

Chapter 5 – The Donegal Community Audit - A Community Perspective

5.1 Introduction

A community and voluntary group's needs are diverse and can be determined by where they are located¹, the sector they serve², the structures they belong to or by the groups themselves. As chapter 3 focused on location specific needs and chapter 4 on sectoral specific needs or issues, this chapter will examine the representation of the needs of community and voluntary groups through existing structures and present further needs as identified by the groups themselves.

5.2 Representing the needs of community and voluntary groups

5.2.1 The County Community Forum

The County Community Forum was established in March 2000 to *“represent the community and voluntary sector in County Donegal and to ensure that it is fully involved in decision making in the county”*³

The County Community Forum has a functional role in providing a channel for mobilising consultation on development issues in the County and the Local Area Fora provide a potential area of contact between communities and statutory authorities at local level.

The Forum draws its membership from five area fora - Inishowen Community Forum, Foram Pobail na Gaeltachta, South Donegal Forum, East Donegal Forum and North Donegal Forum - spread throughout the county.

As a comprehensive review of the County Development Board and its associated sub-structures⁴, took place in 2005, which examined the effectiveness of the processes and mechanisms used to implement the strategies in detail, this aspect is not further developed in this chapter. The focus instead is firstly on 'how aware community and voluntary groups are of the existence of these structures' and secondly if aware, 'are they willing to join these structures' and therefore, have their needs represented.

5.2.2 Willingness to join

Map 12 below displays the boundaries for the five area fora and the community and voluntary groups audited, which are geographically, located therein but not necessarily a member of the respective forum.

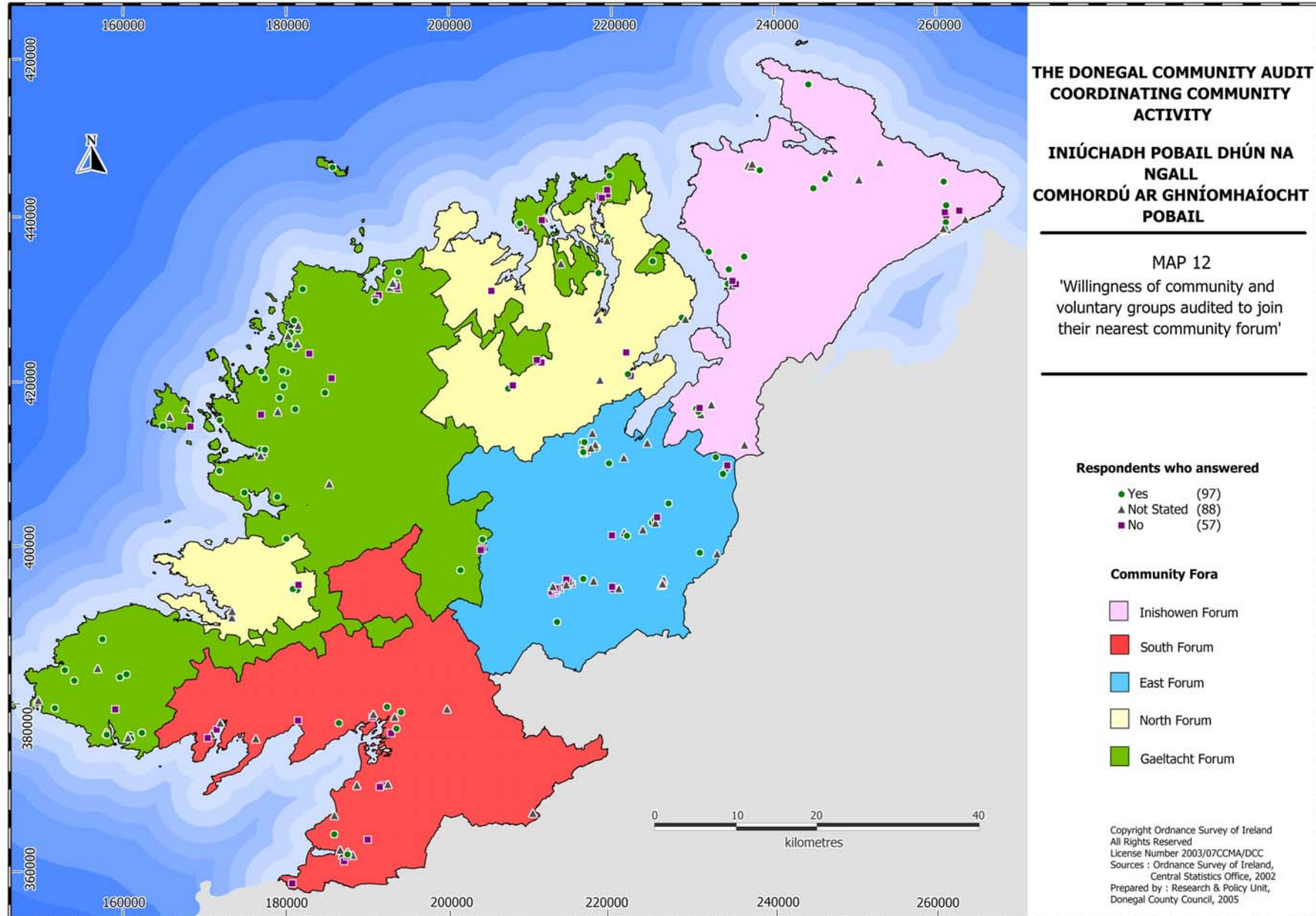
Respondents were asked to state whether their group is a member of any of the above structures and if they are not, then whether they would like to join their nearest area forum. Of the groups that responded to the survey, 40% indicated that they would like to join their nearest community forum and therefore felt that it would be representative or provide a useful platform to represent their needs. 24% indicated they would not like to join their nearest forum and the highest are recorded in the Gaeltacht Forum area. It can be further deduced that 36% already exist as members and others chose not to respond.

¹ Chapter 3

² Chapter 4

³ <http://www.donegalcldb.ie>

⁴ CDB Review, 2005



40% indicated that they would like to join their nearest Community Fora. 24% of all groups indicated that they wouldn't, with the highest recorded number in the Gaeltacht Forum area

5.2.3 Awareness of the existence of community structures

A necessary pre-condition to ensuring any structure represents the views of existing or potential members, is that they are aware of its existence. Respondents were asked to state their level of awareness of the County Community Forum and its 5 Area Fora in County Donegal. 242 groups responded to this question, the results of which are illustrated as follows:

- 53% of respondents were aware of the existence of the County Community Forum, 23% were not
- 46% were aware of the existence of the Gaeltacht forum, while 25% were not
- 42% were aware of the existence of the Inishowen Forum, while 28% were not
- 39% were aware of the existence of the South Forum and 28% were not
- 35% were aware of the existence of the North forum and 26% were not
- 34% were aware of the existence of the East forum and 30% were not.

The responses to the survey show that there is a need to increase the awareness of the existence of the community structures in the County

The previous two subsections have highlighted that 24% of respondents did not want to join their nearest forum and that a high proportion of respondents were unaware of the existence of those structures. Therefore, 24% of the groups captured through the Audit are not, at present or likely to be in the future, represented by existing structure in the County.

5.2.4 Alignment of community structures

A possible impediment to the existing structures best representing the needs of present or future members; in terms of communication between community representatives, elected representatives and executives of the County Council; is the mis-match between the Area Fora and the Local Area Committees⁵.

The alignment of forum areas at present splits some Electoral Divisions, with the result that census data cannot be matched scientifically to these (i.e.) the 12 different census volumes cannot be applied to build a profile for these split Electoral Divisions. Furthermore, if the community structures were aligned in accordance with Electoral Areas, this would permit the matching of census data to the entire area served by each of the structures. This would give each forum a complete picture of the area they serve and by matching each with the key census datasets, will inform them as to how to respond to the changing needs of the entire Electoral Area.

⁵ CDB Review, 2005, pg60

The present alignment of community structures splits some Electoral Divisions, meaning that census data cannot be applied in any scientific format to building up a profile of those Electoral Divisions

5.3 Needs as identified by community and voluntary groups

The questionnaire provided groups with the opportunity to raise their particular needs with regards to funding, strategic development, human resources, volunteerism, training and educational needs and these are now dealt with in turn.

5.3.1 Strategic development needs of community and voluntary groups

To determine whether those who responded to our survey, were actually classified as a community and voluntary group, they were asked to indicate if they had a constitution, aims and objectives and a memorandum and articles of association. The results of which are captured in Table 5.1 below. The majority of community and voluntary groups had aims and objectives (78%), had a constitution (59%) and memorandum and articles of association (43%). Despite the fact that the majority have the essential criteria to be classified as a community and voluntary groups there are still a substantial amount of those who did not. This alone is a finding, in itself, as we need to determine what assistance these groups require to become formally established?

The majority of groups captured through the Community Audit would qualify as a legitimate community and voluntary groups, in that they have a constitution, aim and objectives and memorandum and articles of association

	Yes	No	Not Stated
Constitution	142 (59%)	54 (22%)	46 (19%)
Aims and objectives	190 (78%)	28 (12%)	24 (10%)
Memorandum and Articles of Association	103 (43%)	73 (30%)	66 (27%)

Table 5.1 Criteria for classification as a community and voluntary group

Translating aims and objectives and assistance with the development of a strategic plan

It is interesting to determine how many of these community and voluntary groups translated their aims and objectives, as outlined in Table 5.1 above, into a strategic development plan.

Only 37% of the total respondents to the survey indicated that they had a clear strategic development plan, however 49% indicated that they did not have a plan.

Further examination reveals that of the 49% who did not have a strategic development plan, 62% were interested in receiving assistance to complete such a plan. This type of assistance could include a template of constitution, roles of committees etc, however, responses indicated a clear lack of understanding of the material needed to develop a plan and indicates a clear interventional role for service providers.

Community and Voluntary Groups require assistance in translating their founding aims and objectives into Strategic Development Plans but are unsure of the type of assistance required to do this

Ensuring the implementation of action plans

A number of community and voluntary groups indicated that they had strategic development plans, with clearly defined short term, medium term and long term actions and also specified the requirements or needs to implement their plans and the most common occurrences are grouped under the following headings:

1. Funding

The majority of community and voluntary groups indicated they required funding to ensure the implementations of their actions. The responses reflected that groups are dependent on piecemeal funding. The groups indicated that they require core funding and continuous or on-going funding from both central Government and local and regional bodies, to permit planning in the long term and thereby ensuring sustainability.

The groups also referred to the need to embark on fundraising activities. The groups recognised that continued support from various funding agencies and local voluntary helpers was essential but also praised the work of some funding bodies, like the PEACE II Taskforce:

“The current PEACE II project has supported capital investment and programmes of activities for various groups. The presence of staff under the PEACE II funding, has allowed several other areas of development of be addressed and significant progress to be made. Priority now is to access core funding on an on-going basis, to sustain these developments and to continue the work necessary to address the levels of disadvantage and isolation experienced in the area as a result of years of decline and border closures”.

Funding sources and fundraising activities are explored further in Chapter 6.

2. Advise, help and support

A significant number of groups indicated that they would require advice, help and support on how to:

- Deal with funding agencies
- Motivate the community
- Carry out administration and secretarial work
- Engage in fundraising activity
- Ensure the continued volunteer commitment and engagement

It was envisaged that such support, help and advice would be best provided by people in relevant agencies that know the community projects on the ground; by Local Authorities, State bodies and other service providers and the wider community.

3. Premises

Community and voluntary groups indicated that securing suitable premises in a convenient location was essential to ensuring the implementation of their short term, medium term and long-term actions.

4. A change in attitudes

Finally, it was recognised that there is a requirement or need to ensure the full participation of the community and voluntary group in the implementation of action plans through a positive willingness to embrace a change in attitudes.

5.3.2 Human resource needs of community and voluntary groups

The Donegal Community Audit set out to quantify the number of paid staff and the number of volunteers working in the community and voluntary sector. The purpose of this was to determine if there is an over-reliance on volunteerism to compensate for a lack of paid staff in the sector.

Paid community and voluntary workers

Respondents were asked to specify the number of paid employees and whether there were in a full-time or part-time capacity. 114 groups (47% of all groups) indicated that they had paid staff⁶. On average, each of the community and voluntary groups has 5/6 employees either full time or part time. The total number of paid staff captured through the audit was 655 employees, the majority of which were employed in a part time capacity (400).

It is important however to note that more than half of the respondents did not have paid human resources (125 groups) and it would be anticipated that those groups rely on the services of volunteers to compensate for any other form of paid labour. The following section assesses the contribution of volunteerism to the community and voluntary sector in County Donegal.

47% of respondents had paid staff and it is evident that they had an abundant supply, while 52% who do not have any paid staff and relied heavily on volunteerism.

The importance of volunteerism

The survey sought to determine whether community and voluntary groups audited had any volunteers⁷. It is not surprising that the majority of 163 groups have volunteers. It is important to note that those groups who indicated that they have volunteers may also employ paid staff. It is likely that the majority of volunteers captured are in community and voluntary groups who have no other form of paid staff or resources.

The average number of hours worked per week by volunteers for all groups in the county is 11.3 hours⁸, however a number of groups indicated in some cases that volunteers worked upto 70 hours per week. While it appears that the number of voluntary hours are quite high, however the vast majority worked well below the average at 11.3 per week.

Addressing a lack of volunteerism or the 'volunteersim' issue

Respondents were asked in their opinion how volunteerism could be improved in their area. The responses are divided up into the categories detailed below. From here on in, the volunteerism issue is taken to indicate that there is a lack of volunteers.

⁶ 52% indicated that they did not and 1% were non-stated

⁷ Have volunteers = 66.3% (163 groups), No Volunteers = 22.3% (55 groups), Not Stated = 11.4% (28 groups)

⁸ 976 = total hours by volunteers / 86 groups who indicated the hours the volunteers worked

1. Training and Support

- More support and funding is required for voluntary groups
- More support (i.e.) funding, is required from the Local Authority
- More Government support is needed
- It is absolutely essential that a formal mechanism for volunteerism is established
- As volunteers are mainly involved with specific smaller groups in the area, it is necessary to formalise aims to help establish and support these groups
- By good recruitment, training, support and supervision. If the volunteering environment is structured and well-organised then volunteers feel supported, valued and not abused. Short shifts and specific duties are very helpful
- More training, resources and support from paid workers is needed
- The Management Committee participated in training days and attended different events, activities and seminars
- By providing introductory evenings, advertising, letting potential volunteers know they will be valued and receive training in areas such as child protection, introduction to youth work and first-aid
- Training on community development which highlights community issues and the benefits of community participation
- An accredited training programme for skills learned, encouragement of lifelong learning.

2. Funding, Payment and Incentives

- Decisions with regards to funding carried out in an open, transparent and inclusive manner by both the funding agency and the community and voluntary group
- Recognition of volunteer input as a source of "matching funding", resourcing of volunteers by a wage or salary for the loss from taking time off work to attend meetings etc
- Greater funding to community groups who can illustrate, in a transparent manner, that they have arrived at their development aims, for local action, in a democratic fashion
- Better funding to source volunteers and provide adequate training
- Acknowledging the helpfulness of volunteers, before, during and after the annual festival (i.e.) through payments etc
- Volunteers should at least get expenses for their time and labour
- Covering financial out of pocket expenses, for example, travel, childcare, eldercare etc
- By giving incentives (e.g.) in childcare, let the fees be lowered if the parents do a day in the playgroup
- Acknowledging and strengthening voluntary input by credits or awards for volunteerism
- Develop and co-ordinate the activities of volunteers having a designated paid worker
- Offer financial support to groups, out of which volunteers' expenses can be met.

3. Awareness and Promotion

- It is important to make people aware of the need for volunteers so that they will give a little back into their community
- Increasing awareness through the dissemination of information
- Increasing awareness of committee membership and who to contact
- Increasing awareness of the activity that is taking place in the community by talking to children in primary and secondary schools
- The promotion of volunteerism and inter-promotional type projects at school level
- Through publicity, marketing and supporting volunteer relationships
- Capacity building for volunteers
- Success breeds volunteerism (i.e.) the success of our band has proven to be an incentive for volunteers to get involved
- On-going awareness raising to ensure events can be held annually
- Advertising through various media with an underlying message that continually lets the public know of the work being done and the need for new volunteers to carry on where others have left off
- Increase awareness by working with groups (e.g. 5 sessions) on what is involved, highlighting the importance of meeting the needs of volunteers as well as the organisations
- By carrying out a PR exercise on volunteering, to include roles or responsibilities of volunteers and volunteering organisations
- Mobilising volunteers by developing interesting and motivating ideas and projects
- A good PR Campaign seeking volunteers through FÁS
- Having pride of place in towns and villages
- By appealing to the public and by positive example.

4. Community Development

- If community infrastructure is in place in an area, (i.e.) community facilities, youth clubs etc, then volunteers could be used to the benefit of the community
- By promoting community development in our area through businesses and schools
- Teangbhal le grupaí spóirt an aisach agus an óige ***
- Encouraging volunteerism and community development through the involvement of the entire family unit, by encouraging civic spirit through the different religious institutions
- Community development will not happen unless people are willing to volunteer their time.

4. Better Facilities

- By having reasonable facilities to make the work more enjoyable, *'as at present we have no facilities and we are using a room in the Community Centre with poor kitchen facilities with very little space'*
- Improved facilities and resources
- At present we are using the facilities of others and this cripples the attitude or motivation towards volunteerism.

6. Further Solutions

- Clearer progression routes highlighting how voluntary activity can lead into employment opportunities
- Identify 'partner' groups looking for volunteers
- Responsibility placed on parents to volunteer in groups, clubs etc, where their children attend
- Need to be flexible and be able to make a commitment (e.g.) encourage a small commitment over short period of time to start with
- The development of a Charter of Rights for Volunteers
- Exploring alternatives to volunteerism.

A converse to the volunteerism issue

The previous comment boxes looked at tangible solutions to addressing a lack of volunteerism. This section presents the converse when volunteerism is not an issue for groups and offers some insight into their understanding of the concept.

7. Why volunteerism is not an issue...

- Due to good co-operation within the group and everyone having equal status, (i.e.) 'no one thinks they do more or are better than any of the other volunteers'
- When the community is focused on projects which are seen as a huge benefit to the town, for example 'The Tidy Towns' and Christmas Lights, Festival weeks etc
- When people are interested and motivated
- By providing programmes and training to increase participation.

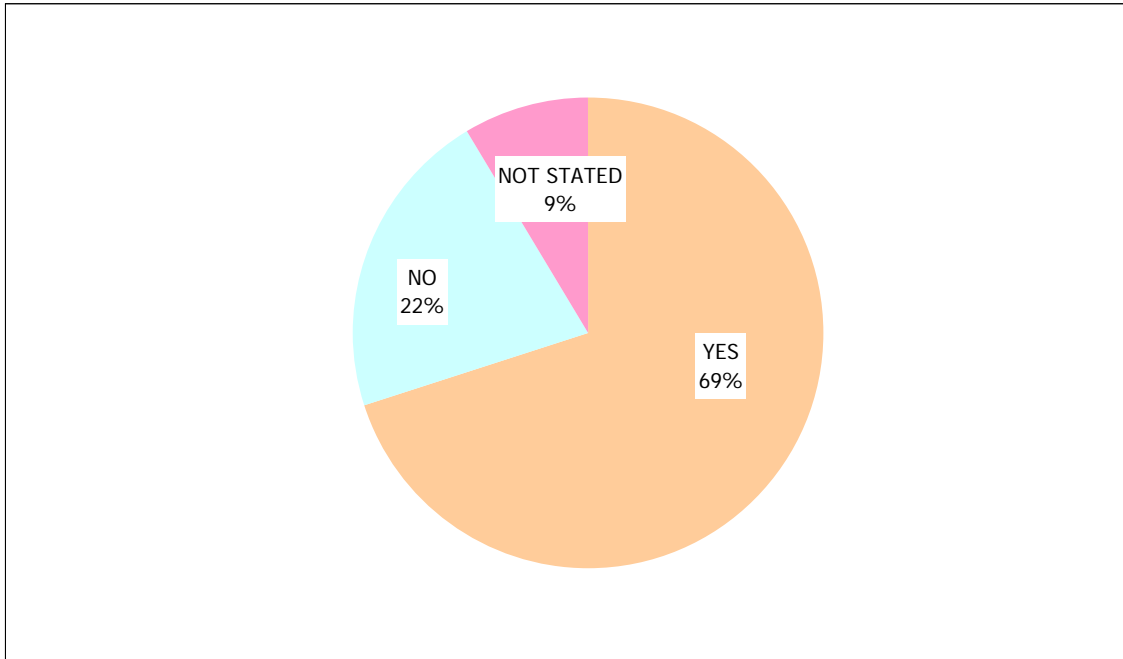
5.3.3 Training and educational needs of community and voluntary groups

This section quantifies the contribution made to the community and voluntary sector in terms of training, education and capacity building, by exploring whether training courses were funded or not over a one-year period and presents the benefits accruing to the 23 different sectors by undertaking these courses. Furthermore, this section provides the educational and training providers of Donegal County Development Board with indicative insights into what course are required by the community and voluntary sector in the future.

Funding training in the county

All respondents to the survey were asked to specify in the questionnaire, whether training courses undertaken by their committee members, staff or volunteers over the last year was funded. Figure 5.3 below captures these results and indicates that the vast majority of training courses undertaken by community and voluntary groups in the county were funded. The benefits accruing from those participating in those training courses, will be discussed in greater details below, but suffice to say that, funding agencies in this respect have made a huge contribution to the local economy.

Figure 5.1 Was Funding provided for Training Courses?

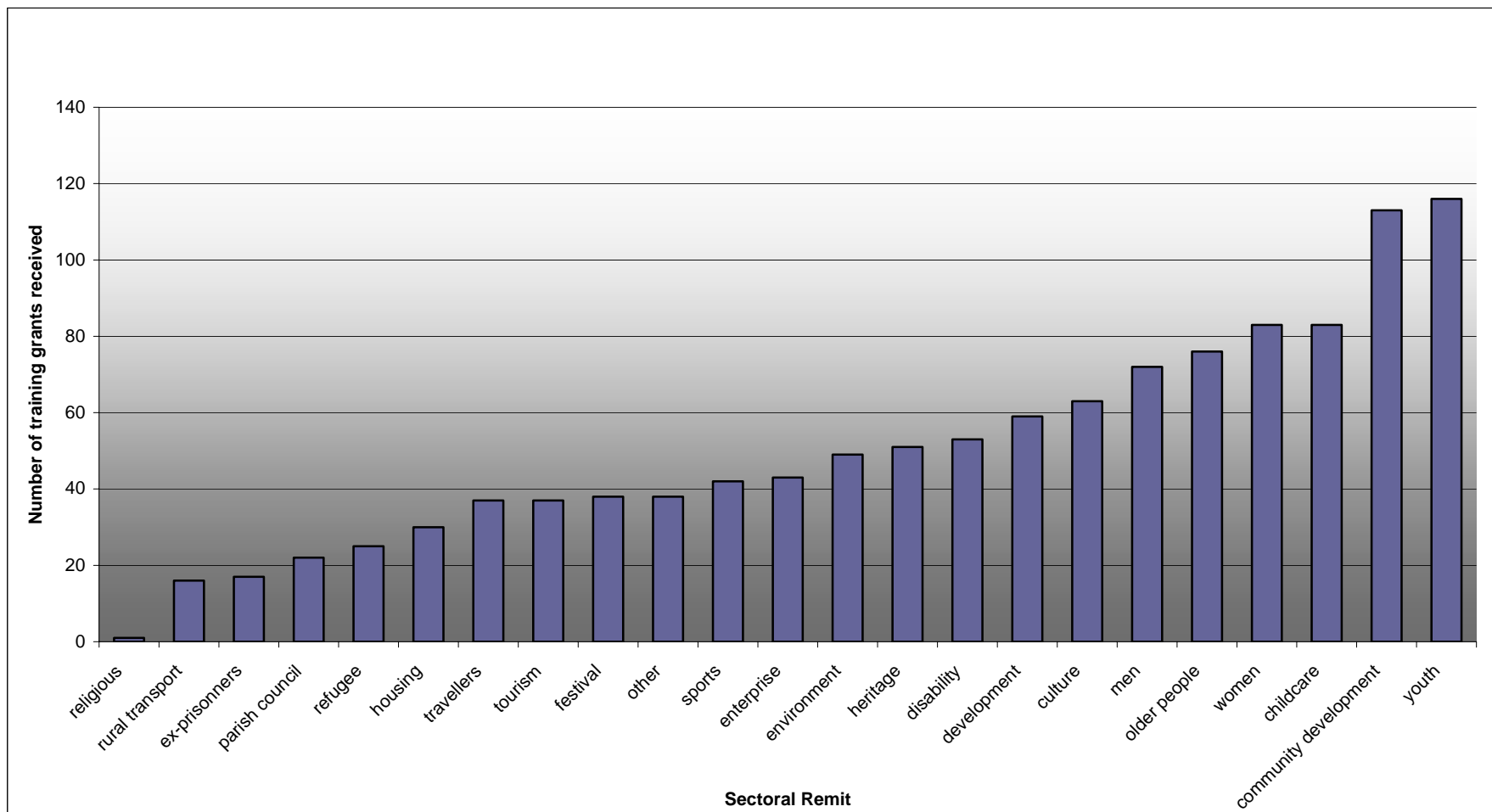


The vast majority of training and educational courses for the community and voluntary sector were funded

The distribution of training grants across the different sectors

Figure 5.2 below outlines community and voluntary groups with specific sectoral remits that received training grants. Groups with a sectoral remit for youth (10%) received the most training grants, closely followed by community development groups (10%), followed by childcare (7%), women (7%), older people (7%) and men (6%).

Figure 5.2 The Distribution of training grants across sectoral specific community and voluntary groups



Types of training courses undertaken

The comment boxes in this section details the training and education courses undertaken by the Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Committee Members, Staff, Volunteers etc in different community and voluntary groups operating across the 23 different sectors. This section outlines the most common types of training courses taken by community and voluntary groups with a specific sectoral remit and the contribution that these training courses have made to each sector can be ascertained by the reader reviewing the main 'benefits' gained:

Table 5.2 Sector: women

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <p>Committee and business training IT Community Development including Cross Community Work Childcare, Youth and Parenting First Aid, Health and Safety and Fire Safety Dealing with Suicide and Depression.</p> <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants in the above courses gained qualifications to compliment a practical work experience, developed a greater awareness of their community and an understanding of activities to encourage peace, improved their networking with other business management, finance and marketing skills, improvements in health and hygiene and greater applied intervention skills with regards to suicide prevention.</p>
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Table 5.3 Sector: men

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <p>Committee and business training IT Community Development including Cross Community Work Childcare, Youth and Parenting First Aid, Health and Safety and Fire Safety Dealing with Suicide and Depression.</p> <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants in the above increased their capacity to function to a higher level in day-to-day work, gained the necessary information to manage a large group, gained a better grasp and understanding of different roles and furthermore, they felt they were able to pass these benefits onto other local groups. They benefited from a good grounding in factual information about drugs and alcohol and how to apply theory to effective work practices and had greater awareness in suicide and depression related issues.</p>
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Table 5.4 Sector: sports and recreational

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <p>Community Development including Cross Community Work</p>
<p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants gained a better understanding of community development (i.e.) what a community comprises of, what we can do to encourage peace and how the structures function.</p>

Table 5.5 Sector: community development group

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <p>Committee and business training IT Community Development including Cross Community Work First Aid, Health and Safety and Fire Safety Childcare, Youth & Parenting Gaeilge</p>
<p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants increased their capacity to function with a better grasp of different roles, it helped those that were long term unemployed to get back into long term employment, it provided a better understanding of community development and its application of theory to already effective work policy. It improved safety, health and hygiene in the workplace, it made participants more aware of child, youth and parenting policies by putting them into use and improved language, reporting and cultural skills with regards to the Irish language.</p>

Table 5.6 Sector: ex-prisoners

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <p>Committee and business training Community Development including Cross Community Work Dealing with Suicide and Depression IT</p>
<p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants enhanced capacity building, gained professional qualifications in advocacy and gained a better understanding about their community and what activities they can engage in to encourage peace.</p>

Table 5.7 Sector: childcare

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Special Needs and Mental HealthCommittee and business trainingChildcare, Youth & ParentingFirst Aid, Health and Safety and Fire SafetyITCommunity Development including Cross Community Work <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants gained a recognised qualification for working in childcare, enhanced working childcare knowledge especially with how to deal with and recognise child abuse, it gave staff a knowledge of how to deal with an accident in a play situation and to have a community presence as part of the communities online project, improved training on how to deal with special needs children, children with disabilities and children with autism.</p>

Table 5.8 Sector: housing / residential

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Committee and business trainingITHealth & Safety, Fire SafetyCommunity DevelopmentChildcare, Youth & Parenting <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants benefited with improved computer skills and effective management techniques. It enhanced the skills to manage the activities carried on in the centre, it provided a greater knowledge of accountancy procedures, it allowed of an application of an effective work policy and provided a qualification which compliments work and staff experience.</p>

Table 5.9 Sector: refugee / asylum seekers

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Committee and business trainingITFirst Aid, Health & Safety and Fire SafetyChildcare <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants overall gained a professional qualification in advocacy, effective management skills and allowed for the application of theory to an already effective work policy.</p>

Table 5.10 Sector: heritage

Main training courses

Community Development including Cross Community Work
Committee and business training
IT
First Aid, Health & Safety and Fire Safety
Gaeilge

Main Benefits

Participants felt that training courses helped the unemployed get back into long term employment by upgrading skills, it provided a better understanding of 'community' and what activities can be done to encourage peace was gained, the aims and objectives of the Development Committee benefited from training, that health and safety issues were enhanced and allowed for better communication and improved advantages in the work place through the Irish language.

Table 5.11 Sector: youth

Main training courses

Committee and business training
Community Development including Cross Community Work
Childcare, Youth and Parenting
IT
First Aid, Health & Safety and Fire Safety

Main Benefits

Participants increased their capacity to function to a higher level in day-to-day work, it raised their input into and provided a greater awareness of policy to an organisation, it enhanced development skills to work with young people and their parents, it ensured and safe guarded the welfare of young people, it provided a good grounding in factual information about drugs and alcohol. Continual training through a developmental programme keeps the standards of knowledge and awareness at a high level and ensures that the delivery of the programme to parents is up to date and of a high quality and standard.

Table 5.12 Sector: development groups

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Committee and business trainingCommunity Development including Cross Community WorkChildcare, Youth and ParentingITFirst Aid, Health & Safety and Fire Safety <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants received a qualification, which enabled basic computers to be taught to others, it improved networking through other business management, finance and marketing skills, it provided excellent mentoring in finance and marketing and it improved the level of understanding of specific roles and improved safety in the workplace.</p>

Table 5.13 Sector: Travellers

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Committee and business trainingFirst Aid, Health and SafetyCommunity Development including Cross Community WorkChildcare, Youth and ParentingIT <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants improved communication and networking skills between all staff members, it helped their leaderships capabilities, proved beneficial in working with children. They gained a better understanding of community development and gained essential experience in first aid, health and safety related issues.</p>

Table 5.14 Sector: older people

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Committee and business trainingCommunity Development including Cross Community WorkChildcare, Youth and ParentingITFirst Aid, Health & Safety and Fire Safety <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants were made more aware of policies and how to put them into use, they gained a better understanding of the term 'community' and of the activities which can encourage peace, they benefited from the application of theoretical aspects to the working environment while also gaining qualifications which increased their capacity.</p>
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Table 5.15 Sector: tourism

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">First Aid, Health & SafetyCommunity Development including Cross Community WorkCommittee and business trainingIT <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants upgraded skills, improved efficiency in office administration and overall productivity increased as a result. It increased awareness about development especially with regards to target groups. Issues surrounding safety, health and hygiene were also enhanced.</p>

Table 5.16 Sector: festival groups

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Music, Dance and DramaCommunity Development including Cross Community WorkCommittee and business trainingFirst Aid, Health & SafetyIT <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants gained a better insight into their roles within the group, improved computer, teamwork and motivational skills and provided more confidence to the long term unemployed to gain employment.</p>

Table 5.17 Sector: environment

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <p>Gaeilge Community Development including Cross Community Work IT First Aid, Health & Safety Committee and business training</p> <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants received excellent mentoring in finance and marketing, the training provided helped them formulate the aims and objectives of the Development Committee. Overall their IT skills were greatly improved and communication was bettered through the use of the Irish language.</p>
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Table 5.18 Sector: Disability

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <p>Committee and business training First Aid, Health & Safety IT Community Development including Cross Community Work Special Needs Training and Mental Health Programmes related Training Caring for People with a Disability Manual Handling Training</p> <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>With the completion of the committee and business training in particular, Participants are now more empowered and want to develop a new committee, which will draw up specific aims and objectives for their group. The participants are more aware of the social model of disability and issues surrounding disability and the training has helped parents cope with challenging behaviour and in particular was excellent in dealing with children with special needs.</p>

Table 5.19 Sector: culture

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <p>Community Development including Cross Community Work Committee and business training IT Childcare & Parenting First Aid, Health & Safety related Training Gaeilge</p> <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Through training courses completed, participants were more aware of policies and how to implement and put those into use within their respective group, they identified joint community needs, increased capacity to function to a higher level in day to day and improved language skills, reporting skills & cultural skills in Irish</p>

Table 5.20 Sector: religious

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <p>Special Needs Training IT First Aid, Health & Safety</p> <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants gained essential experience when working with young children and also found training was excellent when dealing with special needs children.</p>
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Table 5.21 Sector: enterprise

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <p>IT Community Development including Cross Community Work Committee & Business Training</p> <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants obtained a better understanding of Community Development and a greater awareness around development generally, for example, regarding target groups. Their overall skills increased and office administration became more efficient.</p>

Table 5.22 Sector: rural transport

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Committee and Business trainingCommunity DevelopmentITYouth Work <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants increased their skills to manage the centres' activities, obtained qualifications for the financial administration of post and greater knowledge of accounting procedures and also developed the skills necessary to teach IT to young people.</p>
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Table 5.23 Sector: parish council

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">ITFirst Aid, Health & Safety <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Participants increased their computer skills and information around the subject of Computing and also, health and hygiene were improved in the centre.</p>

Table 5.24 Sector: other groups

<p><u>Main training courses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Committee and business trainingITCommunity Development <p><u>Main Benefits</u></p> <p>Through training, the manager was enabled to evaluate their role and management skills and make appropriate changes. New skills obtained were very relevant and their knowledge of computers increased greatly. Applied suicide intervention skills were learned. Participants gained a good grounding in factual information about drugs and alcohol and a dedicated first-aider was established in the office.</p>
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Future training needs

The questionnaire captured information on committee members, volunteers and staff across all the 23 sectors and their future training needs over the short (0- 1 year), medium (1-3 years) and long term (3 years +). Of all those who had indicated that they had training needs, 51% were in the short term, 32% in the medium and only 17% in the long term:

- **Short Term**
The most pertinent training needs, in order of importance, in the short term were required in Management Training, Committee Organisation and Skill Training, Child Protection, First Aid, IT and Computer Skills Training.
- **Medium Term**
Those training courses most favourable for the medium term in ascending order were Management Training, Finance Planning, Drawing up Constitution, Aims and Plans, Child Protection and Teambuilding and Teamwork.
- **Long Term**
Regarding the long term, Management Training, Capacity Building, Child Protection, Committee Organisation and Skills and Strategic Planning emerged as the most common to fulfil training needs.

51% of all respondents indicated that they had short term training needs, 32% had medium term training needs and only 17% had long term training needs

It is important to note that 'Management Training' has emerged as the most common training need identified in the short, medium and long term, while other training of significant importance highlighted in all three include Committee Organisation and Skill Training and Child Protection. It is only by understanding the level and type of courses taken by community and voluntary groups in the past and in determining their needs, can we be assured that any collaborative action through the County Development Board process will address the real training and educational needs in the future.