it represents a comprehensive integrated development strategy coalescing enterprise, environmental and cultural activities within a holistic, multi-faceted and multi disciplinary development strategy. Its strong strategic focus has resulted in the creation of a prime infrastructure and support system which is delivering exceptional benefits to the accredited brand enterprises in the food, tourism, craft and ancillary sectors (agriculture, marine, retail, services, etc) as well as to the West Cork region in general. Such benefits include enhanced consumer recognition of a distinctive regional proposition within local and non-local markets, significant new enterprise development, sectoral diversification, improved production processes and practices, access to markets, increased output and capacity, development of new products, services and markets, substantial group synergies, environmental enhancements, networking, as well as increased turnover, profitability and employment. Embedded as it is within the region, the Fuchsia Brand also reflects and captures significant elements of local social capital and has been of considerable importance in the development, protection and promotion of prime local, non-financial assets such as environment, culture, community and identity. Significant resources have been deployed in defining and developing these assets as specific brand values underpinning the initiative.

Details on the nature, scale and scope of the Fuchsia Brand and its 160 accredited enterprises can be found at www.fuchsiabrands.com. Furthermore, the evolution and development of the Fuchsia Brand since 1994 is documented in detail in Appendix 8. This also contains substantial third party research attesting to its impact and economic value with particular emphasis on its role in stimulating enterprise activity, innovation, coherent marketing and networking; each of which substantiates the pivotal role of the Fuchsia Brand in anchoring a cluster model. In 2007, comprehensive research published by UCC to determine the economic value of the Fuchsia Brand concluded that the brand, its associated activities and accredited enterprises generated €106m, of which €69m remained in the region generating an overall economic contribution of €89m for the West Cork economy in

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2005. This in turn supported 1,131 Full Time Equivalent's (FTE) locally. (Source: O'Reilly, Moloney/O'Connor, UCC/UCD, 2007).

Additional research undertaken to determine the role, function and value of the Fuchsia Brand for accredited enterprises and for the region conclude that:

“There is a high level of innovation activity amongst business located in the West Cork area - 95% are innovation active. This may be due to the fact that the West Cork LEADER programme has helped to establish a network of businesses in the region. Supporting this assumption, interaction has been identified as a significant source of innovation with the majority of businesses surveyed involved in some form of interaction for innovation. Results verify that the West Cork LEADER programme has a strong positive influence on the level of interaction with every agent, for both product and process innovation”

(Source: Power, Department of Economics, UCC, 2007)

“The Fuchsia Brand as a multi-sectoral, multi-product destination branding initiative reflects the wide and diverse range of products and services which make up the tourism destination product. The brand provides a vision and identity for the region, so that members emit a strong and consolidated message. The emphasis is on the “bigger picture”, on the competitiveness of the whole region and encourages individual enterprises to think beyond the competitiveness of their individual enterprises, i.e. to think about increasing the size of the pie and not just the size of their slice of the existing pie”

(Source: Woods, National Centre for Tourism Policy Studies, University of Limerick, 2005)

Aside from its direct contribution to its component sectors, the development strategy employed in creating the Fuchsia Brand initiative has also been of significance in stimulating inward investment and ICT sector investment through the development of the West Cork Technology Park. The success of this project (as well as that of the Fuchsia Brand itself), their critical economic and strategic value as well as the integrated development approach adopted, clearly demonstrates the hypothesis that a region's distinctive character, strong regional profile and resource base can be used to significant effect in broadening the economic base and in achieving competitive advantage for the region. Moreover, these successes demonstrate the value of the remit, resources, alliances and timeframe for development offered by the LEADER programme in directing and facilitating this process.

5.3. Rationale for Cluster Model development

Further rationale for the Fuchsia Brand and the cluster concept is contained in the “Review of Enterprise Support in Rural Areas” commissioned by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in 2004, Fitzpatrick Associates state

“There is evidence that a sectoral targeting approach can be successful, provided it is based on some level of natural endowment and is supported by a positive local business environment.....clustering should be supported via the co-ordination of appropriate supports in relation to training, local service provision and an appropriate level of infrastructural investment..”

“Where firms interact with one another, spill over effects occur and this fosters knowledge transmission within the network. This type of engagement is especially beneficial to small (and therefore also rural) companies whose internal innovative capacities may be limited. Engagement with each other assists the collective learning of the firms in the cluster and leads to “untraded interdependencies.....the grouping together of firms involved in similar sectors tend to lead to an upgrade in standards of technology and skills. Innovation is aided by the presence of competition from enterprises involved in the same field, with those involved in related sectors providing pressure for development and advancement”

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In assessing the potential for sectoral targeting of enterprise supports and cluster development the report acknowledges the possibilities of the Fuchsia Brand thus

“....Building on a strong tradition and competitive advantagethe initiative has assisted firms in areas such as market analysis, training, marketing, technology and quality improvement.” Furthermore the report notes the presence of a cluster effect in tourism in West Cork. The report goes on to state that “Other factors to be considered in selecting a model for sectoral targeting are the scale of the area to be targeted and the level of rigidity with which the initiative is applied. In relation to the scale of the area, a regional approach appears to be too broad in order to achieve networking. Areas selected should therefore be counties or sub-county areas. In the case of larger counties and those with a significant urban centre it is likely that sub county areas would be most appropriate e.g. West Cork...”

(Source: Review of Enterprise Support in Rural Area, Fitzpatrick Associates, 2004).

Similarly in “Ahead of the Curve – Ireland’s Place in the Global Economy” which exams and recommends future development structures, initiatives and opportunities, the Enterprise Strategy Group convened by Forfás, places significant emphasis on the development of business networks and clusters in Ireland in achieving competitive advantage.

“Networks are groups of firms and other organizations that are structured – formally or informally – around common interests. For example, the participants may share information on markets, they may co-operate to address a customer need that they could not address individually, they may share interests in technology, standards or regulations, or they may act in concert to commission research or to articulate skills requirements. In the future, business networks will increasingly facilitate knowledge transfer, disseminate market knowledge, foster innovation, inform the research agenda and identify infrastructure needs specific to sectoral development. We envisage enterprise-led networks in Ireland playing a significant role in supporting the growth of internationally-traded activities and in enhancing the growth potential of the companies involved over the decade to come”

“Knowledge and expertise in our target markets and in product and service development will be best developed by reinforcing activities or sectors where enterprises or groups of enterprises have or can develop a strong leadership position.....it is the firms themselves, together with educational and research institutes, that must work together and co-operate to drive the development of the sector, inform the research agenda and drive the provision of sector-specific infrastructure, capital and skills”

Source: Ahead of the Curve – Ireland’s Place in the Global Economy, Enterprise Strategy Group/Forfás, 2004)

Economic wealth is a critical factor in maintaining and achieving improvements in quality of life, particularly the standard of living. Returns on external investments aside, wealth creation in West Cork is primarily the outcome of economic activity by firms in the area. This economic activity within the cluster involves the production of a range of goods and services by firms which combine inputs from five types of area based capital – natural, human, social, manufactured and financial. However, the wealth generated from this activity will only result in sustainable improvements in the quality of life for the local population, where it maintains and enhances this stock of capital assets rather than depleting or degrading it. In addition, quality of life is not solely an economic issue, combining both physical and psychological aspects which are dependent on the cultural, social, natural and built environment that individuals and communities reside within. Firms

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are economic entities that operate in markets and as such, the maintenance of this broad range of assets can be difficult to achieve without a rebalancing by alternative forms of organisation. In particular, the West Cork Development Partnership recognises the complementary role that community and not-for-profit organisations can play within the cluster model to rebalance activity outside market dynamics and improve quality of life. In recognising this link between all of the area's assets, the cluster model strategy to be implemented by West Cork Development Partnership encompasses supports and initiatives to maintain and enhance aspects of the cultural, social, natural and built environment which are fundamental to quality of life.

- In priming the cluster model for development, seven specific development objectives to enhance economic competitiveness, social cohesion and community engagement have been established for the programme in the period 2007-2013:
- To develop and promote economic development opportunities and employment in the knowledge economy.
- To improve the quality of life for farming and fishing communities by renewing, developing and diversifying the natural resource base.
- To develop and promote high-quality innovative goods and services reflecting the regions unique resources, identity and character to satisfy specific market opportunities.
- To achieve balanced community and economic development throughout the region.
- To build capacity and resources in order to achieve community participation in planning and project development.
- To foster an appreciation of and responsibility for the unique aspects of the local social, natural, built and cultural environment.
- To engage in inter-territorial and trans-national initiatives and develop projects and networks to assist community and enterprise development.

5.4. Summary of Development Actions

Based on the proposed strategy and planned development actions, the following targets for project development by measure are proposed. The targets have been based upon the assessment of the region, its resource potential and the defined needs arising. The targets proposed seek to achieve a balance between enterprise and community development activity. In setting the targets due consideration is also given to pattern and level of LEADER development activity in the period 1992-2006 and the fact that the overall level of project funding and rates of aid have been increased in the LEADER Rural Development Programme 2007-2013. Specific sub-sectoral targets for development activity are detailed under each principal objective. The West Cork Development Partnership seeks to facilitate the participation in 1800 individuals in a variety of community training and 1500 in enterprise training initiatives as outlined in Table 5.1.

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Table 5.1: Community and Enterprise Training Initiatives

Measure	Analysis & Development	Capital Investment	Marketing	Training
Diversification into non-agricultural activities	6	15	15	12
Support for Business Creation/ Development	10	35	22	15
Encouragement of Tourism Activities	5	35	28	20
Basic Services for the Economy & Population	3	20	4	4
Village Renewal and Development	10	45	4	8
Conservation and Upgrading of the Rural Heritage	5	20	4	8
Training and Information Measure	4	5	3	30
Skills Acquisition and Animation	10	0	2	8
Implementing Co-operation Projects	10	0	15	8
Total no. of Projects	63	175	97	113

5.5. Horizontal Principles

The objectives, indicative strategies, planned indicative actions and targets proposed take full account of the LEADER programme objectives and criteria established in the Ireland Rural Development Programme 2007-2013. To support the stated objectives, the West Cork Development Partnership will deliver strategies and policy actions complying with the horizontal principles as follows:

Innovation – will be the driver that shapes the vision for growth and prosperity. The cluster concept will be the principal catalyst in this process using knowledge, understanding and collaboration to implement new concepts, interactions and relationships that create long term economic and social value for communities and enterprises in West Cork.

Sustainability – will effect positive change which respects and builds upon the essential environmental and social systems on which the West Cork region depends. It is wholly dependant on a collective understanding of the critical relationship between communities and their environment and has as its ultimate aim the long-term social, cultural, economic and environmental vitality of West Cork.

Economic Viability – will be substantially enhanced through complementary capabilities, knowledge transfers, economic efficiencies, risk capital and the creation and refinement of new ideas, actions and concepts created by a cluster of co-operating institutions, sectors and enterprises. The cluster concept will also serve to attract capital, skills, knowledge and

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expertise to the region, further enhancing quality of life, regional competitiveness and economic well-being in West Cork.

Linkages – will be implicit in the cluster model, the ultimate success of which is dependant on multiple levels of interaction between public agencies, local authorities, educational and research institutions, economic sectors, enterprises and trade & industry associations. Representing a coalition of development interests, such organisations must define and implement action agendas, initiatives and policies that reflect the specific needs of the cluster components



5.6. The Knowledge Economy

Objective

Develop and promote opportunities and employment in the knowledge economy

Indicative Strategy

- Develop knowledge intensive technical, business and regulatory services for related and supporting industries within the cluster model.
- Expand economic development activity around cluster/business concentration that has demonstrated market potential.
- Economic development strategies to focus on designation, diversity and distinctiveness.
- Build new sources of competitive advantage based on knowledge and expertise as a key capital resource.
- Develop and promote the region as a business location based on innovation, high quality skills and competencies.
- Promote best practice, innovation and skills enhancement in positioning and promoting West Cork as a cradle of innovation, artistic expression and technical excellence.
- Renew existing sectoral skills levels and promote continual learning.
- Promote and develop new flexible business models, work practices, work/life integration strategies and marketing channels to foster competitiveness and growth.
- Recognise and promote collaboration, knowledge transfer and interaction as drivers of innovation.
- Use the development of the West Cork Technology Park and the profile of the Fuchsia Brand initiative as core development drivers.
- Support the development of local Internationally Traded Services.
- Develop strategies and tools to help SME's to maximise online presence and capabilities in exploiting market opportunities.
- Develop and support indigenous IT and ICT enabled enterprises.
- Promote collaborative working practices and open learning systems.
- Enhance ICT capabilities for key enterprise sectors through research, training and development measures.
- Employ new technologies in marketing, production and communication to enhance operational efficiencies, networking and market access.
- Use the Quality of Life indicators to attract mobile, discerning, high net-worth self starters to West Cork.

Planned Development Actions

- ▶ Employment of a Development Officer dedicated to developing in-house advisory and strategic consulting capacity in order to facilitate adoption of information and communication technologies in local enterprises.
- ▶ Create and facilitate Action Learning Networks for the exchange of knowledge, building of relationships and the fostering of innovation, within and across sectors.
- ▶ Use information and communication technologies to facilitate knowledge transfer and networking opportunities amongst local enterprises.

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The Knowledge Economy

- ▶ Document and promote the key skills and competencies within the region, emphasising in particular ICT and language capabilities that support the development of local Internationally Traded Services.
- ▶ Support the development of appropriate work space (office, production, incubation, shared administration, etc) located within the hierarchy of designated employment centres.
- ▶ Facilitate use of scenario planning tools within sectors to activate and share knowledge in building consensus, visioning and strategic planning.
- ▶ Formalise and enhance existing linkages to third and fourth level institutions for collaboration to aid economic development and diversification.
- ▶ Enhance sectoral up-skilling and multi – skilling capability through the provision of and linkage to appropriate training.
- ▶ Develop and promote accredited third level out-reach training programmes in West Cork.
- ▶ Develop a competitiveness training programme for local enterprise in conjunction with the Department of Economics, UCC.
- ▶ Use and apply available research material and practice to develop new commercial opportunities in key local economic sectors.
- ▶ Provide development supports for an applied research and development programme for local enterprises.
- ▶ Provide developmental support for enterprises engaged in the creative arts and digital media production.
- ▶ Develop skills and training capability initiatives to address the needs of tenant companies located in the West Cork Technology Park.
- ▶ Support the West Cork Technology Task Force to target higher value (R&D, software, etc) enterprises to the West Cork region.
- ▶ Assess the potential for a linkage programme between West Cork Technology Park and satellite facilities in other local towns.
- ▶ Assess the potential for outsourced, subcontracted and satellite work in dispersed rural communities.
- ▶ Promote the suitability of the region as investment location for companies re-locating from urban areas.
- ▶ Capitalise on current IDA dispersal policy to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).
- ▶ Plan for diversification and development of a post-FDI economy.
- ▶ Further progress the development of the Quality of Life index, combining qualitative and quantitative data, and use same to promote the region focussing on attracting overseas and the re-location of indigenous investment.
- ▶ Use the Quality of Life Index to benchmark the region in socio-economic terms against other selected rural investment locations.

Indicators & Targets

- The ICT Development Officer will deliver 8 analysis and development, 12 training and 15-20 capital investment projects to develop and promote the knowledge economy and facilitate the adoption of new information and communication technologies in local enterprises.
- Develop 2 Action Learning Networks for the exchange of knowledge, building of relationships and the fostering of innovation, within and across sectors.
- Develop 1 database documenting and promoting the key skills and competencies within the region.
- Develop 4 capital projects to deliver appropriate work space for the knowledge economy.
- Deliver 2 scenario planning workshops to facilitate the positioning of the region within the knowledge economy.
- Collaborate on 6 knowledge economy research and development proposals with local third and fourth level institutions.
- Develop and promote 2 accredited third level out-reach training programmes for the knowledge economy.
- Develop a competitiveness training programme for local enterprise in conjunction with the Department of Economics, UCC.
- Develop 6 training/capital projects from applied research undertaken internally/externally.
- Develop 6-8 capital projects in the creative arts and digital media production.
- Deliver and resource 4 training initiatives to address the needs of tenant companies located in the West Cork Technology Park.
- Support the West Cork Technology Task Force in securing the location of 3 higher value ICT enterprises to the West Cork Technology Park.
- Conduct a formal evaluation of the potential for a linkage programme between West Cork Technology Park and satellite facilities in other local towns.
- Create 3 projects for outsourced, subcontracted and satellite work in dispersed rural communities.
- Secure the re-location of 2 EI/IDA backed capital investments to West Cork.
- Support for capital investment in 10 non-EI/IDA indigenous ICT enterprises.
- Develop Phase 2 of the Quality of Life index to combine qualitative and quantitative data and integrate the use the Quality of Life Index in the promotion of West Cork as an investment location.

5.7. Farm & Fisheries Development, Renewal & Diversification

Objective

To improve the quality of life for the farming and fishing communities by developing, renewing and diversifying the natural resource base.

Indicative Strategy

- Increase value added production levels in food, farm and fisheries sectors.
- Develop on-farm supplementary income opportunities as an aid to farm viability.
- Develop off-farm supplementary income opportunities for farm families.
- Increase collective and co-operative action in the production and marketing of natural resources, farm and fisheries produce.
- Focus farm and fisheries diversification to exploit West Cork's prime position as a high-quality food region.
- Address issues of scale and market access by encouraging/facilitating production and marketing alliances and partnerships.
- Facilitate improved access to higher value markets for local primary produce.
- Reconfigure local primary production to reflect consumer demand driven dynamic.
- Complement production capabilities and strengths with market knowledge and expertise.
- Create an enabling environment to spur and support innovation and enterprise creation.
- Develop and utilise new and emerging technologies to aid farm and fisheries diversification.
- Support projects that highlight and demonstrate the multi-functional nature of agriculture.
- Link sustainability and environmental management practises to market opportunities.
- Support succession strategies in farming and fishing diversification.
- Foster the protection and enhancement of the environment and natural resources related to the fishing industry.

Planned Development Actions

- ▶ Employment of a natural resources Development Officer specifically to implement strategies for the renewal and diversification of the natural resource base.
- ▶ Create a broad based Agriculture Working Group to establish development agenda for farm development and diversification opportunities.
- ▶ Use market information sources to assess new product development and diversification opportunities in the food, farm and fisheries sectors.
- ▶ Partner sectoral representative organisations in farming and fishing to identify and develop diversification opportunities.
- ▶ Support for strategic networks and producer groups in agriculture, food, fisheries, tourism and energy production.

Objectives & Strategy

Farm & Fisheries Development, Renewal & Diversification

- ▶ Develop a mentoring service for local farmers/fishermen wishing to engage in diversification/alternative enterprise development.
- ▶ Facilitate Peer support through farm/fisheries discussion groups and other networks interested in evaluating transition and diversification opportunities.
- ▶ Support for higher value primary production to include niche markets, organic, free range, specialist horticulture, rare and speciality breeds.
- ▶ Develop a “*Food from Farms*” programme to support the development of community supported agriculture, farmers markets, producer groups, direct selling (box schemes for consumers, holiday homes & restaurant) and farm shops.
- ▶ Develop on-farm agri-education initiatives to create awareness of the importance of farming for food, landscape management, bio-diversity, culture, heritage and community cohesion.
- ▶ Develop agri-tourism for farm diversification and urban-rural interface to deliver unique on-farm experiences including eating on farms, contact with animals, growing vegetables, traditional accommodation, equestrian tourism, etc.
- ▶ Target enterprise supports to facilitate family member succession through diversification.
- ▶ Assess the potential for the development of an R&D, training and incubation facility for local food and fisheries firms to facilitate new product development and quality improvement and control e.g. Food Park.
- ▶ Develop a programme to involve and support the farming community in the preservation and management of rural heritage and bio-diversity, e.g. archaeology and High Nature Value advisory scheme to compliment REPS.
- ▶ Promote small scale horticulture and skills development through the establishment of an allotment project and community garden schemes.
- ▶ Develop an “*Energy from Farms*” Programme (to include biofuel, Combined Heat and Power (CHP), short rotation forestry, wind, solar, hydro and heat). A twin approach to market development through the stimulation of supply and demand. Measures to stimulate demand will include: energy audit and recommendations and commissioning advice & support. Measures to stimulate supply: Forestry group producer formation and heat entrepreneurship.
- ▶ Support renewable energy generation from agri-food waste as a means of enterprise growth and diversification.
- ▶ Support the development of social farming through training, networking, co-ordination, and investment in facilities.
- ▶ Generate a consumer education programme on the availability and merits of seasonal food.
- ▶ Support upgrading and embedding of farmers markets in conjunction with market organisations, local authorities and traders.
- ▶ Develop initiatives to integrate BIM Environmental Management System standards for local trawlers to achieve Fuchsia brand accreditation. Adding value through eco-branding and traceability would act as a catalyst for sustainable development and marketing of the seafood industry.
- ▶ Encourage fishermen and fish farmers to develop environmentally sound techniques aimed at promoting stock.
- ▶ Encouragement of operations with high-added value through the development of innovative capacities that provide for high quality standards and meet the consumer needs for fishermen and aquaculture products.
- ▶ Strengthen the competitiveness of operating structures and the development of economically viable enterprises in the fishing sector.

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Farm & Fisheries Development, Renewal & Diversification

- ▶ Life Coaching and training for relevant localised off farm/fisheries employment. Farm & Fisheries Development, Renewal & Diversification
- ▶ Improve information on and access to training and education opportunities for farmers and fishermen entering the jobs market.
- ▶ Development of a food access network to address local food poverty and improve nutrition, health and well being.

Indicators & Targets

- The natural resources Development Officer will deliver 8-10 analysis and development, 15 training and 20-22 capital investment projects to develop and promote the renewal and diversification of the natural resource base.
- The Agriculture Working Group will meet 3 times annually and establish and oversee a development agenda for farm development and diversification opportunities.
- Use applied research to develop 5 new product development and 5 diversification opportunities in the food, farm and fisheries sectors.
- Partner sectoral representative organisations in farming (3) and fishing (2) to identify and develop diversification opportunities.
- Support for strategic networks and producer groups in agriculture (2), food (3), fisheries (2), tourism (5) and energy (2) production.
- Mentor 18 farmer/fishermen clients seeking to evaluate diversification/alternative enterprise development opportunities.
- Facilitate 5 farm/fisheries discussion groups interested in evaluating transition and diversification opportunities.
- Support 5 individual and 5 collective marketing initiatives and 5 capital projects in higher value primary production for niche markets.
- Deliver a “*Food from Farms*” programme for up to 10 participants on a biennial basis.
- Deliver 15 on-farm agri-education initiatives to demonstrate the multifunctional nature of agriculture.
- Develop 5 high quality agri-tourism accommodation and 10 linked on-farm facilities and amenities.
- Facilitate family member succession in 8 development/diversification projects.
- Participation of 15 farms in a programme for the promotion, preservation and management of rural heritage and bio-diversity.
- Provide training and capital supports for the development of 3 allotment projects and 12 community garden schemes as part of a food access network.
- 3 forestry producer groups and 5 farmer owned heat supply companies will be created through the delivery of “*Energy from Farms*” programme.
- Support 1 project generating renewable energy from agri-food waste.
- Support the development of 3 social farming projects.
- Participation of 8 local retail stores in the promotion of locally available seasonal food.
- Support the further development and promotion of 8 farmers markets.

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Farm & Fisheries Development, Renewal & Diversification

- Accredited 12 local trawlers to the Fuchsia Brand initiative which comply with the BIM Environmental Management System standard and which promote environmentally sound conservation techniques.
- Support enhanced competitiveness and quality standards in 8 fisheries and aquaculture processing enterprises.
- Deliver a training programme of Life Coaching supports for 12 people on an annual basis.



5.8. Regional Branding & Identity

Objective

To develop and promote high quality innovative goods and services reflecting the region's unique resources, identity and character to satisfy specific market opportunities

Indicative Strategy

- Position the Fuchsia Brand as a core enterprise development driver for the region.
- Increase penetration of the brand within food, tourism and craft sectors.
- Establish and promote West Cork as the foremost source of the highest quality speciality food produce.
- Facilitate knowledge and skills transfer within complementary economic sectors.
- Facilitate continuous improvement in product and service quality through training, market development, innovation and investment.
- Develop and exploit synergies arising from agriculture, marine, tourism, food, craft sectors to enhance service sector capability and competitiveness (business, technical, communication and retail, etc).
- Use profile and consumer recognition of the Fuchsia Brand to stimulate new enterprise/product development and import substitution opportunities.
- Leverage Fuchsia Brand potential to access higher value markets for local primary and organic produce.
- Develop and promote new tourism products targeted at high-yield markets.
- Increase Fuchsia Brand awareness in high yield target markets to further generate competitive advantage.
- Develop and implement best practice to support environmental sustainability as a core value of the Fuchsia Brand.
- Develop market intelligence and information systems to assist the ongoing development and promotion of the tourism, food and craft sectors.
- Assess potential for inter-firm collaboration and synergies in developing export markets for niche products and services.
- Create tangible visitor experience of West Cork through improved availability of local food and craft produce.
- Develop, integrate and promote niche tourism products to reduce seasonality
- Capitalise on coastal resources for the development of marine and activity tourism.
- Facilitate co-operation and co-ordination in tourism destination marketing between Fáilte Ireland, Fuchsia Brand and local tourism promotional groups.
- Support the development and marketing of Bantry and its hinterland as a tourism adventure activity hub.
- Support succession strategies to assist food, tourism and craft diversification.

Planned Development Actions

- ▶ Employ a dedicated tourism development officer to implement strategies and initiatives for the development of rural and agri-tourism with linkages to complementary sectors.
- ▶ Employ a dedicated food development officer to implement strategies and initiatives to develop the food sector as a core driver of the cluster model.
- ▶ Promote best practice and quality excellence through a tourism training programme and the provision of business advice, support and mentoring (marketing, customer service and eco-friendly charter).
- ▶ Support up-skilling, vocational training and continuous improvement for Fuchsia Brand accredited enterprises.
- ▶ Evaluate the potential and develop Fuchsia Brand eligibility criteria for complementary economic activity (natural products, flowers, etc).
- ▶ Improve consumer recognition by domestic and overseas visitors of the Fuchsia Brand proposition.
- ▶ Create a West Cork portal site with enhanced interactive content including e-commerce capability to showcase and promote the West Cork Fuchsia Brand initiative.
- ▶ Develop new e-marketing approaches and strategies to advance Fuchsia Brand initiative (enhanced online presence, web 2.0, inter-active user generated content, viral marketing, etc).
- ▶ Identification of new marketing and promotional opportunities for the Fuchsia Brand (Stay in West Cork campaign on food packaging, West Cork ambassadors programme, Fuchsia Brands loyalty card, etc).
- ▶ Promote key destination locations and facilities to stimulate non-peak tourism business (all-weather family-friendly attractions, festivals, cultural activities, etc).
- ▶ Support the provision of new visitor accommodation with formal links to activities and amenities in areas of defined need.
- ▶ Promote eco-friendly design, vernacular architecture, and conservation of traditional building forms/styles in the development of new visitor accommodation.
- ▶ Upgrade existing outdoor activity facilities and develop and promote new products for adventure based tourism (cycling tours, adventure centres, walking/trail head facilities, boat tours, mountain biking, adventure events – The Turas, etc).
- ▶ Apply research and devise appropriate training programmes to address environmental impacts from product life cycle issues (raw materials, inputs and local sourcing practices, carbon reduction and waste management, etc).
- ▶ Facilitate broadening diversification opportunities for Fuchsia Brand participants using proven skills, traditions and competencies to generate additional revenues (culinary tourism, craft leisure courses, consultancy and training, etc).
- ▶ Facilitate and support inter-firm collaboration to exploit synergies and complementarities in product development, production skills, marketing and distribution.
- ▶ Integrate the resources of Fáilte Ireland, local business, and community groups in the planning and promotion of festivals which reflect and enhance regional identity.
- ▶ Leverage regional profile to facilitate the development of business tourism through linkages between hotels and activity providers (conventions, corporate training, etc).

Objectives & Strategy

Regional Branding & Identity

- ▶ Develop market intelligence systems to capture data on new emerging, niche and high yield target markets (cruise liners, language training, genealogy, etc).
- ▶ Develop Action learning networks to facilitate cross-sectoral networking and product development for off-peak visitor packages (eco tourism accommodation and activity, craft leisure).
- ▶ Develop collaborative familiarisation tours for media and tour operators to promote and package tourism product drawing on local activities, culture and heritage.
- ▶ Develop and promote new tourism product development based on regional identity characteristics including quality of life and the natural environment (health and wellness tourism, sensory trails and maritime heritage etc).
- ▶ Provide support for marine themed activities and facilities (visitor centres, whale and dolphin watching, sea angling, sail charters, sail training etc).
- ▶ Address the infrastructural requirements to enhance the development of marine tourism enterprises (pontoons, marinas, slip-ways, fishing access points, etc).
- ▶ Use the region's profile, traditions, skills and competencies to develop culinary tourism, particularly as an aid to reducing tourism seasonality and in strengthening linkages between tourism and complementary sectors.
- ▶ Research and implement best practice partnership models with multiple and independent speciality retailers in local and non-local markets to promote Fuchsia Brand products and services.
- ▶ Develop new consolidated and sustainable distribution channels and supply chains for local produce in partnership with processors, restaurateurs and retailers.
- ▶ Create linkages to facilitate contract and co-production in food manufacturing.
- ▶ Develop visual tools to reflect and emphasise the connection between person, place and product in promoting distinctive local and regional propositions.
- ▶ Develop an advanced food safety training programme to equip food producers to meet the needs of retail multiples and export markets (BRC – British Retail Consortium, HACCP, etc).
- ▶ Work to reduce food miles and increase local procurement in retail, hotel and restaurants.
- ▶ Further refine an annual audit-based compliance system for Fuchsia Brand accredited enterprises.
- ▶ Assist artisan and speciality food producers to diversify by developing activities and services complementary to their core business.
- ▶ Identify opportunity for a collaborative cookery school for vocational and leisure learning linking local restaurants, food producers and accommodation providers.
- ▶ Promote additional food sector development through revival of local traditions and specialities (seaweed, home baking, meats, beverage, etc).
- ▶ Enhance and upgrade marketing, promotional and product presentations (new packaging design, in-store displays, brochures, etc).
- ▶ Support the development of a craft resource centre to raise profile, create linkages, and deliver training and technical support.
- ▶ Training and technical support for new product development and design for craft enterprises.
- ▶ Technical support and training on nutrition and health in product development and labelling for food producers (traffic light labelling, GDA's, legislative compliance, etc).

Objectives & Strategy

Regional Branding & Identity

- ▶ Development of *Stàge* work experience and apprenticeship programme for skills development for local, artisan and speciality producers.
- ▶ Target enterprise supports to facilitate family member succession through diversification.

Indicators & Targets

- Employ a dedicated tourism development officer to implement strategies and initiatives for the development of rural and agri-tourism with linkages to complementary sectors.
- Employ a dedicated food development officer to implement strategies and initiatives to develop the food sector as a core driver of the cluster model.
- Promote best practice and quality excellence through a tourism training programme (a suite of 5 disciplines) delivered annually for up to 50 participants and the provision of business advice, support and mentoring for 25 enterprises over the duration of the programme.
- Support up-skilling, vocational training and continuous improvement in 220 Fuchsia Brand accredited enterprises - Food (70), Tourism (110) and Craft (40).
- Develop Fuchsia Brand eligibility criteria for 5 enterprises in complementary economic sectors.
- Improve consumer recognition of the Fuchsia Brand proposition by undertaking annually 20 domestic and 12 overseas consumer and trade marketing initiatives on a co-operative and inter-agency basis.
- Increase visitor traffic to 38,000 unique visits to the West Cork portal site annually by 2010, with 1 in 3 site users repeating their visit to achieve defined site goals (sales, downloads, feedback/comments, web 2.0 etc).
- Pilot and evaluate 3 new marketing and promotional initiatives for the Fuchsia Brand annually.
- Promote 2 destination marketing campaigns annually to stimulate non-peak tourism business.
- Support 1 new visitor accommodation project annually with formal links to activities and amenities incorporating eco-friendly design, vernacular architecture, and conservation.
- Further develop 20 existing outdoor activity facilities and develop and promote 11 new products/infrastructure for adventure based tourism - cycling (3), adventure centres (10), walking routes/trail head facilities (10), boat tours (4), mountain biking (1) and adventure events (3).
- Deliver 4 training programmes to address environmental impacts from product life cycle issues - Food (2) and Tourism (2).
- Support 12 diversification projects for Fuchsia Brand participants using proven skills, traditions and competencies to generate additional revenues - culinary tourism (3), craft leisure courses (6), consultancy and training (3).
- Support the development and promotion of 3 festivals annually on a partnership basis, which reflect and enhance regional identity themes, and with a proven capacity to attract bed-nights from non-local and overseas markets.
- Attract 600 bed-nights annually (rising by 10% per annum) through the development of business tourism, conventions and seminars and corporate training.
- Apply market research to create and develop 2 new high yield product segments and markets.

Objectives & Strategy

Regional Branding & Identity

- Develop 2 action learning networks to facilitate cross-sectoral networking and product development.
- Facilitate 4 familiarisation tours for media and tour operators to promote and package tourism products annually.
- Develop and promote 7 new tourism product development based on regional identity characteristics - health and wellness tourism (4), sensory trails (1) and maritime heritage (2).
- Provide support for 11 marine themed activities and facilities - visitor centres (2), whale and dolphin watching (2), sea angling (3), sail charters (2), sail training (2).
- Address the infrastructural requirements to enhance the development of 4 marine tourism enterprises - pontoons (2), slip-ways (3) and fishing access points (3).
- Implement best practice partnership models with 15 multiple stores and 15 independent speciality retailers in local and non-local markets to promote Fuchsia Brand products and services.
- Support the development of 2 new consolidated and sustainable distribution channels and supply chains for local produce.
- Create linkages to facilitate contract (3) and co-production (3) in food manufacturing.
- Increase usage of photos.fuchsiabrands.com for use in commercial or PR applications to 100 images annually (rising 15% per annum).
- Deliver 1 advanced food safety training programme BRC and 1 standard HACCP programme annually each accounting for 12 participants.
- Increase local procurement in 20 retail stores, 15 hotels and 30 restaurants.
- Conduct annual compliance audits for 180 Fuchsia Brand accredited enterprises.
- Assist 2 artisan and 2 speciality food producers to diversify by developing activities and services complementary to their core business.
- Support the development of a cookery school for vocational and leisure learning.
- Promote additional food sector development through revival of 1 local tradition and speciality.
- Enhance and upgrade marketing, promotional and product presentations for 65 enterprises (new packaging design for 25 food and craft products, 10 in-store displays and 30 brochures).
- Support the development of a craft resource centre to raise profile, create linkages, and deliver training and technical support.
- Training and technical support for new product development and design for 6 craft enterprises.
- Technical support and training on nutrition and health in product development and labelling for 60 food producers.
- Facilitate 4 inbound and 2 outbound trainees annually to participate on *Stàge* work experience and apprenticeship programme.
- Achieve family member succession through diversification in 8 enterprises.

5.9. *Balanced Development*

Objective

To achieve balanced community and economic development throughout the region.

Indicative Strategy

- Devise appropriate developmental approaches that reflect contexts and demographics specific to different locations within the region.
- Achieve balanced spatial distribution of community and enterprise activity throughout the region.
- Develop sustainable, locally relevant employment opportunities within the hierarchy of designated employment centres.
- Reduce development pressure in CASP, commuting corridors and coastal locations.
- Target interventions and development supports to areas of demographic and economic disadvantage.
- Ensure that development in villages and rural areas complements planned growth in towns at a scale that respects setting and character.
- Provide appropriate small scale infrastructure to enhance the economic and social attractiveness of towns and villages.
- Identify economic growth potential in non-established/non-coastal locations.
- Support the Cork County Development Plan to maintain a critical mass in local population levels in non-CASP locations.
- Use the West Cork Technology Park to stimulate dispersed development activity.
- Develop Dunmanway and its hinterland as strategic growth centre in spatial development strategy.
- Optimise community input and access to complementary development programmes (Pobal, Social Inclusion, Community Services Programme, RSS, CLAR, etc).
- Integrate LEADER and other appropriate development supports (Community Services Programme, RSS, Walks Scheme, Pobal, associated social inclusion measures, etc) to address community needs in a holistic and sustainable fashion.
- Develop animation and capacity building measures to encourage community involvement and foster a spirit of social capital, through an emphasis on local ownership.
- Capitalise on the designation of the West Cork peninsulas as areas of Strategic Tourism Potential.
- Facilitate the development of a Spatial Framework for Tourism to provide a unique combination of attractions and facilities throughout West Cork.
- Achieve critical mass in product development and marketing for marine, walking and activity based tourism.

Planned Development Actions

- ▶ Employ a development officer working part-time to ensure best fit with LEADER objectives in the delivery of other community development initiatives, particularly with regard to balanced development.
- ▶ Devise and implement economic development strategies on a partnership basis for non-CASP towns designated as integrated, specialised, district and local employment centres.
- ▶ Support the development of appropriate work space (office, production, incubation, shared administration, etc) within the hierarchy of designated employment centres.
- ▶ Use new information and communication technologies to offset demographic and geographic disadvantage, (web training and social networking for communities, etc).
- ▶ Upgrade and develop essential community facilities, amenities and utilities to facilitate shared/multi purpose functions.
- ▶ Provide expert planning and environmental advice to assist renewal and enhancement projects in villages where development has lagged arising from demographic, locational or infrastructural disadvantages (Upper Lee Valley, peninsular areas, etc).
- ▶ Support the development of community enterprise centres and facilities to support local innovation and employment, (serviced work and office space, “*Fab Lab*” open workshops, development of former co-op dairies etc).
- ▶ Development of a Trails Network infrastructure to create new trails and consolidate existing scenic, heritage and historical routes.
- ▶ Support product development through the integration of the regions geographically dispersed walking routes, cycleways, heritage drives, green roads etc. and market same on a collective basis.
- ▶ Develop and market niche products that reflect the unique aspects of local culture and heritage (social, sporting, literary, economic, arts, music, food, craft, folklore, etc).
- ▶ Promote best practice in environmental management in the development and marketing of sustainable/eco tourism.
- ▶ Use the cultural, environmental and heritage resources as a lever for local economic development in Dunmanway and its hinterland (Development of Sam Maguire visitor centre).
- ▶ Consolidation and enhancement of tourism information infrastructure including route and information signage, internet, GPS, networking and referrals and tourism information points.
- ▶ Development of strategically located visitor attractions, amenities and facilities in emerging and non-established tourist locations, e.g. community owned discovery parks.
- ▶ Implementation of rural development initiatives as outlined in the Dunmanway Integrated Development Strategy.
- ▶ Establish a Food and Taste Trail and provide development supports to facilitate the participation of local food producers, restaurants and retail outlets.
- ▶ Clustering of accommodation, activities and amenities in the development and promotion of alternative access and touring routes (R584, R585 and R586).

Indicators & Targets

- The development officer will deliver 5 analysis and development, 10 training and 35 amenity enhancement/community facility/utility projects to develop and promote balanced spatial development.
- Deliver and implement 5 integrated economic development strategies for non-CASP towns.
- Develop 4 capital projects to deliver appropriate work space to achieve geographic and spatial balance.
- Employ 6 new and emerging information and communication technologies to offset demographic and geographic disadvantage.
- Upgrade and develop essential 12 community facilities and amenities to facilitate shared/multi purpose functions.
- Provide expert planning and environmental support to assist renewal and enhancement projects in 14 villages with particular emphasis on the Upper Lee Valley and peninsular areas.
- Support the development of a community enterprise centre and 3 multi-purpose facilities to support local innovation and employment.
- Support the development, upgrading and marketing of 5 existing and 2 new walking routes, 10 new recreational trails and 2-3 new heritage and historical routes.
- Develop physical links between 2 existing/new national way-marked ways.
- Support the development and marketing of niche products including festivals (2) sporting, (1) literary, (3) arts, (3) music, (6) food, (2) folklore that reflect the unique aspects of local culture and heritage.
- Participation of 25 tourism establishments in a sustainable/eco tourism training and marketing initiative.
- Development of a Sam Maguire themed visitor centre in Dunmanway.
- Enhancement of tourism information and signage on 3 touring routes, and the development and upgrading of new tourism information points in 15 towns and villages.
- Development of 5 strategically located visitor attractions, 12 amenities and 8 facilities in emerging and non-established tourist locations.
- Support the implementation of 10 initiatives in the Dunmanway Integrated Development Strategy, including the built environment (3), natural heritage and recreation (3), employment and economic development (2), agriculture, rural development and diversification (2) sub-measures.
- Establish a Food and Taste Trail and provide development supports to facilitate the participation of local food producers (8), restaurants (8) and retail outlets (8).
- Clustering of accommodation (12), activities (16) and amenities (20) in the development and promotion of alternative access and touring routes (R584, R585 and R586).
- Support for the development of 6 youth cafes linked to rural transport provision.
- Support for the development of 2 community shops in areas of defined need.

5.10. Community Participation

Objective

To build capacity and resources to facilitate community participation in planning and project development.

Indicative Strategy

- Promote community responsibility, engagement and active citizenship.
- Support the Cork County Community and Voluntary Forum in animating and facilitating community participation in local development.
- Support the development of new community development structures, (community councils, community development associations, etc) in facilitating community input in local development.
- Facilitate the adoption of new methodologies and strategic approaches for community development.
- Reinforce community structures to offset loss of social cohesion and adverse impacts of economic development.
- Use information and communication technologies to facilitate community development through networking, information exchange and access to services.
- Provide communities with opportunities to learn and experience new technology applications to foster life-long learning.
- Harness the knowledge and facilitate the participation of rural youth and active retired in local and community development organisations.
- Enhance networking, co-operation and inter-territorial/transnational exchange of experience in project development.
- Evaluate the potential and support the development of revenue generating community enterprises, e.g. multi-functional usage of community owned buildings.

Planned Development Actions

- ▶ Evaluate the opportunities for Corporate and Social Responsibility initiatives to support community based development (corporate community involvement, philanthropy, business in the community, volunteering policies, funding, mentoring).
- ▶ Facilitate use of scenario planning tools within communities to activate and share knowledge in building consensus, creating a shared vision and action plan.
- ▶ Engage with local youth initiatives using a variety of media to facilitate and promote involvement in community participation and development (young social entrepreneurs, transition year, Macra, Foróige, youth cafés and online social networks).
- ▶ Create an online resource to match community development needs and volunteer availability competency.
- ▶ Promotion of inter-generational projects to preserve and pass on oral culture, history and traditional skills within families and communities such as recipes, folklore, music and song.
- ▶ Enhance local development capacity through the provision of integrated development supports (technical support, training in management structures and fundraising etc, capital investment & marketing) to foster a spirit of social capital and assist the creation of community initiated and managed tourism, culture and heritage projects.

Objectives & Strategy

Community Participation

- ▶ To support community based enterprises that have strong social aims and values, including a commitment to local capacity building.
- ▶ Business development skills training programme and new member induction for directors of community enterprises and co-operatives.
- ▶ Utilise distance and e-learning techniques to deliver training programmes for community development.
- ▶ Develop the capacity of rural dwellers to utilise ICT and e-services.
- ▶ Develop specialised training courses in fixed/mobile facilities and in-house development of training facilities to increase know-how and the use of new technologies.
- ▶ Facilitate the exchange of specialist know-how, information and best practice between community groups.
- ▶ Utilise information and communication technologies to facilitate knowledge transfer, innovative actions and networking opportunities at community level, e.g. heritage networks and web-based information resources.
- ▶ Develop training initiatives to optimise ICT awareness and tools for target groups in the local community (active retired, job seekers, women, etc).
- ▶ Assess the potential for community online broadcasting.
- ▶ Enhance, develop and engage with Web 2.0 opportunities (user generated content, web based seminars, blogging, social networking, podcasting, etc.) for community interaction and engagement.
- ▶ Develop linkages and partnerships in the use of social finance in project development to leverage area based financial capital (Credit Union, Clann Credo, the Co-operative Movement, CSR, etc).
- ▶ Foster a partnership approach for community development to include Muintir na Tire, Cork County Council, Heritage Council and Tidy Towns for events such as Spring Clean and Heritage Week.
- ▶ Promote and support alternative or renewable energy actions to meet energy needs in community owned facilities.

Indicators & Targets

- The development officer will create synergies and link 25 community development projects to complementary development programmes and initiatives.
- Deliver a Corporate and Social Responsibility initiative to support community based development - corporate community projects (10), volunteering policies (10), funding (15) and mentoring (5).
- Deliver 4 themed scenario planning workshops to build and share 4 distinct preferred visions for West Cork (participation from 60 individuals representing 30 groups and community organisations).
- Collaborate on 12 development initiatives with local youth to facilitate and promote involvement in community participation and development - Young Social Entrepreneurs (1), transition year (2), macra (3), foroige (3) and youth cafés (3).
- Create a volunteering database and match community development needs with 60 volunteers skills and availability annually (rising by 15% per annum).
- Develop and promote inter-generational projects to preserve and pass on oral culture (2), history (2) and traditional skills (2) within families and communities.
- Develop community owned and managed tourism (2), culture (2) and heritage (2) projects.
- Develop a community initiated flagship project in recreation, amenity or tourism.

Objectives & Strategy

Community Participation

- Deliver 2 business development skills training programme to facilitate the participation of 24 community leaders as directors in development of community enterprises and diversification of co-operatives.
- Employ distance and e-learning techniques to deliver 8 training programmes for community and rural development.
- Deliver 4 accredited training courses annually in fixed (2) and mobile (2) facilities to increase competency and capacity of rural dwellers/target groups to use ICT and access e-services.
- Co-ordinate the exchange of specialist know-how, information and best practice in project development between 30 community groups with emphasis on the use of information and communication technologies particularly using Web 2.0 tools.
- Deliver 2 workshops for community online broadcasting and provide support for video casting by 20 communities.
- Facilitate the use of social finance in 4 community and enterprise projects.
- Support 3 alternative or renewable energy projects to meet energy needs in community owned facilities.



Objective

To foster an appreciation of and responsibility for the local social, natural, built and cultural environment.

Indicative Strategy

- Integrate social, environmental and economic assets in achieving competitive advantage and social cohesion for West Cork and its communities.
- Link development incentives to quality criteria in the preservation and enhancement of the built and natural environment.
- Use financial development supports as a means of achieving conservation and environmental objectives.
- Manage, develop and promote local cultural, environmental and heritage resources.
- Build consensus and platforms for concerted action at local level in dealing with the transition from fossil fuel dependency and in the creation of sustainable and resilient communities (Cittaslow, transition towns).
- Reduce environmental impacts arising from enterprise/community development.
- Promote landscape management and land use policy.
- Use local heritage and culture to foster pride in local landscape and farming traditions.
- Recognition of environmental quality as aid to economic development.
- Recognise the value of Community Arts and cultural activities in enhancing social capital, community participation and life-long learning.
- Restoration and enhancement of the key components of local environment and landscape (dry stone walling, landscaping, vernacular architecture, bio-diversity etc).
- Promote introduction of environmental management practices and standards.
- Develop projects that support actions identified in the County Heritage Plan

Planned Development Actions

- ▶ Employ a dedicated development officer to implement strategies and initiatives for the conservation and enhancement of the local social, natural, built and cultural environment.
- ▶ Develop a community greening initiative to enhance landscaping, commercial and residential premises, signage, litter and recycling.
- ▶ Integrate a programme of supports for schools regarding local heritage, environment, food, healthy eating and sustainability (Outdoor Classroom, Green School, INFF, School Sustainability module, www.tastebuds.ie).
- ▶ Develop “Eco-counselling” service to provide information resource coupled with training and mentoring on best practice for local enterprise and communities (green infrastructure, low impact development, site specific ecological and environmental requirements, sustainable design and maintenance of heritage trees etc).
- ▶ Facilitate the exchange of green know-how in project design and development.
- ▶ Implement a training programme for communities to activate change in reducing environmental impact, carbon footprint and adapting to climate change, e.g. Global Action Plan.

Objectives & Strategy

Environment & Culture

- ▶ Develop a conservation strategy to assist the preservation of habitats, streetscapes, vistas and local vernacular architecture, e.g. green corridors, green mapping, and green infrastructure development, training on impact of climate change on natural and built heritage.
- ▶ Support the conservation and development of environmental resources as a key tourism assets through a partnership approach e.g. Neighbourhood Parks, Coastcare, Green Coast beaches, Golden mile, community sensory gardens.
- ▶ Support the development of active (recreation, outdoor activities, sporting facilities, etc) and passive (gardens, woodland, parks, etc) open space for community access and use.
- ▶ Promote landscape and heritage restoration by developing the region's local industrial heritage such as railways, creameries, mills, mines, quarries etc. for visitor/community/amenity use.
- ▶ Promote an amenity/landscape enhancement initiative through selective planting of broadleaf and wildflower species.
- ▶ Devise and implement a comprehensive integrated heritage training programme fostering links between third level institutions, agencies and local groups to encourage best practice and deliver practical actions e.g. Care and Maintenance of local heritage, conservation skills, genealogy, etc.
- ▶ Achieve FETAC accreditation (or other similar accreditation) for the Care and Maintenance of local heritage training programme.
- ▶ Link and promote the key features, buildings, structures and landscapes that confer the regions unique identity.
- ▶ Support a range of projects to visually capture ongoing change in landscape character, streetscapes, community, industrial heritage and vernacular forms.
- ▶ Develop projects around the *Cittaslow* Charter focusing on local distinctiveness and products, quality of life, environmental quality and community engagement.
- ▶ Link and promote iconic sculpture and landscape art as assets for community cohesion and tourism appeal.
- ▶ Develop pilot actions on bio-diversity for local communities, e.g. adoption programme for endangered flora and fauna, habitat management.
- ▶ Promote the eco-tourism concept through linkages with SACs, SPAs and incorporating the Natura 2000 network of sites throughout Europe.
- ▶ Devise an initiative to facilitate the adoption of bio-diversity improvement and protection policies as part of an enterprise CSR programme, e.g. adopt a habitat or threatened species.
- ▶ Support community arts initiatives that reflect unique aspects of the region's local culture and heritage to build identity and facilitate community engagement.
- ▶ Introduce environmental auditing and monitoring for tourism, food and craft enterprises.
- ▶ Explore the possibility of developing a Geopark in West Cork through co-operative approach with local communities and relevant local bodies.
- ▶ Support community environmental actions that aim to protect and restore the amenity value of local water resources and HNV areas.
- ▶ Promote activity-based education reflecting the natural, built and cultural environment.

Indicators & Targets

- The development officer will deliver 5 analysis and development, 50 training and 20 environment and culture projects to foster an appreciation of and responsibility for the local social, natural, built and cultural environment
- Promote and resource best practice in community greening initiatives/landscaping for 100 community and voluntary groups.
- Target participation of 30 schools in an integrated programme of supports regarding local heritage, environment, food, healthy eating and sustainability.
- Deliver “Eco-counselling” advice and mentoring for local 20 enterprises and 40 community and voluntary organisations.
- Deliver 4 Global Action Plans annually for communities.
- Assist the preservation and conservation of 5 habitats, 10 antiquities/monuments and 25 prime examples of local vernacular architecture.
- Achieve participation of 100 community organisations with the active involvement of 1,000 individuals annually in the conservation and development of environmental resources through a partnership approach.
- Develop 10 amenity areas of which 5 will be green/sedentary and 5 hard/active.
- Develop 3 community and 3 enterprise projects which preserve and build upon region’s local industrial heritage.
- Deliver an integrated heritage training programme annually.
- Support 3 projects that document visually ongoing changes in landscape character, streetscapes, community, industrial heritage and vernacular forms.
- Achieve *Cittaslow* Charter status in 3 towns and villages.
- Develop a visitor trail that links iconic and historic sculpture and landscape art.
- Develop 3 pilot actions on bio-diversity for local communities and 2 enterprises as part of a Corporate Social Responsibility initiative.
- Facilitate the involvement of 12 tourism enterprises in the development of eco-tourism through linkages with environmental designations.
- Support 10 community arts initiatives that reflect unique aspects of the region’s local culture and heritage.
- Introduce environmental auditing and monitoring for 180 tourism, food and craft enterprises.
- Complete a feasibility study to determine the suitability of developing a Geopark in West Cork.
- Develop 2 facilities offering activity-based education based on the natural, built and cultural environment.

5.12. Inter-territorial & Transnational

Objective

To engage in inter-territorial and trans-national initiatives and develop projects and networks to assist community and enterprise development.

Indicative Strategy

- Ensure that development actions are predicated upon the deepening and advancement of the cluster model concept for community and enterprise development.
- Achieve economies of scale and scope in project development.
- Promote transfer of knowledge, information and experience amongst development groups.
- Analyse and adapt relevant development models, strategies and approaches.
- Participate in selected joint venture developments that engage and build upon the respective competencies of project partners.
- Use information and communication technologies as a data resource to facilitate inter-territorial and trans-national exchange.
- Support the Cork County Development Board/Cork County Council in delivering integrated county-wide development initiatives.
- Collaborate with statutory agencies (BIM, Teagasc, Fáilte Ireland, VEC, Crafts Council of Ireland, Bord Bia, etc.) and selected local development groups in the planning and development of innovative or pilot projects.
- Engage in project planning and development with local action groups in the new EU member states to facilitate the reciprocal exchange of experience and know-how.
- Facilitate the participation of local community and enterprise organisations in trans-national and inter-territorial project development.
- Leverage additional development opportunities from complementary programmes including INTEREG, EQUAL, LEONARDO, etc.
- Facilitate the continued participation in the Fuchsia Brand initiative of accredited enterprises within the Owenabue Valley and Gaeltacht Areas.

Planned Development Actions

- ▶ Employ on an inter-territorial basis a Project Officer to establish a platform for the involvement of farmers in renewable energy production.
- ▶ Identify compatible transnational project partners to advance concept of economic competitiveness through the use of regional identity (Regional branding, cluster and strategy development, etc).
- ▶ Co-ordinate selected development initiatives with the adjacent Gaeltacht and island areas.
- ▶ Explore on joint basis new approaches to the production, distribution and marketing of artisan and speciality food and craft products.
- ▶ Facilitate the opportunity of short-term shadow-working/employee exchange with selected trans-national and inter-territorial projects.
- ▶ Evaluate and benchmark the cluster development model with best practice development initiatives e.g. Suupohja Development Association Finland.

Objectives & Strategy

Inter-territorial & Transnational

- ▶ Develop inter-territorial and trans-national initiatives to identify and implement best practice in engaging farmers in green care/social farming, energy production and collective marketing (Waterford LEADER Partnership, COFAMI, SOFAR and ELREN).
- ▶ Assess the potential for an inter-territorial micro food incubation training programme in conjunction with Waterford LEADER Partnership.
- ▶ Support the development and promotion of the World Adventure Series/The Turas on a joint basis with relevant statutory bodies, local authorities and local action groups.
- ▶ Facilitate focused international study tours exploring rural development strategies and methodologies.
- ▶ Assess the potential for the creation and development of a network of regional branding initiatives.
- ▶ Further collaborate with the North American Community Development Society and Innovative Leadership Australia in developing and refining innovative local development strategies.
- ▶ Participate in the ULTREIA Project to promote sustainable tourism along maritime pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela.
- ▶ Further develop “Imaging Rural Identity” project to enhance the use of visual communication in strengthening social cohesion.
- ▶ Develop a series of themed workshops to explore additional linkages, knowledge sharing and network opportunities for project development.
- ▶ Further develop the Quality of Life index to include quantitative data in benchmarking West Cork against other rural locations.
- ▶ Collaborate on an inter-territorial basis to bundle tourism marketing initiatives and offers for the on-line environment.
- ▶ Engage in joint venture training and marketing promotions with SECAD and MFG to facilitate inclusion of Fuchsia Brand accredited enterprises.
- ▶ Create mutually supportive and complementary strategies for village renewal and community development in re-cast Owenabue Valley region

Targets and indicators

- Employ on an inter-territorial basis a Project Officer to establish a platform for the involvement of 10 farmers in renewable energy production.
- Identify 10 compatible transnational project partners to work on 6 development initiatives to advance the concept of economic competitiveness through the use of regional identity.
- Co-ordinate 8 development initiatives with the adjacent Gaeltacht (5) and island areas (3).
- Implement one new methodology in the distribution and marketing of artisan and speciality food and craft products.
- Facilitate 4 short-term shadow-working/employee exchanges with selected transnational (2) and inter-territorial (2) projects.
- Develop a methodology to measure and compare results from the cluster development model.
- Facilitate the involvement of 42 farm enterprises in implementing best practice in green care/social farming (5), energy production (12) and collective marketing (25).

Objectives & Strategy

Inter-territorial & Transnational

- Deliver a micro food incubation training programme with 8 participants in conjunction with Waterford LEADER Partnership.
- Leverage the World Adventure Series/*The Turas* to foster relationships with 10 visiting journalists and achieve 15 national and 10 international media references to West Cork.
- Market and host 4 international study tours exploring rural development strategies and methodologies.
- Develop 2 collaborate actions with the North American Community Development Society and 1 with Innovative Leadership Australia.
- Develop 1 local pilgrim route as a consequence of the ULTREIA project.
- Collaborate on 2 inter-territorial/trans-national projects on “Imaging Rural Identity”.
- Host an annual seminar to explore additional linkages, knowledge sharing and network opportunities for inter-territorial and trans-national project development.
- Benchmark the region using the Quality of Life index with 2 inter-territorial and 1 trans-national partner.
- Bundle 8 tourism marketing initiatives and offers on a county-wide and regional basis.
- Deliver 2 training and 3 marketing promotions with SECAD and MFG to facilitate inclusion of Fuchsia Brand accredited enterprises.
- Create 1 complementary strategy for village renewal and community development in re-cast Owenabue Valley region.
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