

Chapter 6 The Donegal Community Audit – A Funding Perspective

6.1 Introduction

The importance of funding to the community and voluntary sector can hardly be overstated! In an effort to uncover the funding activity of the community and voluntary sector in County Donegal, the Donegal Community Audit examined in great detail the number of projects undertaken by the respondents since 2000 and this aspect forms the subject matter of this chapter. Section 6.2 examines how these projects were financed in terms of funding applications, fund raising activity and other sources. It examines whether these projects were successful in attaining funding and who were the main funders. Section 6.3 presents how the respondents planned to meet their future funding needs.

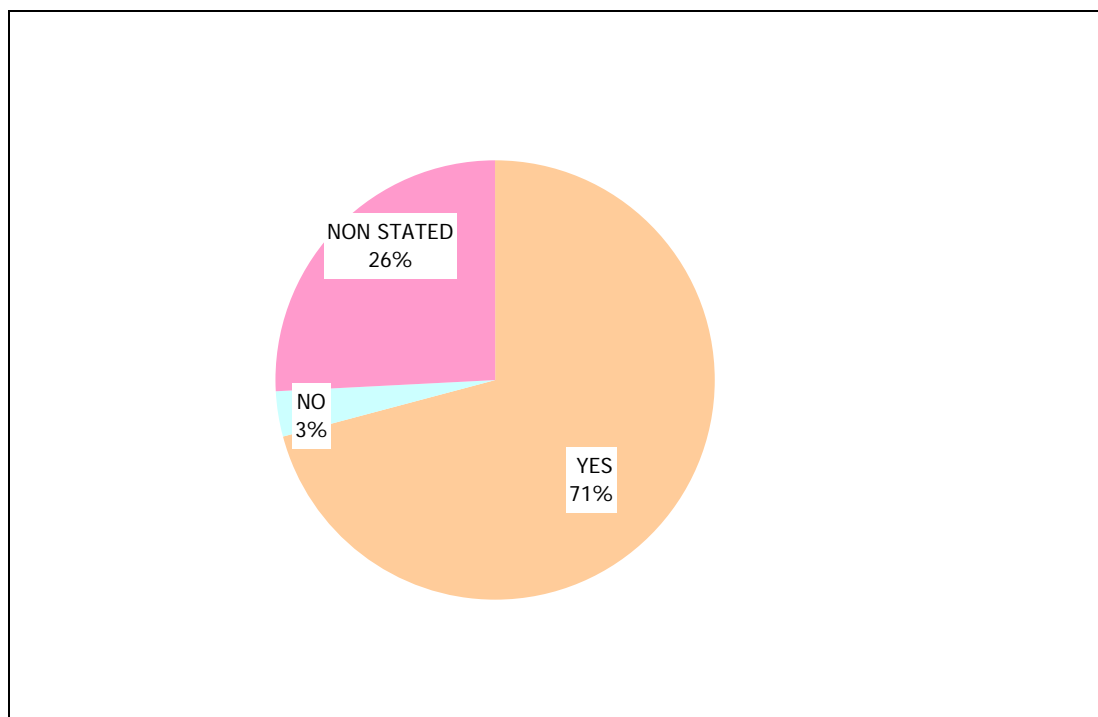
6.2 Financing projects

Projects can be financed either through funding applications, fund raising or by other means.

6.2.1 Funding applications

In the survey, the respondents were asked to indicate whether they had made a funding application or not since 2000. The survey captured 391 projects¹, of which the majority (277) had made funding applications. A small number of projects (13) did not make funding applications and were thus reliant on other sources to fund their projects. Additionally, there were a total of 101 projects where the respondents did not state whether they had made funding applications or not.

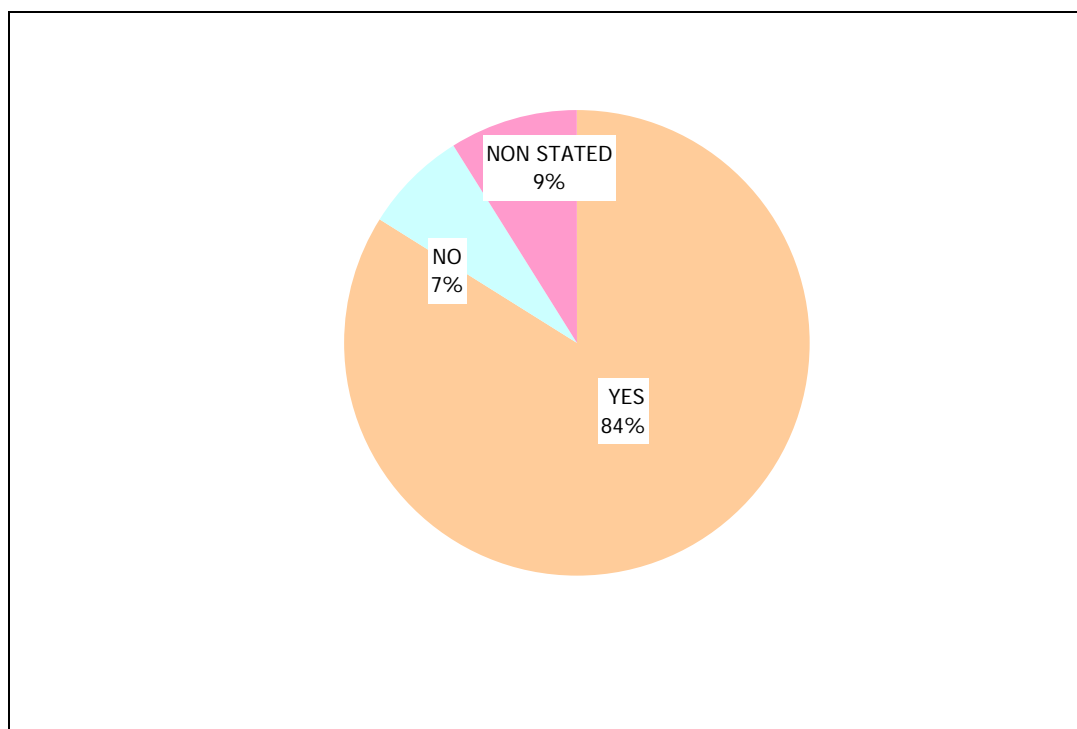
Figure 6.1 Did you make a funding application?



As outlined above, there were 277 projects, which had made a funding application and it is interesting to determine how many of these funding applications were successful or not. The results are captured in figure 6.2 overleaf. 234 were successful in attaining funding, 19 were unsuccessful while 24 were non-stated.

¹ Please note one community and voluntary group may undertake numerous projects over time

Figure 6.2 Was your application successful?



The majority of groups (84%) captured through the survey, that had made funding applications, were successful in attaining funding

Funding bodies for the community and voluntary sector

In all instances, the community and voluntary groups were asked to specify the name of the funder to which the application was made for their project and Table 6.1 below lists the name of the top 20 funders. These funders are ranked according to the highest frequency of occurrences in terms of the number of projects, which are funded either singly by the agency or jointly with another agency.

Table 6.1 below contains the top 20 ranked funders. 25% of all successful projects were jointly funded, i.e. funding was provided by a combination of funding bodies, which may indicate the active nature of groups in seeking out funds to fulfil their needs and the potential for inter agency and cross border co-operation, which is a feature of the community and voluntary sector in any border County.

Funding Body	Ranking ²
EU Programme for Peace & Reconciliation	1
Department for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs	2
National Lottery	3
Udaras na Gaeltachta	4
Donegal Local Development Company	5
Health Service Executive	6
Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs	7
Vocational Educational Committee	8
Donegal County Council	9
FÁS	10
Area Development Management	11
Meitheal Forbartha na Gaeltachta	12
International Fund for Ireland	13
Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism	14
Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	15
Inishowen Partnership Company	16
LEADER	17
Community Foundation Northern Ireland	18
Department of the Environment and Local Government	19
Comhairle	20
Department of Health and Children	20

Table 6.1 Top 20 most active funding bodies to which applications were made since 2000

25% of all successfully funded projects were jointly funded

Of the 234 funding applications, which were successful, it is not surprising the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation 2000 – 2004 was ranked as number one. This programme is administered by the PEACE II led Task Force, which is a sub committee of the Donegal County Development Board. By September 2005, there were approximately 137 active projects, totalling €7.09 million, funded through the PEACE II Task Force, in the County. The PEACE II Task Force supports projects that provide greater access to community facilities, (that assist the re-generation of social housing areas, that support urban and village renewal, that initiate play and recreational opportunities, that assist with long term planning in the areas of spatial, local and community development, that increase access to services through rural transport initiatives), all of which are aimed at cultural and heritage development and tourism marketing.

The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs promotes and supports the sustainable and inclusive development of communities, both urban and rural, including the Gaeltacht and Island communities, thereby fostering better regional balance and alleviating disadvantage, and to advance the use of the Irish language.

The purpose of the National Lottery in Ireland is to provide a source of revenue for special community undertakings that otherwise would not be possible. The beneficiaries are sport, youth and recreation, health and welfare, the Arts and national culture including the Irish language. The National Lottery was ranked third of all the community and voluntary projects funded.

² Ranking is devised as the number of times each funding agency appears in a singly or jointly funded project

Owing to the fact that County Donegal contains the largest Gaeltacht region³, it is not surprising that Udaras na Gaeltachta features as a prominent funder, ranked fourth. The funding provided Udaras na Gaeltachta promotes a community development strategy with language at its core, in association with An Roinn Gnoithe, Tuaithe, Pobail and Gaeltachta and local community based organisations, throughout the Gaeltacht region in County Donegal. Supports from Udaras are in the form of training, facilitation, advise, assistance with funding applications, development of business plans, the provision of annual development budgets and assistance with employment development initiatives as well as Irish language classes and courses.

Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC) is charged with delivering the local development programme and LEADER II to those parts of Donegal that fall outside of the Gaeltacht area and Inishowen. DLDC, which is ranked, fifth, have funding priorities in the areas of services for the unemployed, community development, community youth initiatives and educational disadvantage.

³ Donegal Gaeltacht area is the largest in the country occupying a third of the total land space in the County

6.2.2 Fundraising

Fundraising is an important revenue generating source for the community and voluntary sector. The overall costs involved with the day-to-day running of a community and voluntary group can be greatly enhanced with local fundraising activities. Evidently, community and voluntary groups adopt a diversity of fund raising types to supplement core funding, in an effort to support the overall financing of their projects.

Types of fundraising

In the survey, groups were asked to specify the type of fundraising activity that they had engaged in from 2000-2005 and the amount they had received as a result, in order to finance their projects.

In terms of the type of fundraising activities carried out, table 6.2 above summarises the responses gained from the survey. There is a diverse range of activities, the most common include church gate collections, through sporting events, competitions and dances or concerts.

Type	Number
Bingo	1
Building Fund	1
Garden Fete	1
Jewellery Party	1
National lottery	1
Pampering Day	1
Drama Night	1
Local Collections	2
Local Fundraising	2
Voluntary labour	2
Fashion Show	2
Local Lottery	3
Sales	5
Local Contributions	7
Quiz	9
Church Gate Collection	11
Sport (including sponsored walk, night at the races, cards)	11
Competition (draws, raffles)	18
Dance / Concert / Karaoke	23

Table 6.2 The most common types of fundraising activities

Table 6.2 also illustrates the importance of local support to fund raising activities, with local collections, local lottery, local fundraising and local contributions featuring prominently.

A dependency on fundraising?

Of the 391 projects captured through the survey, 133 or 34% of all projects involved some element of fundraising activity, which totalled €1,434,481. Those 133 projects were further broken down to analyse whether there was a dependence or a reliance on fundraising activities to solely support their financial needs or if fund raising activities were administered in conjunction with successful funding applications. Therefore, those projects were crossed with the successfully funded projects, unsuccessful projects and finally those where a non-stated responses was given. The results indicate:

- A total of 84% of projects, which were successfully funded, were also involved in fundraising
- Only 3% of projects, which were unsuccessful in attaining funding, adopted fundraising activities
- 13% were recorded as non-stated
- Furthermore, groups who were successful in gaining core funding raised the greatest proportion of all revenue generated from fundraising activity at €1,165,627.

It would be anticipated that of those groups, which were unsuccessful in receiving funding through making funding applications, would have placed greater emphasis on fundraising activities and would have accounted for a greater proportion of the total revenue generated, however the converse is more likely to be true. Those groups who have successfully been awarded funding, are still involved with fund raising and overall, have raised the highest amount. This evidently demonstrates the active nature of those groups in particular but also

suggests that funding applications on their own aren't sufficient to support the entire running costs for community and voluntary groups.

The vast majority of projects, at 84%, which were successfully funded, were also the most heavily involved in fundraising activities and generating the greatest proportion of all revenue.

6.2.3 Other means of financing projects

Community and voluntary groups were asked to indicate the type and amount of 'Other' methods used to finance their projects. A total of 56 projects (or 14% of all projects) raised income through these methods, totalling €237,985. The most common types of other methods included Bank Loans, Overdrafts, Membership Fees, Earned Income, and Rental Income from Premises etc. It was also apparent that a number of activities grouped under this heading would have been more appropriately defined as fundraising activities.

Dependency on other methods?

Again, it is useful to determine if these projects were solely dependent on these 'Other' methods for financing their projects. An analysis of the 56 projects reveals that the majority (46), were also successful in attaining funding through applications to funding bodies. Again, this stresses the level of commitment of those groups to continue to source finance from other areas.

6.3 Meeting future funding needs

Respondents were asked to state whether they had made any plans to meet future funding needs for their community and voluntary groups. The majority of groups, almost 66%, revealed that they had made plans for future needs, while 6% had made no plans and 28% were recorded as non-stated.

6.3.1 Plans to meet future funding needs

Of those groups who had actively addressed future funding needs, the responses were grouped into four different categories. The majority of groups intended to continue to source funding from various funding bodies, followed by continuing with fundraising activities, then from other methods and finally from fees and earnings.

66% of groups had made plans as to how they would meet future funding needs

Further applications to funding bodies

This transpired as the main method by which groups intended to support their future funding needs. The responses received revealed that community voluntary groups intended to:

'Secure core funding and continue to send applications to relevant funding bodies to fund specific programmes'

'Source other funders and apply again'

'Apply to and lobby Government Departments'

'Make new applications as they are always looking for future funding opportunities on the behalf of specific groups'

'A continuation of funds could be gained from a PEACE II extension ...hopefully'

'A combination of funding efforts are required to secure future needs'

Fundraising

Fundraising activities emerged, as the next most frequent method of meeting future funding needs by:

'Funding is sought from activities ranging from quizzes, bring and buy sales, church gate collections and bingo to dances and sponsored walks'

It is apparent that fundraising is on-going process with many groups actively fundraising all year round. Responses indicated that groups are:

'Trying to come up with other fundraising ideas'

'Exploring 'new ideas for fundraising activities all the time'

Other methods

In terms of 'Other' methods to meet future funding needs, some of the responses included:

'Once-off training'

'More Community Enterprise Schemes'

'Availing of every funding opportunity'

The long-term sustainability featured well through the responses received, with a group aiming to:

'Continue developing a cross-border neighbourhood work project to meet their funding needs'

Although funds received from other methods featured less frequently in terms of the total number of responses, it is evident that a diverse number of options are adopted to meet funding activities.

Fees and Earnings

Funding from fees and earnings emerged as another category to secure and meet future funding provision. Specific examples included:

'Small fee collected from members for activities'

'Income generated by our newsletter'

'Rental income of enterprise units'

'Raise the cost of attending the playgroup'

This category in particular had the least number of responses which may indicate that the emphasis is placed on the afore mentioned methods including making further application to funding bodies, fundraising and other methods in order to meet future funding needs for the community and voluntary sector in the county.

The majority of all projects captured through the Community Audit, rely on making further applications to funding bodies to meet future their funding needs.

6.4 Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated the resourceful nature of community and voluntary groups in sourcing finance for their projects from a variety of sources. Although 84% of all projects were successfully funded, further analysis is required on the appropriateness of the type of funding sourced and the range of funding sources explored.

Although the majority of community and voluntary groups had planned as to how they would meet future funding needs but approximately 34% had not or were 'non-stated'. This could suggest that these group are either unsure⁴ of their strategic direction in the future or were not aware of the range of funding sources available to them.

It is the view of the authors that there is scope for development agencies with a Community Sector remit to ensure the dissemination of information contained in funding handbooks like the 'CAFÉ Publications Irish Fundraising Handbook 2003-2004, 5th Edition' and the like, to the communities and by making the JB4 Funding Advisor readily available to key personnel in the communities, will in part offset some of these information deficits that are being experienced by groups.

⁴ Recall in Chapter 5 that 47% of community and voluntary groups did not have a strategic development plan compiled