THE PILOT PROGRAMME
FOR
INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT
1988-90

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Eoin O'Malley

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GENERAL SUMMARY

The pilot programme for integrated rural development (IRD) operated during the two-year period October 1988 to October 1990. It was stated at the time of the launching of the pilot programme that the intention was to gain the experience necessary before considering whether to launch a nationwide IRD programme. This paper gives an account of the experience of the pilot phase.

Design and Structure of the Programme

The general objective of the pilot IRD programme was to improve the employment opportunities, earning potential, quality of life and sense of community identity among people in rural areas. It was aimed to achieve this by mobilising local people to work for the economic, social and cultural development of their own area, to decide on their own development priorities, and to take the initiative in bringing their own aspirations to reality. The emphasis was on fostering viable private and community enterprise, based on full utilisation of the abilities and talents of local people.

Thus, the pilot programme did not aim to impose rural development "from the top down", but rather it sought to stimulate and encourage development initiatives coming "from the bottom up".

The pilot programme operated in twelve selected rural areas, most of which had a population of between 6,000 and 15,000 people. In choosing the pilot areas, it was intended to select a variety of areas which would be broadly representative of the variety of rural districts in the country, with a good geographical spread. In practice, the twelve areas selected were somewhat more representative of the western than the eastern half of the country.

The overall design and subsequent management of the pilot programme, and the training of the full-time staff engaged in it, were entrusted to consultants from outside the civil service. These consultants, together with senior civil servants from the Department of Agriculture and Food, constituted a "planning team". This planning team held regular meetings during the course of the programme to review progress and to resolve any operational problems arising.

The programme design provided that a full-time rural development co-ordinator would be appointed for each pilot area. The task of the co-ordinators was to stimulate their local communities to consider new activities

and developments, to encourage them to come up with new initiatives, to give practical assistance in implementing such initiatives, and to liaise with existing advisory and developmental agencies and with local voluntary organisations. It was not intended that the co-ordinators would be leaders and initiators; rather they would stimulate, assist and facilitate the initiatives of members of the local community.

The first task required of each co-ordinator was to organise a Core Group of local people in the area. This group was to consist of individuals with a strong commitment to the development of the area and a willingness to make the effort, on a voluntary basis, necessary to bring about such development. Co-ordinators were advised to select group members with a variety of relevant experience and competence, and also to be sensitive to any existing community or development organisations when selecting group members. They were also advised that a group of about eight members would be the ideal size. The core group was intended to become the body responsible for the operation of the pilot programme in its own area, with the co-ordinator increasingly handing over the initiative to the group and adopting the role of facilitator and adviser in implementing projects selected by the group. The co-ordinators were also advised that they could, if desired, set up "advisory" groups in order to involve representatives of important local organisations or interests. And they could also set up "sub-groups" such as functional/specialist groups, or groups focusing on specific districts within their areas.

A basic characteristic of the pilot IRD programme was that it was built around the concept of *shared learning* between all the individuals and all the core groups engaged in its operation.

The shared learning process in the pilot programme was designed to operate in various ways. A key aspect of the process was a series of four workshops held over the two-year pilot period. Each workshop was to be attended by all the core groups, the co-ordinators and the planning team. The agenda for each workshop varied, but a general intention was to exchange ideas and to report on experiences, as well as to inspire and motivate those involved through contact with the examples and achievements of the others. The timing and agendas of the workshops were also intended to set a quite ambitious pace for achieving results, and to communicate a "work ethic" and seriousness of purpose.

The shared learning process was also intended to operate by individual core group members benefiting from interaction with their fellow members. In addition, the co-ordinators were to meet each month, together with members of the planning team, to share experiences, discuss progress and problems, and to receive further training and guidance.

Finally, each pilot area was to be "twinned" with another, and the co-ordinators and core groups from the two areas were to visit each other at regular intervals to compare problems, discuss solutions, exchange ideas and assess progress and aspirations.

In the second half of the pilot programme, the twinning system was revised and became a more flexible "networking" arrangement. This allowed core groups, or some members of them, to visit other areas in which they had a special interest related to their own development projects.

It was intended from the start that little additional funding would be made available to finance projects emerging as a result of the pilot programme. Rather, it was aimed to ensure that effective use would be made of existing financial resources, as well as the services, expertise and financial assistance available from State development agencies. The only finance made available under the pilot programme itself to help get potential projects started was a small "technical assistance" fund. Aid was made available from this fund to meet part of the cost of obtaining professional advice or assistance required to advance projects which were identified by the core groups.

A basic feature of the programme was that each core group was encouraged to identify the needs and potential of its own area, and to pursue its chosen objectives in a manner which it judged most appropriate. No restriction was placed on the type of project, or the sectors or range of activities which might be pursued. The only requirement was that actions undertaken should be aimed at the development of the area, in accordance with the wishes of the local community. Thus, there were no very precise expectations about what sort of initiatives would emerge from the pilot programme, although it was envisaged that the core groups might aim to foster small or medium-size enterprises, agricultural diversification, rural tourism and amenity and social improvements, among other things.

The Operation of the Pilot Programme

In general, the programme of training for the co-ordinators, the workshops, the monthly meetings of the co-ordinators and members of the planning team, and the other formal events and activities which were intended to be held under the pilot programme, operated as was planned. The first training session for co-ordinators was held at the start of the pilot period and subsequent training sessions were held during the course of the programme. The core groups were largely formed in the first two months, in time for the first introductory workshop in November 1988, and there was a good attendance at that workshop.

The core groups generally met regularly and they had provisional lists of projects or types of projects, which they would aim to foster, ready for

presentation at the second workshop in March 1989. Twinning and networking visits between core groups took place during the programme, as intended. The core groups also set up quite a number of sub-groups for specific purposes. At the third and fourth workshops, held in November 1989 and May 1990, the core groups reported on progress on their selected projects and these two events were well attended.

The formal events and activities held under the IRD pilot programme can be summarised statistically as follows:

Number of Workshops	4
Number of Co-ordinators' Meetings/ Training Sessions	22
Number of Core Group Meetings	274
Number of Sub-group Meetings	More than 380
Number of Twinning Meetings	17
Number of Networking Visits	34
Number of Public Meetings	156

Getting the Pilot Programme Established

In getting the pilot programme established, the co-ordinators had to familiarise themselves with their pilot areas and select a core group. Together with their core groups, they then prepared profiles of their areas for presentation to all the other core groups at the first workshop.

The co-ordinators generally began by making contact with bodies such as existing community councils and development associations, State development agencies, local authorities, sporting organisations, the ICA, co-operatives and farmers' organisations, as well as local councillors, clergy and business people. By such meetings and contacts, the co-ordinators were able to reach decisions about who to invite to participate in the core groups.

Most of the core groups ended up being a little larger than the originally envisaged eight members. Relative to the pilot areas' population as a whole, the core group members included a high proportion of managers, business people and professional people; between them, these categories accounted for 57 per cent of the core group members. There was also a relatively high proportion of public administration employees, many of them involved in development activities. Farming was also quite well represented. Other occupations had a very limited presence in the core groups.

As was intended, most of the core group members had a record of voluntary involvement in local organisations and development activities and indeed many of them were active in more than one such organisation. Thus, once the core groups were established, contacts with local community organisations were thereby consolidated.

Project Activity in the Pilot Programme

During the course of the pilot programme, each core group identified and selected a number of ideas for projects which it aimed to advance for the purpose of furthering the economic and social development of the area concerned. The groups' activity was then largely focused on furthering the implementation of their agreed priority projects.

The twelve core groups combined settled on a total of 397 priority projects. These projects, however, were not all fully implemented by the end of the two years of the pilot programme, since many of them were then still in the planning stage or the early stages of implementation.

The priority projects covered a very diverse range of activities. Classified by sector, they were distributed as shown in the table.

Distribution of Projects by Sector

Sector	Number of Projects	Percentage of Projects
Primary agriculture	25	6.3
Alternative farm enterprise	38	9.6
Tourism	111	28.0
Heritage	24	6.0
Social/cultural	33	8.3
Community development	36	9.1
Small and medium-size enterprise:		
— Manufacturing	17	4.3
— Processing	9	2.3
— Services	8	2.0
Infrastructure	24	6.0
Aquaculture/mariculture	29	7.3
Other	43	10.8
Total	397	100.0

While close to one-fifth of the projects were concerned with community development or social and cultural objectives, the large majority of them were overtly "productive" in character, aiming to make a contribution to the local economy, whether by giving employment or by generating additional incomes.

The core groups' priority projects included some which were completely new and were initiated during the pilot IRD programme, while others involved giving impetus to existing initiatives. About two-thirds of the priority projects were in the first category while the remainder related to existing initiatives.

To understand the role of the core groups in developing their projects, it is necessary to bear in mind that the core groups, by design, did not constitute companies or business entities. Consequently, the core groups were not in a position to undertake directly the implementation of most of their priority projects, so that they needed to work with some sort of project promoter on most of them.

The core groups worked with various types of promoters on different projects. Almost half of the projects were promoted by local community groups or development associations, and a further 11 per cent were promoted by co-operatives.

Basically, the role of the core groups and co-ordinators was to act as catalysts, in a manner that was additional and complementary to the activities of local groups and associations, State development agencies, local authorities and private enterprises. The core groups generated or identified ideas for projects, they sought out suitable promoters, and with the full-time assistance of the co-ordinators they identified sources of funding, organised various forms of assistance for promoters, and frequently brought together and co-ordinated numbers of people or organisations as required for individual projects.

Views of the Co-ordinators

At the end of the pilot programme, most of the co-ordinators were distinctly positive in their overall assessment of it. In a written report, they considered it a "privilege" to have participated in it and they felt that the programme was "unique and refreshing in its approach and progressive in its outlook". They also concluded that the design of the programme was effective in mobilising local human resources and providing a structured approach to community-based development. They considered, too, that the IRD pilot programme, in a relatively short period of time, brought about real beneficial change in the pilot areas. On the basis of their experiences, therefore, they recommended retaining in any future programme the key elements of the programme design, including core groups, workshops, networking, technical assistance, State-paid co-ordinators, professional consultants and a planning team and monthly co-ordinator meetings. Against this background of overall satisfaction with the pilot programme, however, the co-ordinators were also somewhat critical of certain aspects, and they made a number of recommendations for changes in any future programme.

Views of the Core Groups

At the end of the pilot programme, each of the core groups prepared a report on their own experiences and views. Like the co-ordinators, the core groups were generally positive in their overall assessment of the pilot

programme. They mostly approved of its general approach and most of the principal elements of the programme design, and they wanted to see it continue, although with various suggested modifications.

Against this background of prevailing overall approval, most of the core groups had some criticisms and recommendations for changes or modifications in a follow-up programme, but there was little agreement between them on these.

The core groups were asked to recommend in their reports which elements of the pilot programme should be retained and which should be changed or modified in a future programme. Nearly all of the core groups recommended retaining co-ordinators, core groups, workshops, twinning/networking (with rather more specific mention of networking than twinning) and technical assistance funding. There was also a good deal of specific support for retaining the "bottom up" approach and the planning team.

As regards changes or modifications, the only recommendation which was put forward by a majority of the groups was to provide more financial assistance, including more technical assistance funding and/or more broadly applied funding for purposes such as feasibility studies and seed capital.

Impact of the Pilot Programme

In considering whether the pilot programme was a success, it is significant that the prevailing overall view among the co-ordinators and the core group members was that it was very worthwhile. In particular, in the case of the core group members, it should be borne in mind that their participation in the pilot programme was entirely voluntary and unpaid. There was no very strong incentive for them to stay with it (as nearly all of them did), or to pronounce it an overall success and to recommend its continuation, unless they really felt that it was achieving worthwhile results for their area.

While the main participants in the pilot programme mostly regarded it as successful and worthwhile, it is rather difficult to assess its impact objectively in quantitative terms. This is so for a number of reasons.

First, two years is too short a period of time for a programme aiming to foster economic and social development to be able to demonstrate its impact fully. Many of the projects selected were still in the planning stage or at the very early stages of implementation when the pilot period concluded, and consequently they had yet to deliver the full expected results.

A second difficulty in measuring the effects of the programme is that much of what was undertaken in it involved making some contribution to projects rather than taking sole responsibility for implementing them. Core groups and co-ordinators initiated and assisted many projects and in some cases helped to build on existing projects, but in most cases external promoters did much of the work, often with the assistance of public bodies

and agencies. Thus, quite frequently, the IRD participants could not be fully credited with all the results since others also made major contributions. This naturally creates a basic conceptual difficulty in measuring the impact of the IRD programme *per se*.

A third difficulty in measuring the effects of the pilot programme is that a significant minority of the projects undertaken had inherently non-quantifiable social objectives.

Despite these problems in assessing the full results of the pilot programme in a quantitative manner, it is at least possible to say that the projects undertaken had already generated significant employment and incomes by the end of the pilot period. If the full expected results were to be eventually attained, or even mostly attained, the outcome would be impressive. While it would be too much to claim, certainly after just two years' experience, that the approach of the pilot IRD programme could substantially transform rural areas, it does look likely that it can make a distinctly useful contribution to economic and social development.

The method of operation of the pilot programme meant that, for relatively small expenditures on employing paid staff, the voluntary efforts of much larger numbers of people were mobilised. With twelve full-time paid co-ordinators together with quite intensive management and guidance as well as administrative back-up, the programme secured the involvement of about 125-130 core group members (the precise number varied). It also involved a larger number of sub-group members, and stimulated new efforts by many members of other local organisations and other project promoters. Given this high level of voluntary work (or at least unpaid by the State) in relation to the numbers of paid staff, the programme probably gave good value for money.

Conclusions

The pilot programme sought to bring to rural development policy a programme with an IRD approach. The term "IRD", however, does not have a single generally accepted meaning. In the case of the Irish pilot programme, it meant a programme aiming to link and promote multi-sectoral projects, on a geographical area basis, over a number of years. It also meant aiming to mobilise local leadership and initiative, and to encourage non-statutory or voluntary organisations to foster development projects while availing of the assistance available from statutory agencies. In addition, it incorporated the notion that systematic learning and sharing of ideas, experience and information can be beneficial in a process of participative change and development.

The pilot programme demonstrated that the approach adopted is capable of stimulating considerable voluntary efforts by local people to promote

economic and social development in their own areas. It was clear, too, that those involved generally found the experience worthwhile and looked forward to continuation of the programme in some form. In terms of what it aimed to achieve, the programme could be regarded as successful, providing good grounds for continuing with this approach, with appropriate modifications.

While the pilot programme stimulated and encouraged initiatives coming from local communities themselves, it needs to be recognised that this was not spontaneous and that the programme worked through a focused, directed and quite conscious process. The initiatives taken on projects were genuinely local, but there was systematic central guidance of the overall process. Establishing and guiding the process took a good deal of care, and similar care and attention would be needed in extending such a programme to other areas.

The pilot IRD programme itself offered little in the way of direct financial assistance for development projects, although it did facilitate people in drawing on financial assistance from existing development agencies and other sources. Apart from this, what it did as a means of promoting development efforts was to stimulate new thinking and initiatives, promote the exchange of ideas and information, and co-ordinate and harness the available resources and efforts of numbers of people. Thus, what it offered as a means of promoting development was partly stimulation and support of "enterprise", in the broadest sense. But more than this, it became evident from many of the projects which emerged that, quite apart from the quality or spirit of enterprise of individuals, there are certain types of project activity which can be initiated and developed more effectively through the process of co-ordinating and linking up of people. This made it possible for some things to be done which would have been unlikely or much slower to happen simply by relying on enterprising individuals in isolation.

B

PART I

THE APPROACH OF THE PILOT INTEGRATED
RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The pilot programme for integrated rural development (IRD) was in operation during the two-year period October 1988 to October 1990. The intention to establish such a programme had previously been announced in the government's *Programme for National Recovery,* which was published in October 1987. That document stated that "integrated rural development programmes on a pilot area basis will be introduced to promote rural enterprise (e.g., including agri-tourism) and to benefit to the greatest extent possible from EC funding". Planning and preparation by the Department of Agriculture and Food for a two-year pilot programme continued through 1988, and the programme went into operation in October 1988 with financial support from the EC. It was stated at the time of the launching of the pilot programme that the purpose of the pilot approach was to gain the experience necessary before considering whether to launch a nationwide IRD programme.

This paper gives an account of the experience of the pilot phase; it is largely based on a report which was prepared for the Department of Agriculture and Food at the end of the pilot programme.

The Meaning of Integrated Rural Development

"Integrated Rural Development", or IRD, was the name given to the particular pilot programme which was operated in Ireland in 1988-1990 and is discussed in this paper. However, the term "integrated rural development" has also been in use in Ireland and elsewhere for some time past, to refer to a general concept or set of concepts.

Indeed, even before the term came into common use, much of what is implied by the concept of IRD had been advocated previously. For example, as Commins (1991) points out, almost 90 years ago Horace Plunkett enunciated a concept of what was later to become known as IRD when he argued that "not by agriculture alone is Ireland to be saved", and called for the development of industries in the countryside. Commins also notes that a similar concept was part of official thinking in Ireland in the 1960s, to the extent that the Second Programme for Economic Expansion saw part of the solution to the problems of low income farming in the development of industry, forestry and tourism, including the idea of package farmhouse holiday schemes.

Outside Ireland, the concept of IRD was in use in the context of development policies in the Third World in the early 1970s, for example in connection with US foreign aid to developing countries (Varley, 1988, p. 14). The term subsequently came into common use in EC parlance in the late 1970s.

While the term IRD has been commonly used, however, it does not have a single universally accepted meaning; it means somewhat different things to different people (Murray, 1989). As Varley (1988, p. 29) observes, integrated rural development "can be variously interpreted to mean a multi-sectoral, co-ordinated approach to development, the pursuit of growth-with-equity objectives, participative development or even environmental protectionism".

More specifically, Commins (1991) and Greer and Murray (1991) present (somewhat different) lists of the various prescriptions or elements which could be included as part of the IRD approach. These include:

— IRD should link together various projects into an integrated programme.
— IRD should involve a multi-sectoral approach to development, promoting, e.g., tourism, forestry and industry in addition to agriculture, preferably in a mutually supportive manner.
— IRD should be planned and implemented on a geographical area basis, not on a sectoral basis.
— An IRD programme should link activities across several years (multi-annual planning).
— IRD should enhance the collaboration of statutory agencies and non-statutory organisations in development efforts.
— In the IRD approach, local people should become actively involved in identifying needs and opportunities for development in their areas, and in the implementation of projects. To this end, IRD should give attention to the promotion, training and mobilisation of local leadership and initiative.
— IRD should involve a degree of devolution of powers from the central to the regional and local levels of administration.
— IRD should concentrate efforts on aiding poor areas and, more specifically, the poorer people living in such areas.

In practice, various efforts at what has been termed integrated rural development have incorporated different combinations of elements such as these. The Irish pilot IRD programme of 1988-90 involved most of these elements (with more emphasis on some than on others), but not all of them.

Thus, it did aim to link and promote multi-sectoral projects. It operated on a geographical area basis and looked ahead over a number of years. It also sought to mobilise local leadership and initiative to identify and implement projects, and to encourage non-statutory or voluntary local organisations to avail of the assistance available from statutory agencies. However, the Irish pilot programme did not involve substantial devolution of formal administrative powers. Nor did it involve an explicit concentration on the poorest areas of the country or on the needs of the poorest people in the areas where it operated, although a particular focus on the needs of such people in the areas concerned was not ruled out. Chapter 2 provides a more detailed account of the aims and content of the pilot programme.

The Wider Policy Context

The pilot IRD programme was intended to gain experience with one particular approach to *contributing* to rural development, but it was not envisaged that this approach would be the only policy for promoting development of rural areas. For both the Irish government and the EC operate a range of policies which have an influence on rural development. Such policies include the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for the agricultural sector, policies to develop tourism and forestry, policies to expand and to disperse industry geographically, and policies to improve infrastructure and the environment (see Brady, 1990). It was intended that the IRD approach would operate within this wider policy context and would be additional and complementary to other efforts to develop rural areas.

The pilot IRD programme, and increased concern about rural development generally, emerged in Ireland in the late 1980s in the context of concern about the effects of reform of the CAP, as well as the introduction of the Single European Market. It was felt that these developments would, or could, have negative effects on Irish agriculture and on rural areas generally, at a time when rural unemployment and/or emigration were already very serious problems. At about the same time, in the interests of fostering economic and social "cohesion" in the EC, when faced with these potential threats to "lagging" regions and many rural areas, the EC was undertaking reform of the Structural Funds. These reforms were to involve a doubling of the amounts available between 1989 and 1993, as well as concentration on five priority objectives, which were to include the development of rural areas.

Thus, from the point of view of Irish rural areas, in the late 1980s there were perceived threats, particularly from the reform of the CAP, as well as perceived opportunities to benefit from the enhancement of the EC's Structural Funds. In this context, there was felt to be both a need and an

opportunity to introduce new rural development initiatives, and one such initiative by the Irish Government was the establishment of the pilot IRD programme in 1988.

While EC funding was made available to support the pilot IRD programme, this was done outside the framework of the Structural Funds. However, the intention was, through the pilot programme, to develop an approach to contributing to rural development which would subsequently be eligible for assistance from the enhanced Structural Funds — after the pilot phase.

Although this paper is concerned with giving an account of the pilot IRD programme itself, it is worth noting here that, since the conclusion of the pilot phase, the administrative arrangements for a follow-up to the pilot have been announced by the Minister for Agriculture and Food. This new nationwide IRD programme is intended to generate projects which will be eligible to benefit from EC Structural Funds, although the structure or administrative arrangements of the programme do not qualify for EC supports. We outline the arrangements for this follow-up programme in Chapter 10.

It was to be expected that the EC would be interested in assisting a follow-up IRD programme, since not only did it fund the Irish pilot programme but it has also supported IRD-type programmes elsewhere since the late 1970s, e.g., in Belgium, France and Scotland. (It is not our intention here to review the considerable literature on this; see Varley, 1988, pp. 23-27, for a succinct survey of experience elsewhere in the EC.) As was mentioned above, however, the term IRD has had somewhat different meanings at different times and in different places, and the particular approach of the Irish pilot IRD programme of 1988-90 is outlined in the next chapter.

Contents of this Report

Chapter 2 describes the design and structure of the IRD pilot programme. Chapters 3 to 5 then go on to give an account of the actual operation of the programme. This includes an outline of the timing and content of a series of meetings and workshops in Chapter 3, a description of how the programme was made operational "on the ground" in Chapter 4, and a description and analysis of project activity in Chapter 5.

Chapters 6 to 9 are concerned with reviewing the experiences and lessons of the pilot programme, with an account of the experiences and views of participants in Chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 8 then highlights the successes and problems, and Chapter 9 points to some lessons and some issues which needed further consideration.

That concludes the account and assessment of the IRD pilot programme and Chapter 10 is basically a postscript which is included to provide some information on plans to extend the IRD approach more widely.

Chapter 2

DESIGN AND STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

The General Approach

The purpose of the pilot programme was, in the first place, to build up a base of experience with a particular approach to rural development before launching a broader national programme, while also hopefully achieving some useful development results in the pilot areas. The general objective of the approach was to improve the employment, earning potential, quality of life and sense of community identity among people in rural areas.

It was aimed to achieve this by mobilising local people to work for the economic, social and cultural development of their own area, to decide on their own development priorities, and to take the initiative in bringing their own aspirations to reality. The emphasis was on fostering viable private and community enterprise, based on full utilisation of the abilities and talents of local people.

Thus the pilot programme did not aim to impose rural development "from the top down", but rather it sought to stimulate and encourage development initiatives coming "from the bottom up". Consequently, the general approach of the programme could be described as that of a "state-backed, self-help initiative".

The Pilot Areas

The pilot IRD programme was conceived as one programme with a unified approach and design. In the nature of a pilot, however, it was to operate only in part of the country and it was thought best to select a variety of areas in which to implement it. Consequently, 12 pilot areas were selected and these areas together formed the field of operation for the pilot programme as a whole. The twelve selected areas were:

1. The district of Skibbereen, Co. Cork.
2. The South-West Kerry region
3. The Macamores, Co. Wexford.
4. Slieve Felim, Counties Tipperary and Limerick.
5. The Cooley peninsula, Co. Louth.
6. The Inny Basin, Counties Westmeath and Cavan.
7. The district of Gort and part of district of Scariff, Counties Galway and Clare.

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Location of Integrated Rural Development Pilot Areas

INISHOWEN

NORTH WEST
ISLANDS

ERRIS

MANORHAMILTON

COOLEY

INNY
BASIN

GORT

SOUTH WEST
ISLANDS

SLIEVE
FELIM

MACAMORES

SOUTH-WEST
KERRY

SKIBBEREEN
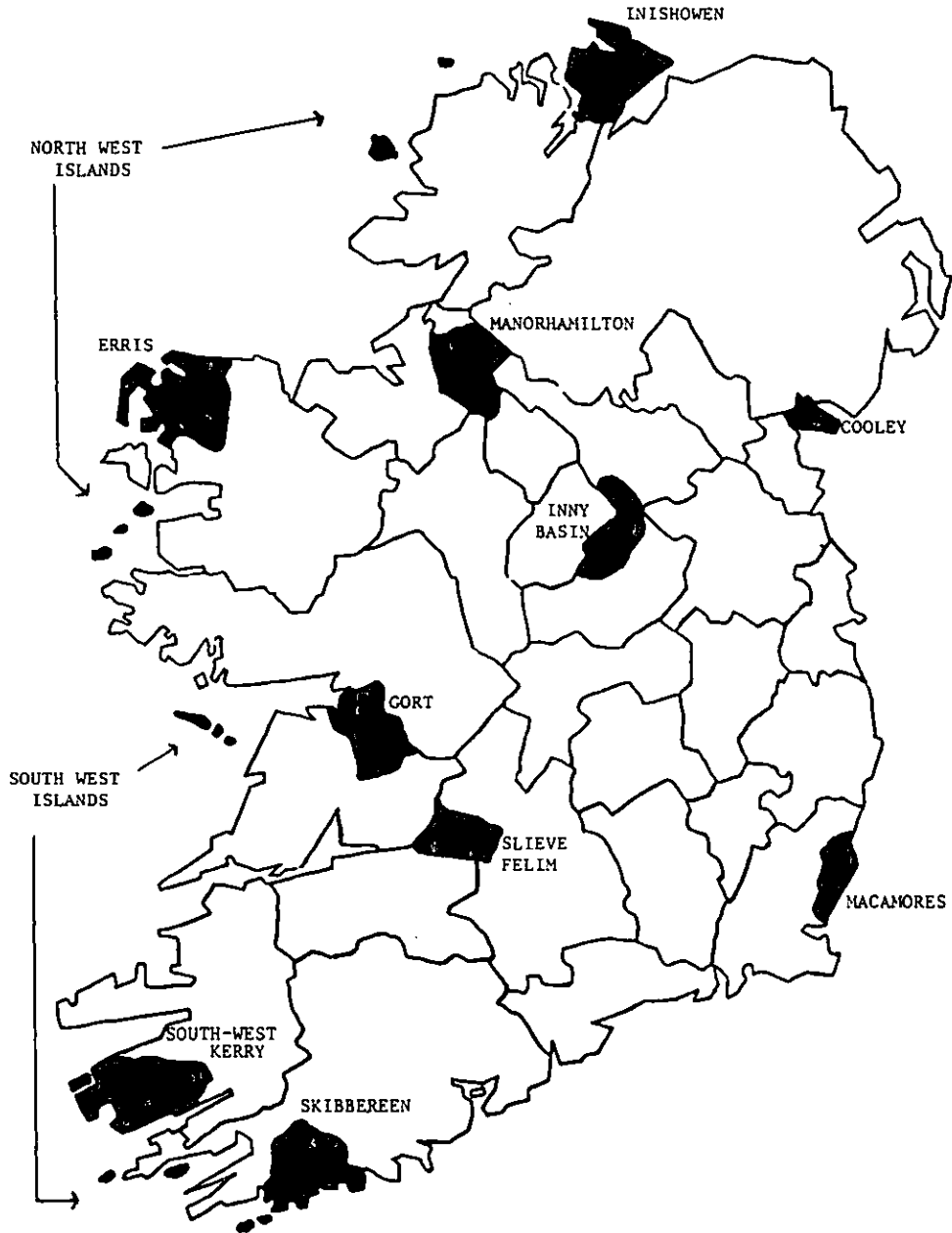
8.   Erris, Co. Mayo.
9.   The district of Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim.
10. The Inishowen Peninsula, Co. Donegal.
11. The inhabited islands off the northern half of the west coast.
12. The inhabited islands off the southern half of the west coast.

The location of these areas is shown on the map. Most of the pilot areas have a population of between 6,000 and 15,000 people, although a few of them have populations lying outside this range. The two island groups each have less than 2,000 inhabitants and Inishowen has much the largest population with 29,000. The total population of the twelve pilot areas amounts to 123,900, which represents 8 per cent of the population of rural Ireland (i.e., the "Aggregate Rural Areas" in the Census of Population).

The twelve areas vary considerably in natural advantages and disadvantages, patterns of production and employment, and levels of income. They also vary significantly in the extent of their previous experience with community based development efforts. In selecting the pilot areas the aim was not to choose a particular type of area, such as the most disadvantaged. Rather, it was intended to select a group of areas which would be broadly representative of the variety of rural districts in the country, with a good geographical spread, although in practice the twelve areas selected were somewhat more representative of the western than the eastern half of the country. All of the pilot districts are rural since none of them has a town with more than about 3,000 inhabitants, while the largest town in most of them has less than 2,000 inhabitants. Some of them, however, are within commuting distance of larger towns such as Dundalk, Sligo or Limerick.

Pilot Programme Design and Management

The overall design and subsequent management of the pilot programme, and the training of the full-time staff engaged in it, was entrusted to consultants from the Irish Productivity Centre and Price Waterhouse Management Consultants. One of the consultants concerned had a background in training and development innovation and in processes of participative change in industrial organisations. The other had a background in public service staff training and development. These consultants, Mr Tom Lyons of the Irish Productivity Centre and Mr Tom Murray of Price Waterhouse, together with an assistant secretary, a principal officer and an assistant principal officer of the Department of Agriculture and Food, constituted a "planning team". This planning team held regular meetings during the course of the programme to review progress and to resolve any operational problems arising.

The Co-ordinators

The programme design provided that a rural development co-ordinator would be appointed for each pilot area. The co-ordinators were to be selected from within the public sector and were to become full-time employees of the Department of Agriculture and Food, with a good deal of day-to-day independence. The task of the co-ordinators was to stimulate their local communities to consider new activities and developments, to encourage them to come up with new initiatives, to give practical assistance in implementing such initiatives, and to liaise with existing advisory and developmental agencies and with local voluntary organisations. It was not intended that the co-ordinators would be leaders and initiators; rather they would stimulate, assist and facilitate the initiatives of members of the local community. While the co-ordinators clearly had to take the initiative in some respects at the early stages of the programme, it was intended that "ownership" of the project would be transferred to members of the local community.

The co-ordinators were to receive training both at the start of the programme and on an ongoing basis during the programme. This training was to cover the philosophy underlying the programme, methods of implementing it by stimulating community action, and practical information on matters such as the workings of central and regional administrations and of the EC. The intention was to organise additional training modules for the co-ordinators as seen necessary during the course of the programme.

The Core Groups

The first task required of each co-ordinator was to organise a Core Group of local people in the area. This group was to consist of individuals with a strong commitment to the development of the area and a willingness to make the effort, on a voluntary basis, necessary to bring about such development. Co-ordinators were advised to select group members with a variety of relevant experience and competence, and also to be sensitive to any existing community or development organisations when selecting group members. They were also advised that a group of about eight members would be the ideal size. The core group was intended to become the body responsible for the operation of the pilot programme in its own area, with the co-ordinator increasingly handing over the initiative to the group and adopting the role of facilitator and adviser in implementing projects selected by the group.

In view of the compact size of the core groups, the co-ordinators were also advised that they could, if desired, set up "advisory" groups in order to involve representatives of important local organisations or interests. And they could also set up "sub-groups" such as functional/specialist groups, or

groups focusing on specific districts within their areas. The configuration of such groups was to be a matter of discretion, whereas each of the twelve areas had to have a core group.

Shared Learning

A basic characteristic of the pilot IRD programme — designed by consultants with experience in this regard — was that it was built around the concept of *shared learning* between all the individuals and all the core groups engaged in its operation. The shared learning model was derived from previous experience of the Irish Productivity Centre with projects involving participative change mainly in industrial companies. However, the approach was adapted by the originator of this process for the different setting of a rural development programme.

As developed originally for operation in companies, "shared learning" is a process for accelerating beneficial organisational change. Through a process of problem-solving, jointly sponsored by management and unions, it aims also to develop the quality of human relationships within organisations. This approach holds that good and lasting change depends on the way that change is constituted, who participates in the generative process, what rules have been applied and what relationships have been implemented. It also aims to create "learning organisations", i.e., organisations developing a corporate culture of learning from their experiences through joint team problem-solving between employees and management.

The shared learning process provides for experiences in "networking" and "participation". Networking is the activity of initiating and managing the introduction of effective change within a supportive system or network of active organisations and "core groups" which act as agents of change, for a given period of time, with back-up expertise. Participation involves providing a means of sharing influence within an organisation, with such a process being introduced in addition to other existing legitimate influences. Thus, the structure formed for the purpose of sharing influence appears as a parallel structure aiming to stimulate innovation, which is complementary to structures already in place in an organisation.

The first "shared learning experience" was organised jointly by the Irish Productivity Centre and the Labour Relations Agency, Northern Ireland, in the period 1985-87, and it was sponsored by the European Commission. It involved a network of ten organisations from both parts of Ireland, including commercial enterprises such as Telecom Eireann, Waterford Crystal and Rothmans (N.I.) Ltd., and public sector agencies such as An Foras Forbartha and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. Each of these organisations had core groups which were composed of a mixture of managers, supervisors, shop stewards and other employees, and which aimed to pursue initiatives

for change. The groups from the various organisations came together periodically at workshops to exchange experiences and to receive guidance and expert inputs. The initiatives which resulted included, for example, introducing a job appraisal system, initiating flexibility training programmes, setting up interdepartmental project teams and developing draft technology agreements.

The first shared learning experience was generally considered to have proved an effective means of stimulating and bringing about participative change, in the context of companies and public sector agencies (Whelan, 1987). It was thought by those in the Department of Agriculture and Food who were responsible for organising the pilot IRD programme that a suitably modified version of the shared learning model could underpin this IRD programme. For the pilot IRD programme was to seek to bring about change, in the form of rural development initiatives, with an emphasis on participation by local rural people and organisations in deciding on and stimulating such initiatives. The context was clearly rather different from the first shared learning experience, but the emphasis on *participative* change, as well as the scope for usefully sharing learning and experiences between different groups, was similar in both contexts.

Shared Learning in the Pilot IRD Programme

The shared learning process in the pilot IRD programme was designed to operate in various ways. A key aspect of the process was a series of four workshops held over the two year pilot period. Each workshop was to be attended by all the core groups, the co-ordinators and the planning team. The agenda for each workshop varied as the pilot programme proceeded, but a general intention was to exchange ideas and to report on experiences, as well as to inspire and motivate those involved through contact with the examples and achievements of the others. The timing and agendas of the workshops were also intended to set a quite ambitious pace for achieving results, to communicate a "work ethic" and seriousness of purpose, and to provide a forum for demonstrating results achieved, thereby setting standards for groups to compare with their own experiences.

The shared learning process was also intended to operate by individual core group members benefiting from interaction with their fellow members. In addition, the co-ordinators were to meet each month, together with members of the planning team, to share experiences, discuss progress and problems, and to receive further training and guidance from time to time.

Finally, each pilot area was to be "twinned" with another, and the co-ordinators and core groups from the two areas were to visit each other at regular intervals to compare problems, discuss solutions, exchange ideas and assess progress and aspirations. The twinned areas were as follows:

— Macamores/Cooley;
— Skibbereen/Slieve Felim;
— Gort/South-West Kerry;
— Manorhamilton/Inishowen;
— Inny Basin/Erris;
— South Islands/North Islands.

In the second half of the pilot programme, the twinning system was revised and became a more flexible "networking" arrangement. This allowed one or more core groups, or some members of them, to visit any other pilot area in which they had a special interest related to their own development projects. Alternatively, members of two or more groups could together visit development projects of special interest anywhere in the country.

A schematic outline of the basic design of the pilot programme is shown in Appendix 1. This was formally described to all participants at the first workshop, and it did not change significantly during the operation of the programme.

Financial Arrangements

It was intended from the start that little additional funding would be made available to finance projects emerging as a result of the pilot programme. Rather, it was aimed to ensure that effective use would be made of existing financial resources, as well as the services, expertise and financial assistance available from state development agencies under existing legislation and funding arrangements. Expenditure under the pilot IRD programme itself covered staff salaries and expenses, costs of holding workshops, consultants' fees, and travel and accommodation expenses of voluntary participants in the programme incurred in association with workshops, twinning visits, etc.

Apart from these expenditures, which were basically meeting the running costs of the programme, the only finance made available under the pilot programme itself to help get potential projects started was a small "technical assistance" fund. Aid was made available from this fund to meet part of the cost of obtaining professional advice or assistance required to advance projects which were identified by the core groups. While the core groups were encouraged to draw on their own expertise or that of members of their local communities as far as possible, this fund was intended to help them to advance projects which required other professional assistance to proceed. In the first phase of distributing this assistance, the planning team decided to make IR£84,000 available from the fund, with IR£7,000 going to each of the 12 pilot areas. In the second phase, IR£42,000 was made available, divided into six grants of IR£5,000 and six of IR£2,000. Including this

expenditure on technical assistance, the total cost of the pilot programme amounted to IR£1.5 million, the major part of which was contributed by the EC.

Recording and Assessment

The pilot programme design also provided for recording and assessment of the programme by The Economic and Social Research Institute. This involved recording what went on and the experiences of those involved. The objective was to produce a report at the end which would facilitate a structured approach to ensuring that the lessons learned from the pilot phase would be taken on board in any future expansion of the IRD programme.

To this end, the author of the present report attended all four workshops as well as the monthly meetings of the co-ordinators and most of their training sessions, and visited each of the pilot areas at least once, attending core group meetings in most of them or else meeting with some core group members separately in others. There were also available, as inputs for the preparation of this report, separate reports from each core group containing factual information on their activities and their experiences and views of the pilot programme, as well as a report from the co-ordinators as a group containing their experiences and views of the programme. The format of these reports was initially proposed by the planning team and then discussed with the co-ordinators, while the author of the present report was able to specify any elements which he felt should be included in the format.

To a considerable extent, the element of assessment of the pilot programme in the present report rests on the factual information, views and assessments presented by the programme participants in their reports, as will be seen in Chapters 6-9. However, by regularly attending the monthly meetings and workshops and by visiting the pilot areas and attending some core group meetings, it was also possible for this author to see some key elements of the process at work and to form judgements on the reliability or validity of the material presented by the participants. But it could scarcely be said that sufficient in-depth investigation was undertaken to make for a completely independent critical evaluation or to verify all the details.

The element of assessment in this report relates primarily to programme *processes* rather than to precise quantification of programme *outcomes* such as impacts, effectiveness and value for money. Since two years was a rather short period of time for a development programme to produce substantial results, it would not really have been possible to quantify adequately the full results, actual and potential, by the end of the pilot period.

Expectations

A basic feature of the programme was that each core group was encouraged to identify the needs and potential of its own area, and to pursue its chosen objectives in a manner which it judged most appropriate. No restriction was placed on the type of project, or the sectors or range of activities which might be pursued. The only requirement was that actions undertaken should be aimed at the development of the area, in accordance with the wishes of the local community.

Thus, there were no very precise expectations about what sort of initiatives would emerge from the pilot programme. Nevertheless, it was thought likely that in most pilot areas the main emphasis would be on four types of activity:

1. Small/medium size rural businesses, such as arts and crafts, country shops, fishing and mariculture.
2. On-farm enterprises, such as diversification from mainstream agriculture into deer, rabbits, goats, fruit and non-traditional vegetables, as well as organic farming, forestry and horse breeding.
3. Rural tourism and other service sector activities.
4. Amenity and social improvements.

PART II

THE PILOT PROGRAMME IN ACTION

Chapter 3

AN OUTLINE OF THE OPERATION OF THE PILOT PROGRAMME

The pilot IRD programme started to operate when the co-ordinators took up their duties. The twelve co-ordinators were appointed on schedule, but the appointee for South-West Kerry dropped out at an early stage and there was some delay in recruiting a replacement during the first few months of the programme. The other eleven began work in early October 1988. The replacement co-ordinator for South-West Kerry started some four months later.

Appendix 2 lists the twelve co-ordinators, showing their previous occupations and their previous knowledge of the pilot areas to which they were assigned. As can be seen in Appendix 2, their previous occupations meant that most, but not all, of them were familiar with some sector of potential rural development activity, such as forestry or agriculture. However, it was not considered essential for the co-ordinators to be sectoral experts since the pilot programme design took account of the fact that core group members would have some relevant expertise while there is also an existing structure of sectoral development agencies which provide advice and support. The pilot programme, and the co-ordinators, were intended to facilitate people in drawing on such support and expertise. Thus, the programme did not particularly set out to provide additional sectoral expertise through the co-ordinators, or indeed in the planning team.

The previous occupations of the co-ordinators did not generally give them professional experience in activity involving a "bottom up" approach to community development with voluntary participants. One of the co-ordinators had previous professional experience of somewhat similar development activity including work with voluntary participants, while a few others were previously employed by a development agency. In addition, seven of the co-ordinators had previous experience of community development as voluntary activists, while two report no prior experience in such activity.

For the most part, however, the co-ordinators did not have prior professional experience in a "bottom up" development programme. The planning team for the pilot programme was aware of this fact and recognised it as an element of risk in attempting to operate the programme.

Appendix 2 also shows that while some of the co-ordinators were very familiar with their pilot areas, many of them had either no previous

knowledge of the areas to which they were assigned, or else had only limited acquaintance with them based on occasional visits. This, too, was recognised as possibly an element of risk.

Monthly Co-ordinators' Meetings and Training Sessions

When the co-ordinators took up their duties, their training began with a three-day module in the first week of October 1988. This session aimed to develop their understanding of and commitment to the programme, to clarify the role of the co-ordinator, to begin the process of working as a team, to begin to identify their learning needs, and to prepare for the immediate tasks of the start-up phase. The co-ordinators identified a number of learning needs including *skills* such as working with groups, interpersonal skills, conducting meetings, etc., and a need for *information* on various state agencies and grant schemes, and various areas of government policy and EC policy.

Module 2 of the co-ordinators' training programme was held two weeks later, and the co-ordinators were asked to start work on a number of tasks before then. These tasks were to assemble data for a profile of their area, to hold at least one "open" event on the IRD programme in their area, and to target, but not necessarily to recruit potential core group members. Given that some of the co-ordinators were already familiar with their areas and communities, while others were newcomers, it was recognised that some could proceed more quickly than others in organising the core groups.

In Module 2 of the training programme, a range of start-up problems were discussed. It was clear that the two groups of islands would have particular problems in fully operating the pilot programme as designed, due to the difficulty of holding regular meetings because of problems with transport and access. Other, more general, start-up problems included uncertainties among co-ordinators about how to select core group members, how to "sell" the programme when it offered no additional funding, and how to relate to existing organisations and interests.

The main content of the training module then focused on how to establish core groups and other sub-groups; how to prepare "area profiles" for presentation to all the core groups at the forthcoming Workshop I scheduled for the weekend of 25-27 November 1988; how to conduct and behave effectively at meetings; and how to apply a rational approach to decision-making by groups. The co-ordinators were advised that their core group meetings should be run informally, without a chairperson, and that the groups should aim to make decisions by consensus and avoid voting on issues.

The first regular monthly co-ordinators' meeting (apart from training sessions) was held on 16 November 1988, just ten days before Workshop I.

Such monthly meetings continued to be held throughout the pilot programme. In the interval before that first monthly meeting, the co-ordinators were asked to recruit their core-group members, or at least the nucleus of a core group, so as to have a group ready to attend Workshop I. They were also asked to have most of the work done on preparation of a profile of their areas, which was to be presented at Workshop I, involving the core group members in this task as much as possible.

At the first monthly meeting on 16 November, the co-ordinators all reported that they had a group ready to attend the workshop. Not all core groups were finalised, but all had at least five committed members. (Although South-West Kerry still lacked a co-ordinator and hence a formal "core group", arrangements were made to have a group from that area attend the workshop too.) Various issues and problems encountered in forming balanced core groups were discussed. The preparation of area profiles for the workshop was also reported to be generally well advanced, and most groups had selected two members (not including the co-ordinator) to present the area profiles at the workshop.

Workshop I

Workshop I was held in Galway on 25-27 November 1988. It was attended by the IRD planning team, the eleven co-ordinators, a core group of between five and fourteen members from each of the eleven operational areas (as well as a group from South-West Kerry), and a number of invited speakers and observers. The speakers included the Minister for Agriculture and Food as well as the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of his Department, who stressed the commitment of the government and the Department to the pilot IRD programme. Other invited speakers included academics and others with expertise in rural development, and speakers from a number of the State development agencies.

The general objectives of Workshop I were to establish commitment to the pilot programme, to agree outline objectives, and to create a "public arena" in which the groups could present themselves and encounter each other. To these ends, a substantial part of the workshop involved active participation by the core groups themselves. Two members from each group, not including the co-ordinators, presented 30-minute profiles of their own areas covering topics such as geography, infrastructure, population, employment and unemployment, natural resources, and preliminary ideas on potential for development. The pairs of core groups from the "twinned" areas also had two interactive sessions towards the end of the workshop in which they discussed ideas gained and potential fields for development projects.

Considering that the pilot IRD programme was less than two months in operation by the time of Workshop I, it was quite a success. There was evidence of a good deal of commitment and enthusiasm among the core group members and they participated very actively in the event.

From Workshop I to Workshop II

The design of the pilot programme called for the second workshop involving all core group members to be held in March 1989, about four months after the first one. It was intended that the period between the two workshops would be one in which the core groups would work mainly on considering and identifying potential development projects which could realistically be undertaken in their areas. Thus it was envisaged that the groups would be in a position to present a short-list of potential projects or types of projects at Workshop II. It was not expected that the list of potential projects would be finalised by that time, and there would probably still be a need for further research and consideration to work out the details of projects before they could actually be implemented. In working towards this goal, regular core group meetings were held, the monthly co-ordinators' meetings continued, and reciprocal visits between the twinned areas were organised.

The first monthly co-ordinators' meeting after Workshop I reviewed the workshop and planned the next steps. In particular, the co-ordinators were asked to finalise their core group membership by Workshop II (if this was not already done), and to make decisions soon about establishing any "advisory" groups or "sub-groups". They were also advised to establish a regular pattern of core group meetings and to organise reciprocal twinning visits before Workshop II. The work plan up to Workshop II was then discussed in detail, including the process of identifying potential development projects. The co-ordinators' further training requirements were also discussed, and a third training module was subsequently arranged, incorporating the regular monthly meeting for January 1989.

The co-ordinators' meeting/training module in January 1989 first heard progress reports from each of the co-ordinators. In most cases, good progress was reported on finalising core groups, deciding on the structure of advisory groups and sub-groups, arranging twinning visits, developing work plans and starting the process of planning projects. Most of the training module then focused on how to go about the task of facilitating the core groups with the formulation of a short-list of potential projects for presentation at Workshop II. By way of guidance, it was agreed that the groups would aim to have a list of potential projects comprising roughly four or five small projects, three or four medium-size projects and two or three large projects. (Small projects were defined to be those not requiring significant funding,

medium-size projects were defined to be those requiring expenditure of up to IR£20,000, and large projects were defined to be those requiring greater expenditure than this.) These project lists would not be finalised in detail by Workshop II, but would represent provisional lists of potential projects to be followed up in more detail subsequently. The lists could be revised in the light of lessons learned and ideas gained at the workshop itself.

The next co-ordinators' monthly meeting was held in February 1989; (the co-ordinator for South-West Kerry had been appointed before this meeting). The agenda covered area progress reports on finalisation of core group membership, twinning meetings, identification of projects, and preparation of display material for Workshop II. It also covered the detailed programme for the workshop, which was to be held in March. In general, the groups were reported to be on target in most respects for the workshop.

Workshop II was held in Galway on the weekend of 10-12 March 1989. As in Workshop I, the agenda provided for inputs from invited speakers as well as presentations by each of the core groups. However, it allocated longer periods for group interaction and group presentations than in Workshop I. The general aims of Workshop II were to confirm objectives, to present and discuss plans, and to identify and discuss strategic approaches.

Three of the invited speakers presented case histories of different types of successful local development initiatives in which they were involved. Others spoke on the EC Commission's approach to rural development, "market-led" approaches, and the past experience of community-led development in Ireland.

Much of the workshop, however, involved the core groups presenting and receiving feedback on their project proposals in interactive sessions with their twinned groups and with large and small mixed groupings from other areas. All the core groups had a list of potential projects ready for this purpose, although some were firmer and more advanced in preparation than others.

The outlines of potential projects which were presented by the core groups covered a wide variety of activities. For example, among the larger potential projects were mountain parks, specialised tourism centres, angling development, mariculture development, craft and enterprise centres, harbour construction or expansions, tree nurseries, forestry, mushroom processing and packaging, pollution control projects, vegetable production and processing, and horse breeding. Examples of smaller potential projects included production of tourist literature and maps, improved signposting, knitting co-operatives, group water schemes, production of local souvenirs, open farms, landscaping/tree planting, bulb and flower production, and soft fruit growing.

From Workshop II to Workshop III

After Workshop II in March 1989, further co-ordinators' meetings were held each month. The first of these meetings, held in April, incorporated both a particularly in-depth review of progress, issues and problems in each pilot area, and a training session on planning of projects. From the review of each area, it emerged that most areas were progressing quite satisfactorily, but some difficulties were also reported in a number of areas. It was concluded subsequently that it would be helpful if the consultants managing the programme were to visit each pilot area in turn before Workshop III in November, in order to meet with the core groups and to discuss any problems.

The training session on planning of projects at the April meeting covered the content and format of formal "business plans". The co-ordinators were also informed at this meeting that a technical assistance fund would be available to cover part of the costs of obtaining professional advice or assistance needed to advance projects which were identified by the core groups. The meeting concluded with a question and answer session with the planning team and the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture and Food.

The programme of "twinning" visits was also reconsidered at this time. It was decided that it would be sufficient to have one pair of reciprocal visits before Workshop III in November 1989, plus one other joint visit elsewhere by each core group, and perhaps another field trip by the co-ordinators with a few group members. (Some of the co-ordinators had reported that it would be difficult to persuade all of their group members to undertake two pairs of reciprocal twinning visits before Workshop III, as was originally planned.)

The monthly meetings during the Summer of 1989 covered the usual round of progress reports from each area co-ordinator. Most of them reported satisfactory progress, with core group members generally being actively engaged in working out the details of projects and implementing them. South-West Kerry was something of a special case since the co-ordinator there had been appointed so recently, but nevertheless that area had a working core group by this time.

The June monthly meeting also included a briefing by a consultant from the Irish Productivity Centre on legal structures for business enterprises, since many of the groups were by then at a stage when they needed to consider appropriate formal structures for undertaking projects.

Applications to the planning team from core groups for technical assistance funding began to come in during the Summer of 1989, beginning in May and June, as the groups were proceeding with working out the details of their development projects. There was a certain amount of misunderstanding

initially about what types of expenditures were eligible for this assistance and the position was clarified as follows. First, aid was to be available only in relation to specific projects selected by core groups, and it would not be available for preparing surveys, area profiles or *general* studies. Second, aid would consist of a contribution towards the cost of obtaining professional advice or assistance in relation to the project, only after the groundwork had been undertaken by the project's promoter and such professional assistance was needed to advance the project to implementation. Third, aid would be paid directly to the actual promoters of projects, not to the core groups, although the applications for assistance would have to be approved and submitted by the core groups. And fourth, there was to be no predetermined *rate* of assistance from the fund, although there was an overall ceiling of IR£7,000 available to each core group for all applications it submitted in the period Summer 1989 to Spring 1990.

Workshop III was held in Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co. Clare, on the weekend of 10-12 November 1989. The aims of this workshop were to provide an opportunity for the core groups to report on progress and to share experiences, to re-establish commitment, and to provide inspiration and enhance motivation. The agenda allocated a greater proportion of time than in previous workshops to core group presentations and feedback, although there were also some inputs from invited speakers. The guest speakers spoke on the "Communities for Economic Excellence" programme in the USA, a case study of a successful local development initiative in Ireland, opportunities to enhance local projects through using latest technology, and co-operative structures in community development.

From Workshop III to Workshop IV

The monthly co-ordinators' meetings continued to be held regularly after Workshop III. Reports from the various pilot areas generally indicated satisfactory progress in nearly all cases. At the first meeting after Workshop III, held in December 1989, two changes in the operation of the programme were introduced. These changes reflected confidence by the planning team in the proven abilities and sense of responsibility of the co-ordinators, and they were also natural evolutions in line with the "bottom up" ethos of the pilot programme which did not fundamentally alter its design.

The first of these changes was the delegation of decision-making on approvals of technical assistance funding to the group of co-ordinators at their monthly meetings. This change did not involve any change in the existing criteria and guidelines for such funding, and the consultants managing the pilot programme contributed advice and guidance on the decision-making from time to time.

The second change was the evolution of formal "twinning" into a more flexible "networking" system. This allowed one or more core groups, or some members of them, to visit any other pilot area in which they had a special interest related to their own development projects. Alternatively, members of two or more groups could together visit development projects of special interest anywhere in the country. The new arrangement was agreed in discussion with the co-ordinators, and decision-making on approvals of travel and accommodation expenses for networking was delegated to them as well.

From this time on, discussion and approval of technical assistance funding and networking expenses formed a regular part of the content of monthly co-ordinators' meetings. During this period, further training sessions for the co-ordinators were also held in conjunction with the meetings. These covered revision of earlier sessions on conducting and behaving at meetings, group decision-making and interpersonal skills. They also covered business planning.

At the co-ordinators' meeting in March 1990, it was announced that there would be a second round of technical assistance funding available after Workshop IV, which was to be held in May. In the second phase of this funding, there would be six individual relatively large grants of IR£5,000 for "headline" projects, going to one selected project in each of six sectors to be suggested and agreed by the co-ordinators. There would also be six grants of IR£2,000 to "special interest" projects which could be of wider general interest for more than one core group, with the headings or categories for these grants again being suggested and agreed by the co-ordinators.

Workshop IV was held in Galway on 11-13 May 1990. The aim of this final workshop was to provide a forum for the core groups to make full presentations on their progress to date, to indicate successes and difficulties encountered, and to learn from each others' experiences. Unlike previous workshops, there were no invited speakers and the agenda for the working sessions on this occasion consisted only of the core groups' presentations. All core group members were encouraged to participate in these presentations or in answering questions from the audience, while the co-ordinators took seats in the audience. The core groups generally indicated that they had found the experience of the pilot programme very worthwhile, and there was a good deal of concern that it should continue after the two-year pilot period. The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture and Food announced at the workshop that existing arrangements would in fact be extended for an additional three months after the end of the formal pilot period in early October, pending decisions on the further implementation of such a programme after assessment of the pilot phase.

After Workshop IV

The monthly co-ordinators' meetings continued after Workshop IV, with progress reports, technical assistance and networking expenses applications being regular items on the agenda.

The May 1990 meeting decided on the awards of IR£5,000 for technical assistance for six "headline" projects, under the headings Aquaculture/Mariculture, Rural Tourism/Tourism Development, Heritage, Agriculture, Community Development and Small and Medium-Size Enterprises. This was a rather different and more difficult decision-making process for the co-ordinators than previous approvals of technical assistance, since it involved not only approving applications as eligible but also selecting some projects over others. Only six of the core groups could succeed in their applications. Nevertheless, a consensus was attained. Apart from the six awards of IR£5,000 for "headline" projects, a further six awards of IR£2,000 each for projects of special merit were also made to those areas not receiving the "headline" project awards.

The meetings of May to July 1990 were also concerned with arranging to have formal reports prepared by each core group, in which they would report their experiences and assessment of the IRD pilot programme. Similarly, the co-ordinators were asked to prepare such a formal report from themselves, as a group. These reports were duly completed and were available as inputs to the present report.

Summary of Activity and Events

The formal events and activities held under the IRD pilot programme can be summarised statistically as follows:

Number of Workshops	4
Number of Co-ordinators' Meetings/ Training Sessions	22
Number of Core Group Meetings	274
Number of Sub-Group Meetings	More than 380
Number of Twinning Meetings	17
Number of Networking Visits	34
Number of Public Meetings	156

Chapter 4

GETTING THE PILOT PROGRAMME ESTABLISHED

In getting the pilot programme established, the initial step was to hold training sessions for the co-ordinators. The co-ordinators then had to familiarise themselves with their pilot areas and select a core group. Together with their core groups, they then prepared profiles of their areas for presentation to all the other core groups at Workshop 1. This was scheduled to occur within 2 months of the start of the pilot programme.

For three or four of the co-ordinators, there was no great need to familiarise themselves with their pilot area since they already knew the area well, or at least most of it. The others had either no prior knowledge or rather limited knowledge of their pilot areas, so that the start-up phase presented a considerable challenge. A key task at this stage was the selection of a core group of suitable people, from communities which were unknown or not known very well to most of the co-ordinators.

Recruiting Core Groups

The co-ordinators were asked to select as core group members people who were living or working in the area. They were further advised to look for people with a variety of relevant expertise or skills, ideally consistent with maintaining a good geographical balance and sectoral balance. A record of, or commitment to local development activity was also regarded as an important attribute for core group members.

The co-ordinators who were already most familiar with the communities in their pilot areas were able to recruit core groups on this basis depending largely on their own existing knowledge and contacts, and they were able to do so quite quickly. If anything, a problem for them was who to leave out. They did not depend entirely on their own knowledge since the opinions of trusted individuals were also sought, but the fact that such people were already known to them was a help. One of these co-ordinators held public meetings in different parts of the pilot area, invited names by secret ballot and then selected core group members from those suggested on the basis of previous knowledge and discussions with others.

For the co-ordinators with limited or no knowledge of their local communities, the task was more difficult and some of them felt that the time allocated for it was rather short. They generally began by making contact

with bodies such as existing community councils and development associations, state development agencies, local authorities, sporting organisations, the ICA, co-operatives and farmers' organisations, as well as local councillors, clergy and business people. They attended meetings of bodies such as these and they explained the approach of the pilot programme both at meetings and to individual contacts. They also organised public meetings specifically to inform people about the IRD programme.

Through these meetings and contacts the co-ordinators began to form impressions of who would be likely to be suitable as core group members. Personal discussions with potential members then helped them to make their decisions on who to invite to be members. Some found that as word spread about the IRD programme, some people volunteered themselves as group members, while others were put forward by various local groups, either at public meetings or through direct representations to the co-ordinator. Some of the core group members were then selected following such representations, provided that the co-ordinator felt that they would be suitable and that they would give the group the right balance, in terms of a variety of relevant expertise, ideally consistent with a good geographical and sectoral balance.

Several of the co-ordinators initially selected most of their core groups by these means and the group members then proposed new additions to the group who were subsequently recruited.

A full list of the core group members is presented in Appendix 3, which also shows their occupations and the length of time they served as group members during the two-year pilot programme. It is worth noting that, due to some changes in membership during the course of the programme, not all of the people listed in Appendix 3 were core group members at the same time. Consequently, some of the groups were never actually as large as they might appear to be from a glance at the list. Nearly all of the groups, however, did end up being a little larger than the originally envisaged 8 members. Two groups had 8 members, six had between 9 and 11 and four had between 12 and 15.

The two largest core groups, however, were those for the North Western Islands and the South Western Islands, which were rather special cases. In view of the need to have some representation for individual islands if they were to participate at all effectively, it was probably inevitable that these core groups would end up being relatively large. The third largest core group was the one for Inishowen, which was much the largest pilot area.

Most of the core group members were men, although about one-sixth of them were women. The composition of the core groups in terms of members' occupation is summarised in Table 4.1. It is evident from the table that their occupational background largely reflects the requirements to select people with relevant expertise and skills (as well as an involvement in local

development), rather than reflecting the occupational structure of the pilot area populations in a representative fashion.

Table 4.1: *Core Group Members, by Occupation*

Occupation	Number of Members	Percentage of Members
Public Sector:		
Development Agency Officials	10	6.8
Local Authority Officials	5	3.4
Other Public Sector	10	6.8
Managers, Business People:		
Co-operative Managers	9	6.2
Hoteliers	4	2.7
Other Managers, Business People	28	19.2
Agriculture:		
Farmers, Farm Managers	22	15.1
Agricultural Advisers, Researchers	5	3.4
Professional:		
Teachers	23	15.8
Priests	4	2.7
Other Professionals	15	10.3
Others:		
Housewives	4	2.7
Others	7	4.8
Total	146	100

Note: These figures include all those who were core group members at some stage, even if not for the full duration of the pilot programme.

Thus, relative to the pilot areas' population as a whole, the core group members clearly included a high proportion of managers, business people and professional people; between them, these categories accounted for 57 per cent of the core group members. There was also a relatively high proportion of public administration employees, many of them involved in development activities. Farming was quite well represented, but with somewhat smaller numbers than its relative size in the labour force of these rural areas. Other occupations had a very limited presence in the core groups relative to their size in the rural population. As was indicated above, this was broadly a reflection of the approach of the pilot programme, which

never particularly intended to form core groups which would be faithfully representative of the structure of rural society.

As was intended, most of the core group members had a record of voluntary involvement in local organisations and development activities and indeed many of them were active in more than one organisation. These organisations included, for example, community councils, tidy towns committees, co-operatives, festival committees, sporting organisations, cultural organisations and farming organisations. In some of the core groups, all members were involved in such organisations.

As regards the length of time served as core group members, most of them joined at or near the start of the pilot programme and stayed on until the end. Of all those who were ever core group members, 67 per cent served for the full period of the pilot programme, while a further 9 per cent served for all but a few months; most of the latter group were people who were recruited a little late and stayed until the end. Of those who served for shorter periods than this, most were either early recruits who had to drop out for unavoidable reasons such as a move out of the area, increasing demands of other commitments, illness or death, or else they were late replacements for those who dropped out for such reasons. There were not many cases of people dropping out due to a loss of interest or dissatisfaction with the pilot programme, although in one core group about half of the original members dropped out and were replaced at the halfway stage. For the most part, therefore, it can be said that the process of recruiting core group members was successful in identifying people who were to show a sustained commitment to the pilot programme.

Developing Contacts with Local Communities

As well as forming core groups, it was important for the co-ordinators (and later for the core groups) to build up contacts with their local communities at an early stage. Some of the co-ordinators already had good contacts through living and working in their pilot areas, but this was not the case for most of them.

In the early stages of the pilot programme the process of developing local contacts largely went hand in hand with the search for potential core group members, as outlined above. Thus, contacts were made with local community organisations and development associations as well as sectoral groups such as tourism or fishing organisations. Public meetings were organised to inform people about the IRD programme. Most of the co-ordinators also made use of the local press, which was generally receptive to articles and information about the pilot programme, and a few of them circulated information leaflets to households. More informally, most of the co-ordinators went out of their way to attend public and social functions where they could meet people.

Some of them also developed a good relationship with the local clergy who later co-operated by reading announcements in churches about IRD activities.

Once the core groups were formed they were largely composed of people who were active in a range of local organisations, so that contacts with the community were thereby consolidated. As time went on, too, the co-ordinators generally found that people were coming to them, asking for information about the IRD programme and often inviting them to speak about it at meetings of local organisations.

Sub-Groups

Apart from establishing a core group in every pilot area, the programme design also envisaged that there could be "advisory groups" and "sub-groups", depending on the perceived requirements in individual pilot areas. In practice, little use was made of purely advisory groups, but many sub-groups were used for various purposes in order to focus on particular types of projects or particular districts and to draw on the assistance of additional people. Most of these sub-groups were not established in the very early stages of the pilot programme, but they arose increasingly later on as specific needs and areas of interest were identified.

There was a total of over 70 formal sub-groups established and all but one of the core groups had such sub-groups. They typically had about 3 to 6 sub-groups each, although the two island groups each had more than a dozen of them. Manorhamilton was the exception in not having sub-groups as such; however, IRD activities in that area initiated the formation of a number of district development groups, which then operated autonomously but often in very close co-operation with the IRD core group or co-ordinator on particular activities. Slieve Felim established just one sub-group, but the core group in that area was able to work with a network of existing community councils, of which many of the core group were members.

The sub-groups established by the core groups were of two basic types — groups with a sectoral (or project) focus, and groups with a focus on specific geographical districts within a pilot area. Most of the core groups had sectoral sub-groups, with tourism, agriculture, aquaculture/mariculture and enterprise development being the most common sectors of interest. The usual pattern was for one or more core group members to be members of each sub-group, along with other people, and the sub-groups worked on advancing core group priority projects within their own field of interest.

Two of the core groups had sub-groups with a focus on specific districts, dividing up the pilot area between these districts. Each of the district sub-groups had a member or members in the core group. Two other core groups had a combination of some sectoral sub-groups together with sub-groups for some districts.

Chapter 5

PROJECT ACTIVITY IN THE PILOT PROGRAMME

During the course of the pilot programme, each core group identified and selected a number of ideas for projects which it aimed to advance for the purpose of furthering the economic and social development of the area concerned. Each group first presented a list of such project ideas, or at least types of activities in which it would further investigate the potential for projects, at Workshop II which was held in March 1989. Subsequently, these lists were revised or added to in many cases and firm lists of priority projects became settled. The groups' activity was then largely focused on furthering the implementation of their agreed priority projects. This was not the only activity undertaken in the course of the pilot programme since the co-ordinators, in particular, were quite often asked for some advice or assistance relating to local activities other than the priority projects. However, the advancement of the agreed priority projects was the basic focus for activity under the programme.

The twelve core groups combined settled on a total of 397 priority projects. While the average number of projects adopted by core groups was 33, most of the groups actually had less than this number, while a minority of groups with larger numbers raised the average figure. It is noticeable that the two groups of offshore islands, with much the smallest populations among the pilot areas, had relatively large numbers of priority projects. This may reflect the fact that sub-groups operating on individual islands were each coming up with a number of projects for their own islands, thereby generating a relatively large total for the groups of islands.

With such a large number of projects involved in the pilot programme as a whole, it is not possible in a report such as this to give a detailed account of each of them. However, Appendix 4 contains an annotated list of the agreed priority projects in each area and this chapter presents an analysis of them in terms of size, sector and other characteristics. This chapter also outlines the ways in which core groups were involved with projects, their interaction with project promoters and the ways in which finance was raised to develop projects.

It should be pointed out at this stage that the projects which are discussed in this chapter and which are listed in Appendix 4 were not all fully implemented by the end of the two years of the pilot programme. Two

years is actually a rather short period of time for a programme aiming to foster economic and social development. Thus, many of the selected priority projects were still in the planning stage or the early stages of implementation when the pilot period concluded, and consequently at that time they had yet to deliver the full expected results.

Size of Projects in Financial Terms

The core groups generally classified their projects as small, medium-size or large. These classifications were defined in terms of the financial expenditures involved. "Small" projects were defined to be those not requiring significant funding so that any money required could be generated out of own resources; however, such projects might in fact be quite large, in terms of usage of voluntary labour for example. "Medium-size" projects were defined to be those requiring expenditure of up to IR£20,000 — in the immediately planned phase of the projects, even if they might ultimately develop into something larger. And "large" projects were defined to be those requiring expenditure of more than IR£20,000 from the outset; it was expected that these would include infrastructural projects.

Using these definitions, the distribution of projects by size class was as shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: *Distribution of Projects by Size Class*

Size class	Number of Projects	Percentage of Projects
Large	87	22
Medium-size	127	32
Small	183	46
Total	397	100

Classification by Sector

The priority projects covered a very diverse range of activities. Classified by sector, they were distributed as shown in Table 5.2.

While close to one-fifth of the projects were concerned with community development or social and cultural objectives, the large majority of them were overtly "productive" in character, aiming to make a contribution to the local economy, whether by giving employment or by generating additional incomes. Tourism emerged as the sector with much the largest number of projects, and this sector featured a good deal more prominently in the activities of the pilot IRD programme than it does in the national economy.

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Table 5.2: *Distribution of Projects by Sector*

Sector	Number of Projects	Percentage of Projects
Primary agriculture	25	6.3
Alternative farm enterprise	38	9.6
Tourism	111	28.0
Heritage	24	6.0
Social/cultural	33	8.3
Community development	36	9.1
Small and medium-size enterprise:		
— Manufacturing	17	4.3
— Processing	9	2.3
— Services	8	2.0
Infrastructure	24	6.0
Aquaculture/mariculture	29	7.3
Other*	43	10.8
Total	397	100

Note: *The "Other" category includes some multi-sectoral or composite projects, as well as environmental projects, among others.

A substantial number of the projects were concerned with agriculture (whether primary or "alternative" type ventures), but no more and possibly a little less than might have been expected from the relative importance of agriculture in these rural districts. There were a relatively small number of projects in manufacturing industry. And although the number of aquaculture/mariculture projects was not very great, this activity certainly featured quite prominently relative to its still rather marginal importance in the national economy.

New and "Existing" Projects

The core groups' priority projects included some which were completely new and were initiated during the pilot IRD programme, while others involved giving impetus to existing initiatives. About two-thirds of the priority projects were in the first category while the remainder related to existing initiatives.

While most of the core groups had a majority of new projects together with a significant minority involving building on, or assisting, existing activities, some of them were rather distinctive in this respect. All of the Macamores' projects and all but one of Manorhamilton's were entirely new.

On the other hand, a majority of Gort's projects and a large majority of South-West Kerry's involved assisting or building on existing initiatives. It seems that this pattern may at least partly reflect the level of previously existing local community development activity in the different areas. Such activity was relatively lacking in the Macamores and Manorhamilton, so that new initiatives were more necessary. In both Gort and South-West Kerry, on the other hand, the core groups worked with district-oriented subgroups, which were drawn from existing active community or local development associations which were involved in or aware of existing project activities.

Tourism Projects

Tourism was the sector with the greatest number of projects emerging in the pilot programme, and in fact every core group had at least five tourism projects while several of them had more than ten. Some of the individual projects are ambitious such as, for example, the Carn holiday complex in Erris which is to incorporate a golf course, tennis, bowling and adventure sports facilities together with a caravan park, chalets and hotel accommodation. However, the projects range in size from such relatively large-scale undertakings to smaller ones such as production of maps and brochures, signposting of tourist walks and drives, organisation of festivals, opening of tourist information centres and holding of training courses or seminars for people getting into tourist businesses.

Whatever about the size of individual projects, most of the pilot areas adopted a combination of tourism projects which together could have quite significant impacts on tourism development. Generally, this involved promotion of various tourist attractions together with complementary projects such as enhancement of accommodation, marketing and information, and provision of training courses and seminars for local people in the tourist business.

In many of the pilot areas, the IRD process provided a means of integrating or co-ordinating such individual projects in a way which was mutually beneficial and encouraging to each of them. Thus, rather than leaving it to individual enterprise to develop tourist attractions, to open new accommodation or to engage in tourism marketing, the motivation for people to engage in each of such activities can be enhanced by the knowledge that others are taking steps to develop complementary activities. For example, it makes more sense for someone to invest in developing a particular tourist attraction if they are confident that others will be developing complementary attractions in the same area while others are to market the area and others are enrolling in training courses with a view to opening new tourist accommodation. Through this type of process, this aspect of the

concept of "integrated" development took on a real meaning for tourism activities in many of the pilot areas.

In some pilot areas, such an integrated or co-ordinated approach to tourism development became quite formalised. For example, the Inishowen group, as one of its projects, encouraged the formation of Inishowen Tourism Co-operative, with membership from all parts of Inishowen and all branches of the tourism industry there. This Co-op set out to draw up an overall development and marketing strategy, and to engage in promotional activity. This move was accompanied by a range of tourism projects such as promotion of golfing, angling, a festival of the sea, boat trips and other leisure facilities. The Slieve Felim group also encouraged the formation of a new tourism co-op following the completion of a rural tourism course. This was accompanied by projects such as the development of a mountain park and a mountain drive, a mining interpretive centre, an outdoor education centre and a drive to promote foreign student tourism. The Cooley Peninsula group held an initial meeting of all the tourist interests in the area and it was hoped that this would lead to the formation of a Tourism Group for the peninsula.

The South Western Islands group adopted as a project the development of common tourist promotion and marketing for the islands. This was accompanied by a range of projects to improve and increase accommodation, and to develop attractions such as golf, sea angling, adventure centres, an interpretive centre, tourist trails and beaches. And in Erris, the core group set out to develop specialist holiday products such as angling, water sports, equestrian activities and so on, and a new rural tourism group emerged from their activities.

Apart from these examples of more formal integration of activities, most of the core groups could point to mutually supportive or complementary projects among their tourism projects. Generally, the development of specific tourist attractions was accompanied by projects such as training courses and seminars, enhancement of accommodation, and marketing and provision of information.

Agricultural Projects

Agriculture was the category with the next largest number of projects, taking mainstream or traditional agriculture together with "alternative" or "complementary" farm enterprises. Most of the pilot areas had between two and four projects in the area of traditional agriculture, although three of them had none. And most had between two and six alternative farm enterprise projects, although four of them had none or only one.

In the area of mainstream agriculture, many of the projects involved providing services or forming organisations of a sort that are found elsewhere

but were lacking in the pilot areas concerned. The services concerned included livestock marts, farm relief services and farm machinery banks. And other projects aimed to set up organisations such as producer and/or marketing groups for lamb, seed potatoes and vegetables. These sorts of projects, involving co-ordinating numbers of people and building co-operation, fitted in well with the general approach of "integrated" rural development. Two other agricultural projects involved introducing new continental breeds of cattle and sheep. The Slieve Felim group also set out to organise a farm development programme aimed at strengthening farm efficiency and achieving viable levels of income.

In the area of alternative or complementary farm enterprise, quite a number of the projects involved development of farm forestry. There were also about half a dozen projects to develop organic production of products such as lamb, vegetables and cheese. Several of the groups had projects to promote horse breeding and management, mushroom growing, vegetable production, soft fruit and open farms for visitors. And there were some other enterprises adopted by one group only, including flax growing, snail farming, poultry production, flowers and bulbs, and angora goats.

Other Projects

Most of the core groups had projects in the field of aquaculture or mariculture. Nearly all of these projects involved shellfish; the species concerned included oysters, mussels and scallops, as well as quite innovative projects involving clams in the Skibbereen area and abalone in the South-Western Islands. There were few projects involving finfish farming, due both to the greater capital investment required and to wariness about the controversies which have arisen concerning possible environmental effects of such activity. However, the South-Western Islands did get involved in developing land-based fish farming.

In promoting shellfish farming, or development of existing natural shellfish beds, the projects often involved setting up co-operatives of small farmers or fishermen, who were thereby assisted to get into this activity on a part-time basis. Some of these projects were among the quickest of all to generate additional incomes for significant numbers of people.

A rather limited number of industrial projects emerged from the pilot IRD programme. These included small enterprises in activities such as crafts, knitting, toys and lace-making. There were also projects involved in processing of local primary products such as peat, mushrooms and other foods. Of course, many industrial projects would require substantial capital investment and the IRD programme did not offer much in the way of finance, so that it was scarcely geared to developing major new industries. What it could do best was to stimulate new thinking and initiatives, promote

the exchange of ideas, and co-ordinate and harness the available resources and efforts of numbers of people. These strengths of programme appear to have been more applicable to the development of activities such as tourism, agriculture and mariculture, and less so to the development of industry apart from generally small-scale enterprises.

However, these same strengths of the IRD programme appear to have been quite applicable to promoting activities under the headings of social and cultural development and community development. Quite large numbers of projects emerged in these spheres. There was a wide range of social or cultural projects including, for example, a number of summer schools, traditional dancing and music events and classes, production of traditional music tapes and song books, the establishment of a pipe band, local history publications, theatrical promotions and development of local sports facilities. The development of a multipurpose integrated resource centre in the Manorhamilton area was one of the most ambitious projects in the social/cultural field, although it is also planned to incorporate income-earning tourism facilities.

Community development projects included a number of community centres or halls, landscape and streetscape improvements often linked with tidy towns or tidy islands competitions, tree planting, group water schemes, improved provision of housing and general environmental improvements. One notable project in this field was Slieve Felim's formation of a federation of Community Groups in the area, which it was hoped would bring lasting benefits through co-operation and co-ordination of resources and efforts.

Many of the social/cultural and community development projects had the potential to generate spin-off benefits of an economic nature, particularly by attracting visitors to social or cultural events, and by making the areas concerned more generally attractive to tourists. In fact, the potential for enhancing tourism revenue was often an important motivating factor for the core groups in deciding on such projects.

The same was true of many of the Heritage projects. These included a number of heritage centres in disused churches, agricultural museums, restorations of mediaeval buildings, development of an ancient monastic site, restoration and conversion of a deserted village, restoration of a burnt-out RIC barracks, refurbishing of graveyards, protection of a raised bog, and a number of archaeological surveys and digs including two major projects of this nature in South-West Kerry and Erris.

The Role of Core Groups and Project Promoters

To understand the role of the core groups in developing their projects, it is necessary to bear in mind that the core groups, by design, did not constitute companies or business entities. Many of the individual core group

members were also members of local development associations or community groups which had a legal structure, or they were directors or managers of companies, but the core groups themselves had no legal standing as business enterprises. Consequently, the core groups were not in a position to undertake directly the implementation of most of their priority projects, so that they needed to work with some sort of project promoter on most of them. While it would be true to say that many of the projects would not have happened at all without the IRD programme and the core groups, it was also usually the case that they needed others to undertake projects.

The core groups worked with various types of promoters on different projects, and Table 5.3 shows the percentage of projects undertaken by different categories of promoter. As the table shows, almost half (47 per cent) of the projects were promoted by local community groups or development associations, and a further 11 per cent were promoted by co-operatives. A smaller proportion of the projects, amounting to 30 per cent of them, were undertaken by conventional private companies or entrepreneurs.

Table 5.3: *Percentage of Priority Projects Undertaken by Different Types of Promoter*

Community groups	28.4
Development associations	18.3
Co-operative societies	11.2
Individual entrepreneurs	18.3
Private companies	11.7
Others	12.0
Total	100

The remaining 12 per cent of projects were undertaken by a variety of other promoters including local cultural or heritage societies, state agencies, and the core groups and co-ordinators themselves. Projects undertaken by the core groups and co-ordinators themselves, without an external promoter, were usually ones which involved little or no expenditure of money and did not constitute business ventures. Examples were the organisation of educational or training courses, awareness campaigns and the formation of new organisations such as various co-operative societies. It is worth noting, however, that when projects had an external promoter, it was often the case that one or more core group members were directly involved, as members of the promoting community group or development association, as managers or directors of the promoting private company or co-operative, or sometimes as individual entrepreneurs.

Basically the role of the core groups and co-ordinators was to act as catalysts, in a manner that was additional and complementary to the

activities of local groups and associations, state development agencies, local authorities and private enterprises. The core groups generated or identified ideas for projects, they sought out suitable promoters, and with the full-time assistance of the co-ordinators they identified sources of funding, organised various forms of assistance for promoters, and frequently brought together and co-ordinated numbers of people or organisations as required for individual projects.

This catalytic process, provision of assistance and co-ordination of efforts could operate in a variety of ways, depending on the nature of individual projects. The variety of modes of operation can be illustrated by the following selected rather different examples.

The Manorhamilton pilot area provides a number of examples of projects organised by the core group and co-ordinator themselves. In the cases of their community development seminar and agri-tourism seminar and courses, the core group and co-ordinator came up with the ideas and organised speakers, instructors, venues and promotion, in liaison with relevant state agencies. These projects called for little or no raising of finance.

A number of tourism-related projects arose in the Manorhamilton pilot area more indirectly from core group activities. The core group felt that the area had untapped tourism potential and one of the steps it took was to encourage and stimulate the formation of Dromahaire and District IRD Group, which then became the actual promoter of several of the tourism projects in the pilot area. The core group and co-ordinator continued to assist and encourage these projects, through having a member in the new Dromahaire group, by liaising with the Regional Tourism Organisation, and by liaising with FAS, the County Development Team and others regarding funding, information and other support. Meanwhile, the core group and co-ordinator were also encouraging and assisting tourism projects in other parts of the pilot area besides Dromahaire, which should have the benefit of stimulating tourist traffic into the area as a whole to the benefit of more than one of its individual districts.

In the two groups of western islands, a number of the projects were organised by using existing community co-operatives as the promoters. Such co-ops are quite common on the islands as they can qualify for financial support from Roinn na Gaeltachta. However, these co-ops were generally more involved in commercial activities such as supplying materials and equipment, and the IRD groups stimulated them into thinking and acting more in a broader developmental manner. Island co-ops were promoters of IRD projects such as development of a holiday village, vegetable production, establishment of a machinery bank and establishment of an annual summer school. The island co-ops were responsible for close to half of all the IRD projects promoted by co-operative societies, and several of their managers

were core group members. The core groups and co-ordinators assisted the projects promoted by co-ops not only by identifying ideas and opportunities, but also by preparing or organising the preparation of plans and liaising with relevant state agencies to provide financial and other support.

In some pilot areas, one or more core group members (as opposed to the group as a whole) sometimes played active roles as project promoters. One such example arose from an initial core group proposal in the Macamores pilot area to establish an enterprise or craft centre with a tourist office. Group members researched the idea and subsequently refined it to a proposal to convert an available creamery building into a quality retail outlet for crafts together with a restaurant, abandoning the enterprise centre and tourist office concepts. One of the core group members had sufficient faith in the proposal to find three partners who would help him to buy and convert the building, which is now in operation as a craft centre and restaurant and is providing new employment in the area. This project was also helped by IRD technical assistance funding towards architects fees.

Quite a number of the IRD projects involved building on and developing an existing idea or activity. One example of this was the Carn Holiday Complex in the Erris pilot area. There was an existing proposal here to construct a golf course and clubhouse, and an existing promoter for this. The IRD core group felt that there was untapped potential to develop tourism in the area, and one of their basic objectives was to develop a number of tourism projects in an integrated manner. As part of this effort, they encouraged the expansion of the golf course proposal into a comprehensive tourist complex with tennis, bowling and adventure sports together with a caravan park, chalets and hotel accommodation. The IRD group assisted the promoters in sourcing funding, preparing applications for funding and building contacts with state agencies and private investors. IRD technical assistance was a key input in making possible the preparation of plans, which in turn made it possible to apply for grants and to approach potential investors.

In many of the projects, a key contribution by the core groups and co-ordinators was the building of contacts and the co-ordination of numbers of people, who together could achieve something that would have been difficult or even impossible for individuals on their own. A snail farming project in the Inny Basin pilot area, for example, involved linking up a zoologist, who was developing a system for snail farming, with local farmers who initially knew nothing about it but who could be persuaded to invest in commercial production of snails. It further involved exploring the possibilities for joint export marketing and distribution, and identifying a promising link-up with a local mushroom exporting enterprise. The core group members and co-ordinator between them had the necessary contacts to accomplish this.

Also in the Inny Basin area, the core group was aware of a businessman who was interested in establishing a sphagnum peat processing plant. But he had the problem that it was difficult to acquire a sufficient area of peatland, since this required finding a considerable number of people within a limited area who were all willing to make their land available. The core group with a local community development association initially identified 90 local owners of turbary rights who were willing to sell, and this opened the door for the project to go ahead in the Inny Basin area.

The IRD core groups and co-ordinators also played key linking roles in bringing about the formation of new organisations such as specialist farmers', fishermen's and shellfish growers' co-operatives or producer groups. A number of such organisations were vital in the development of mariculture projects, for example, since they could organise supplies of inputs and take care of marketing in a way that isolated individuals could not. The Inishowen IRD group was particularly active in promoting the formation of co-operatives and producer groups, although there were also many examples in other areas.

Finally, a few of the core groups felt that one way to overcome problems of finding suitable promoters for projects was to have a "third sector" company or companies which could undertake various projects. (A "third sector" company is neither public-sector nor conventional private-sector, since it is owned by private groups or communities, but it is motivated by local development goals, subject to commercial viability, rather than by profit maximisation.) Some core groups had projects aiming to establish such companies.

Sources of Finance for Projects

The IRD pilot programme provided nothing in the way of direct financial assistance for projects except for the technical assistance fund. Nevertheless, an important role for the core groups and co-ordinators in assisting many projects was in identifying appropriate sources of funding, helping promoters to make applications for grants, finding private investors and, in some cases, engaging in significant local fund-raising activities to assist projects.

The core groups and co-ordinators, with a range of expertise and specialist knowledge, were often better informed than project promoters about sources of finance and they became increasingly familiar with the means of tapping potential sources during the course of the pilot programme. Thus the IRD groups and co-ordinators generally became recognised as valuable local sources of information and assistance on funding, particularly since many of the pilot areas do not have ready access to offices of the various grant-giving agencies and organisations. Some of the core groups also said that they

themselves became much more aware of sources of financial and other assistance during the pilot IRD programme.

The IRD projects availed of financial and other assistance from a wide range of agencies and institutions. Table 5.4 sets out the numbers of projects getting assistance from various sources up to the end of the pilot programme. Most of these sources of finance contribute only a portion of total costs, however, so that it was usually necessary for project promoters to raise or contribute part of the financial requirements themselves.

Table 5.4: *Number of Projects Obtaining Assistance from Various Agencies and Institutions*

	Financial Assistance	Non-financial Assistance
Government Departments:	33	48
— Education	9	3
— Environment	8	7
— Gaeltacht	5	10
— Marine	3	11
— Labour	3	2
— Agriculture and Food	2	12
— Energy	2	2
— Finance	1	—
— Tourism and Transport	—	1
FAS	46	70
County Councils	29	69
Industrial Development Authority	19	21
Udaras na Gaeltachta	18	28
International Fund for Ireland	15	26
County Development Teams	14	66
Teagasc	14	36
Bord Failte	13	56
Bord Iascaigh Mhara	13	17
Coillte Teoranta	12	31
CERT	5	10
Eolas	3	10
Vocational Education Committees	3	4
Fisheries Boards	2	18
Shannon Development	2	8
Third-Level Education Institutions	—	28
Others*	19	>75

Note: *Others include mainly local businesses and local people with specialist expertise.

The IRD technical assistance fund also helped a large number of the projects to obtain necessary professional advice or assistance. In many cases, this was a significant input even if it amounted to quite a small proportion of the total cost of a project. For by making it possible to prepare plans or designs at an early stage, for example, this made it possible in turn to apply for grant aid, to put forward project proposals to local authorities or to approach potential private investors. The projects which received technical assistance funding are listed in Appendix 5.

PART III

EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS OF THE PILOT PROGRAMME

Chapter 6

EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS OF THE CO-ORDINATORS

The co-ordinators, as a group, prepared a report on their own experiences of the pilot programme together with their views on its operation and how it might be improved. This chapter highlights the main points in their report concerning lessons of the pilot programme and implications for the future. Each of the core groups also prepared similar reports, and the next chapter provides a synthesis of the main points in these 12 reports.

The co-ordinators were distinctly positive in their overall assessment of the pilot programme. They considered it a "privilege" to have participated in it and they felt that the programme was "unique and refreshing in its approach and progressive in its outlook". They also concluded that the design of the programme was effective in mobilising local human resources and providing a structured approach to community-based development. They considered, too, that the IRD pilot programme, in a relatively short period of time, brought about real beneficial change in the pilot areas. On the basis of their experiences, therefore, they recommended retaining in any future programme the key elements of the programme design, including core groups, workshops, networking, technical assistance, state-paid co-ordinators, professional consultants and a planning team and monthly co-ordinator meetings. Against this background of overall satisfaction with the pilot programme, the co-ordinators were also somewhat critical of certain aspects, and they made a number of recommendations for changes in any future programme.

The Role of the Co-ordinator

As regards the role of the co-ordinators themselves, they were satisfied that their role was of value and was welcomed by the core groups and local communities. They also felt, however, that the demands on them were considerable, and that there was a risk of "burn out". To cope with this, they recommended that there should be a fully trained assistant for each co-ordinator, and that the level of resources for facilitation should be flexible and related to each area's needs. They also recommended that there should be an early training/induction course for core group members and project activists to explain the level of commitment required.

Design Elements

The co-ordinators were generally happy with the main elements of the programme design including the general approach and value system. They felt, however, that the timetable and scale of activity expected were generally ambitious and put the co-ordinators and core groups under considerable pressure; in particular, they referred to the 6-week lead-in to Workshop I as being too short. Also on the time frame, they thought that the two-year pilot period was adequate for evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot programme, but that it would need to be recognised in doing so that many of the benefits arising from the programme would not be fully demonstrated and quantifiable within that period.

The co-ordinators felt that a flexible approach could be taken to the size of rural areas for inclusion in an IRD programme.

They concluded that the concept of core groups, selected for their competences, worked well. The core groups were generally thought to reflect a number of strands in the community. The ideal size for core groups was considered to be 9 or 10 members (rather than 8), given the tendency for unforeseen events to force some people to withdraw.

The co-ordinators found the "twinning" process useful and supportive in most cases, although the time frame for twinning visits was difficult to achieve.

While recognising that workshops were a valuable and integral part of the programme design, the co-ordinators suggested some modifications. They felt that there should be more time in them for interaction and discussion, and that their own knowledge of core groups needs should have been utilised to a greater extent in planning the content of workshops.

The co-ordinators also considered that the networking arrangement was a very effective form of shared learning, which built on links established at workshops. However, they felt that some groups with a stronger history of community development activity would have benefited if networking had been available earlier, while other areas would take longer to make good use of it.

Technical assistance funding was regarded as valuable, and sometimes as the making of a project, although some areas with little history of development activity felt pressurised to make early applications before they were fully ready to do so. The co-ordinators also felt that funding for feasibility studies and seed capital would have been productively employed had it been available, and that core groups could be trusted with budget allocations to fund projects at their discretion.

Support Structures

The co-ordinators commended the initiative and commitment to the pilot programme of both the Department of Agriculture and Food and the European Commission. But they felt a need for more information from these sources on other rural development initiatives. They felt it appropriate in the context of the "bottom up" approach of the pilot programme that officials of the Department and the Commission attended workshops but restricted their presence in the pilot areas.

The co-ordinators felt that the government embargo on staff recruitment left them in a situation where they did not have full-time secretarial help; while they did have secretarial assistance, the arrangements were felt to be less than ideal for some of them. They also felt that a fund should be available to cover expenses such as postage and photocopying by core group members.

The standard of office accommodation varied across the pilot areas and in some areas the co-ordinators thought it was inadequate. They considered it important to have independent offices so as to avoid confusion with other agencies such as Teagasc (which provided offices for several of them). The co-ordinators also felt that better office equipment would have been a great advantage.

They felt that the planning team for the pilot programme responded well to developments in the course of the programme, but that it lacked specific expertise in the sectoral topics which they were dealing with.

The co-ordinators found the consultants managing the programme to be very committed to it and helpful with advice and co-operation. They also felt that the consultants' team could have been strengthened by the addition of a member with more hands-on experience of rural development, although the outlook of such an additional member would have to be compatible with the philosophy of the IRD programme.

As regards support and assistance by state agencies, the co-ordinators reported a number of difficulties. There were problems in tailoring projects to comply with regulations and some agencies were regarded as rather inflexible. Financial cutbacks on agencies also limited their ability to provide services and undermined their commitment to development work with no clear financial return to them. State agencies were also felt to be rather remote from rural areas, and sometimes wary of perceived "competition" from the IRD initiative. The co-ordinators felt that there is a specific need for assistance for community tourism development projects, as well as more generally multi-annual commitment of assistance rather than only annual commitments.

Other supports, that the co-ordinators considered are needed include legal aid to community groups, detailed and ongoing advice on preparation of

business plans, and more information to community groups on availability of finance from financial institutions.

The Approach to Projects

The co-ordinators agreed that the preparation of area profiles for Workshop I was a useful exercise. They also considered that the subsequent systematic approach to identifying needs and ideas for projects worked well.

The process of advancing the projects, once selected, was reported to be very time-consuming for the co-ordinators due to factors such as gaps in state supports, shortage of core group members' time to help and inadequate back-up facilities and services. However, they felt that their availability as officially backed and full-time resource persons opened up new possibilities for community groups, helped to raise their level of confidence, and legitimised the status of core groups in the eyes of many officials.

Training

The co-ordinators felt that their training was effective in explaining and reinforcing the value system of the pilot programme and in providing a full understanding of the design of the programme. They also felt they were in a position to impart skills they had acquired at training sessions to their core groups. However, they considered that further specialist help was needed on a day-to-day basis particularly in relation to project needs, and that longer training modules on specific topics such as business plans would have been useful.

The training sessions, monthly meetings and workshops were considered to have developed a supportive and co-operative spirit of teamwork among the co-ordinators. The delegation to them of decision-making on technical assistance and networking funding contributed substantially to this. The co-ordinators felt that supportive links between them would have developed more quickly if there had been earlier discussions on projects of a similar nature and if networking had been introduced earlier.

As regards the content of training sessions, they felt that it was generally very good on the areas covered, but that more attention was needed to priority time management, specific rural development issues and discussions of projects. They also considered that there should have been explanations at an early stage of why the shared learning approach was chosen, together with comparisons with other rural development initiatives.

Principal Recommendations from the Co-ordinators

To summarise their principal recommendations, the co-ordinators wished to *retain* the following elements of the pilot programme: core groups, the technical assistance concept, full-time co-ordinators, the shared learning

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concept (including workshops, twinning and networking), monthly co-ordinator meetings, a planning team and professional consultancy.

At the same time, they favoured the following *modifications* in a national programme. There could be a mix of national and regional workshops. Technical assistance funding should be more flexibly available to meet core group needs. Selection of co-ordinators should extend beyond the public sector. The planning team should include co-ordinator and core group representation.

In addition, the co-ordinators chose to highlight the following recommendations to overcome difficulties encountered:

— The level of facilitation should be related to local circumstances, particularly to the strength of existing community development activity which affected the speed with which communities responded to and took control and advantage of the pilot programme.

— Steps should be taken to reduce the high level of dependence on the co-ordinator. This should include an early training session for core groups to explain the commitment needed.

— Areas should be included in an IRD programme on the basis of self-selection, i.e., at the request of a number of groups within an area. Self-selection would reduce the level of misconception about IRD among participants and would ensure that there would be a community willingness on which to build.

— Technical assistance funding should be increased, made more flexible and should be available for areas such as research, pre-feasibility and feasibility studies and seed capital.

— There should be a new statutory and independent agency to co-ordinate rural development initiatives. This agency would have an executive role and its board should reflect local communities. The IRD initiative should remain with the Department of Agriculture and Food until the new agency is established.

— The consultancy team managing a national IRD programme should include an additional member with hands-on experience of rural development, to give co-ordinators greater access to information on rural development initiatives. Funding should also be provided to meet consultancy costs of other rural development specialists whose advice might be required.

Finally, the co-ordinators had a number of further specific messages which can be summarised as follows:

— The provision of a computer link-up plus word processor facilities in co-ordinators' offices could be the foundation of a national community-based networking system and rural development data base.

— State development agencies should formally take the experience of rural development activists into account during policy formation. Greater responsiveness to community needs would include the provision of suitable training.

— Community-led project initiatives should be eligible for direct funding from the EC, with a minimum of bureaucracy and with funding related to the level of funding available in the proposing community.

— A major limiting factor on rural development is out migration, particularly since many of the better qualified and more entrepreneurial people have left rural areas. Provision of leadership training is therefore vital.

— The corporate plan of development agencies and county councils should incorporate rural development issues and be adequately resourced to address them.

— Many good community development projects are stopped by the high cost of insurance and this area must be addressed.

Chapter 7

EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS OF THE CORE GROUPS

Each of the core groups prepared a report on their own experiences and views of the pilot IRD programme. This chapter highlights their most widely held views, mainly by drawing from their reports. Like the co-ordinators, the core groups were generally positive in their overall assessment of the pilot programme. About half of them volunteered decidedly favourable general comments such as the following:

We found the two years of this programme to be very beneficial ... We have seen clear progress in a number of projects undertaken under IRD and are confident that further progress will be made in the near future ... We would be anxious to see this programme continue and are sure that it can be of continued benefit to the region.

This pilot programme has been responsible for harnessing the boundless energy, goodwill, interest and enthusiasm of the people of the area ... It is imperative that this design should be extended to other areas in the future to achieve integrated development ...

Working in this pilot project has been encouraging for us and our experience and achievements have been positive ... We, as a core group, fervently hope for the continuation of this design concept, modified to meet requirements of an area such as ours, and feel confident that such a programme will provide the means of utilising the benefits of our greatest natural resource, "Our People".

The Integrated Rural Development Programme has been of decided benefit to (our area). Although the area's Development Groups were organised prior to the Programme, nevertheless, it did help to reactivate those which had become discouraged and enable other communities to formulate and structure their own Development Groups.

We wish to compliment the Minster for Agriculture and Food and his Department on their initiative in launching and successfully seeing through this Pilot Programme. We would encourage him to continue with this approach to Integrated Rural Development and to take on board our recommendations and proposals with regard to changes.

About half of the core groups did not volunteer such explicitly favourable general comments in their reports. Nevertheless, it was usually clear from their more detailed comments and recommendations that they found the programme largely worthwhile, that they approved of its general approach and most of the principal elements of the programme design, and that they want to see it continue, although with various suggested modifications. In the case of one group, however, it appears that they were dissatisfied with the programme to a significant extent, although this was indicated somewhat more by verbal comments during the course of the programme than by their written report.

Against this background of prevailing overall approval, most of the core groups had certain criticisms and recommendations for changes or modifications in a follow-up programme.

Design/Process Elements

Pilot Areas: About half of the core groups felt that there was a problem with the delineation of their pilot areas. The most common concern here was that some areas were not "natural" units with an innate identity that people could identify with. A few groups also felt that, while their area had an identity, their "natural" area was somewhat larger than the area designated. Size as such was not the issue for most of them, but delineation of natural units was. However, one of the groups with what looks like an "unnatural" area, straddling two counties, found the mixing of the two mutually beneficial and stimulating.

One of the islands' groups felt that there was too great a geographical spread between their islands and that it would be better to link adjacent groups of islands with the nearest mainland base, while providing for interlinking between groups of islands.

Core Groups: There was widespread general approval of the concept of core groups. Most groups felt that the process of selection of members worked well and was the best way to form groups, but three of them felt that there should be an element of elections, or nominations by local community groups, in addition to, or instead of, selection of members. One group reported difficulties in finding sufficient suitable members. Most of the groups felt that they needed more than 8 members, but specific ideas on this ranged from 9 to 15. Most of them were largely satisfied with the composition of their groups, although some had specific comments that they needed, for example, more members with professional skills, better geographic representation, more women, more industrialists, more young people or more project activists. Again, most of the groups were largely satisfied with their role and method of working, but some commented on the heavy workload.

One group felt that their style of operation should be more formal, with a chairperson, secretary and a larger more representative group.

Workshops: The workshops were generally seen as an important element in the programme, which succeeded in enhancing motivation and providing inspiration. However, the core groups had quite a number of specific suggestions on how to improve them. One-third of the groups felt that there were too many workshops and that three would have been sufficient, while almost half of them felt that the workshops were too long and/or the agendas too intensive. A related point made by a few groups was that there should have been more time for informal or social interaction between the groups.

The contributions from invited speakers or resource persons were generally regarded as good, with a few reservations, although three of the groups would have liked a say in planning the content of workshops while two of them would have liked to get papers and background information in advance of the workshops. Several of the core groups said there was too much repetition in the presentations from core groups.

Twinning: A majority of the core groups found the twinning visits effective or very effective in promoting shared learning. The main reservation, expressed by one-third of the groups, was that there should have been closer matching of similar areas with issues and problems in common. Mainly for this reason, three of the groups had fairly negative views of twinning, although a reason for this in one case was that its twinned group had a more negative attitude to the IRD programme.

Networking: All of the core groups found the networking arrangement good or very good, apart from one which did not avail of it. Some additional comments were that it was more beneficial than twinning, that it facilitated the follow-up of contacts and ideas gained from workshops, that it made up for lack of informal interaction at workshops, and that it should have been introduced earlier.

Technical Assistance: All of the core groups considered that technical assistance funding was valuable or essential, and most of them said that more was needed and could be usefully employed. Many of them also felt that the criteria for eligibility were too restrictive and/or that funding should be more broadly available for purposes such as feasibility studies and seed capital. Some felt that the technical assistance funding should have been introduced earlier and that the criteria should have been better clarified at the start. There was also a recommendation that there should be a fund available at the core groups' discretion. One of the core groups was very dissatisfied with the method of allocating phase two of the technical assistance fund.

Support — the Planning Team: Nearly all of the core groups commented very favourably on the role and commitment of the planning team, although two of them were quite critical. One of these regarded the planning team as remote and inaccessible, with no contact except at workshops, while the other regarded them as willing to be helpful and co-operative but lacking in rural development expertise. Two other comments were that more contact between the planning team and core groups would have been helpful, and that the support structure could have been augmented by involving development agencies and other organisations.

Support — the Co-ordinators: All of the core groups felt that the role of the co-ordinator was vital or indispensable and they generally commented very favourably on the work of their own co-ordinator.

Linkages to Other Groups in the Area: Nearly all of the core groups felt that they had developed effective or very effective linkages with other groups in their area such as community groups, local development associations and sectoral groups. This was achieved in various ways, but mainly by core group members also being members of other groups, by contacts through the co-ordinators and by public meetings.

Linkages to Agencies/Institutions: Nearly all of the groups found that linkages with the state development agencies and other institutions were effective or very effective. There were a few qualifications on this with some groups saying, for example, that some agencies were not very responsive at first, that some agencies could be more flexible and that staff shortages in the agencies made it difficult for them to be as helpful as they would wish.

Contacts with the agencies were developed through the co-ordinators, through meetings with core group or sub-group members, and by having agency staff as core group members. One core group which was not satisfied with the support from agencies suggested that it might have helped to have more agency staff as core group members.

Main Strengths and Weaknesses of the Programme Design

The core groups were asked to specify in their reports what they regarded as the principal strengths and weaknesses of the pilot programme design. Their views on this varied, but it was quite noticeable that there was a good measure of agreement on the main strengths, whereas a large number of diverse weaknesses were mentioned but usually only by one or two groups in each case. This would appear to indicate that the strengths were rather more obvious to all than the weaknesses, which would be consistent with the core groups' generally favourable overall view of the pilot programme.

Nearly all of the core groups included among the main strengths of the pilot programme the "bottom up" concept, the shared learning approach

involving twinning/networking and workshops, and the role of the full-time co-ordinator. A majority of them also regarded as key strengths of the programme the official backing of a government department and the European Commission, the role of core groups, and the fact that the general approach crossed sectoral boundaries drawing in the services and support of various agencies and institutions more effectively than previously.

Apart from these points, other main strengths identified by three or more core groups were the effective mobilisation of local people and resources, the systematic approach to identifying and selecting projects, and the professional and educational inputs which imparted new skills, ideas and information.

As regards the main weaknesses, the twelve core groups between them mentioned more than 30 distinct points, but there was little agreement on them, so that most of these points were actually mentioned by only one group. None of these points was mentioned by a majority of the groups. The most commonly cited main weaknesses of the programme, mentioned by three or four groups in each case, were the scarcity of additional finance under the pilot programme, the difficulty of convincing people of the value of the programme (particularly in the early stages) when no additional finance was involved, a feeling that things had to be done too quickly under pressure to produce results, and a feeling that the programme made great demands on voluntary participants, with some groups saying that there was inadequate allowance for out-of-pocket expenses.

Two other points, which may be of particular importance in certain areas were, first, that the programme design apparently assumed that there were active community groups in all areas and/or that people had a desire to work together as a community, whereas this is not necessarily so in all cases. And, second, the core groups had no formal mandate from their community and could be perceived by some as elitist.

One other identified weakness which should be mentioned in the context of the present report, was that the evaluation process examined the operation of the pilot IRD programme, but did not involve consulting the wider community or addressing wider policy issues. It has to be acknowledged that this is basically correct. The time allocated for evaluation was not such as to allow widespread consultation with local communities on their views of the pilot programme. And there are, of course, other policy issues having major implications for rural development which are not considered in great detail in this report since it focuses on the pilot IRD programme; some of these other policy issues are mentioned below at the beginning of Chapter 9.

Requirements for the Future

The core groups were asked to recommend in their reports which elements of the pilot programme should be retained and which should be changed or modified in a future programme. As with their identification of main strengths and weaknesses, there was a good measure of agreement on one side of this — namely, which elements to retain — whereas there were quite diverse views and much less agreement on how to change or modify the programme.

Nearly all of the core groups recommended retaining co-ordinators, core groups, workshops, twinning/networking (with rather more specific mention of networking than twinning) and technical assistance funding. There was also a good deal of specific support for retaining the "bottom up" approach and the planning team.

As regards changes or modifications, the one recommendation which was put forward by a majority of the groups was to provide more financial assistance, including more technical assistance funding and/or more broadly applied funding for purposes such as feasibility studies and seed capital. Some groups also recommended that at least part of this funding should be allocated at the discretion of the core groups.

There were a number of other recommendations for change put forward by more than one group, but none of these were suggested by more than three. These included slimming down the workshops (i.e., fewer of them and/or shorter and less intensive); consultation with core groups on speakers for workshops; better communication on IRD activities elsewhere via a computer link-up; delineation of "natural" areas with a recognised identity as participants in the programme; inclusion of a rural development specialist/ activist in the planning team; more back-up and support for co-ordinators; more representative means of forming core groups (although more groups favoured retaining the existing method of selection); provision of more realistic out-of-pocket expenses for core group members; and the establishment of an independent rural development agency (although there was also somewhat more support for keeping an IRD programme under the Department of Agriculture and Food).

Suggestions to Overcome Difficulties and Other Specific Messages from Core Groups

The core groups were also asked for suggestions on how to overcome any difficulties they had encountered, and for any other specific views they wanted to express. In practice, there was some degree of overlap in the topics covered by different groups under these two headings (as well as some repetition and emphasising of points made elsewhere). Consequently, it is convenient to treat them together here.

The views expressed in this regard were again very wide-ranging and most of the individual points made were expressed by only one group. But there were some views which were put forward by several groups. Some of the points related to the IRD programme itself while others dealt with other policies and issues having a bearing on rural development.

On the IRD programme itself, half of the core groups took the opportunity here to make explicitly favourable overall comments on it, such as those quoted at the start of this chapter; they generally called for a rapid follow-up and extension of the programme, having due regard to suggested modifications. This was much the most common type of "specific message" and some of the groups had no other specific message.

Most of the groups called for more finance in one form or another in order to overcome difficulties they had encountered. The financial needs referred to included assistance specifically for community groups and co-operatives, seed capital for projects, assistance for community backed tourism projects and craft enterprises, and a financial allocation for core groups to use at their discretion.

About half of the core groups suggested that the state development agencies could be pressed to give more formal recognition and/or a more positive response to IRD groups. Related suggestions were that the agencies should have specific budget allocations for assisting IRD projects and that their staff should be available on a regular basis to deal with IRD requirements.

One other suggestion about the IRD programme which was made by more than one group was that there should be better back-up for the co-ordinators and their office base.

Other suggestions and views dealt with broader policies and issues not specific to the IRD programme but affecting rural development. A common concern or, rather, interrelated set of concerns, was that social welfare and tax regulations should not have the effect of penalising or impeding initiative. This issue was often mentioned in the context of utilising FAS schemes, and there was a related concern that eligibility for participation in FAS schemes needs to be made more flexible. Leaving aside the FAS connection, one suggestion was that people trying to initiate a new business activity should be allowed an "exploration phase" during which they would not lose their existing social welfare entitlements or become liable to heavier taxation.

Two core groups recommended that there should be integrated plans for rural development in each area, drawn up by the relevant development agencies together and within the context of a national planning framework; one of these groups also specified that this process should involve local community representatives. Several of the groups also called for better assistance for agriculture, although their precise recommendations varied.

And two groups recommended that the criteria for eligibility for agri-tourism grants should be less stringent.

Finally, the two island core groups both made somewhat similar suggestions that there should be a unified official approach to development of the islands, whether through a new islands authority or through an explicit islands policy which would apply to all relevant government departments and agencies.

Chapter 8

SUCCESSES AND PROBLEMS OF THE IRD PILOT PROGRAMME

As was seen in Chapters 6 and 7, the prevailing overall view of the pilot programme among the co-ordinators and the core group members was that it was very worthwhile. Both of these sets of people wanted to see it continue and to be extended to other areas, although they favoured various modifications and changes. Since it is rather difficult to evaluate the success of the pilot programme precisely and objectively in quantitative terms, these qualitative judgements of the key participants have to be taken seriously as important indicators of its success or failure.

For the co-ordinators, of course, continuation of the pilot programme could have offered the prospect of continuation of their employment, which might be thought to have influenced their expressed judgement of its success. But then it should be borne in mind that they were on secondment from other jobs in the public sector to which they could return. Also, by their own account and quite credibly, the position of co-ordinator placed considerable demands and pressure on them, so that if they had a definite desire to continue in that position it seems that they genuinely found their role satisfying and worthwhile despite its difficulties. Furthermore, during the course of the pilot programme the co-ordinators were by no means reluctant to express their criticisms of it at their monthly meetings. It was clear, nevertheless, as time went on, that they generally felt that the programme was succeeding in achieving worthwhile results, despite any criticisms. In these circumstances, their overall view in their written report that the pilot programme was a success can be taken as a real reflection of their judgement.

The core group members' participation in the pilot programme was entirely voluntary and unpaid. There was no very strong personal incentive for them to stay with it, or to pronounce it an overall success and to recommend its continuation, unless they really felt that it was achieving worthwhile results for their area. (However, some of them may have felt that there could be more substantial funding available through a follow-up programme if the pilot was judged to be a success.) The commitment asked of them, on a voluntary basis, was often quite considerable and their willingness to continue giving it speaks louder than words in demonstrating their belief in the value of the programme.

The core groups members' commitment to the pilot programme is partly shown by the continuity of their membership of core groups and by their consistent attendance at the workshops. As was mentioned in Chapter 4, 76 per cent of all those who were ever core group members joined the programme in the first few months of its operation and stayed to the end. Of the remaining 24 per cent, only about half dropped out during the programme, while the other half were their replacements. And some of those who dropped out quite clearly had to do so for unavoidable reasons, so that withdrawals due to dissatisfaction or loss of interest were few and must have amounted to less than one-tenth of all group members.

Attendance of core group members at workshops, which can be taken as another indication of their commitment, ranged from 92 to 100 people, representing between 74 per cent and 84 per cent of current core group membership at the time of individual workshops. The final workshop had the largest attendance. Considering that workshops took up whole weekends, also involving some loss of normal working time for most people due to travelling, this level of attendance was very satisfactory.

Apart from their views in their written reports, the core group members' belief in the overall value of the pilot programme was repeatedly expressed implicitly during the programme. For they were well aware that what was being undertaken was a two-year pilot of an experimental nature, and during the second year they frequently expressed concern about the future and looked for assurances that the programme would continue in some form.

It is worth bearing in mind, too, in considering the assessment of the pilot programme by the core groups, that these were mostly experienced activists in organisations such as community groups, local development associations and sectoral groups, while some were officials of development agencies and local authorities. They should, therefore, have been in quite a good position to recognise and assess whether the pilot programme made a real difference in stimulating community based development activity in their areas. They were generally quite familiar with the situation in this regard both before and after the start of the programme.

Benefits of the Pilot Programme

While the main participants in the pilot programme mostly regarded it as successful and worthwhile, it is rather difficult to assess its impact objectively in quantitative terms. This is so for a number of reasons.

First, two years is too short a period of time for a programme aiming to foster economic and social development to be able to demonstrate its impact fully. Many of the projects selected were still in the planning stage or at the very early stages of implementation when the pilot period concluded, and consequently they had yet to deliver the full expected results in terms of

income generation or job creation. This is not at all surprising. Experience
with the rural action projects of the Second European Programme to
Combat Poverty suggested that the time frame for developing such projects
typically required two years to establish a project initially, two more years
to implement it and a further three years to consolidate it (Kennedy and
Kelleher, 1989, pp. 8, 9). If anything, projects undertaken in the IRD
programme tended to move faster than this, but it was still too early to see
the full impact of many of them by the end of the pilot period.

A second difficulty in measuring the effects of the programme is that
much of what was undertaken in it involved making some contribution to
projects rather than taking sole responsibility for implementing them. Core
groups and co-ordinators initiated and assisted many projects and in some
cases helped to build on existing projects, but in most cases external
promoters did much of the work, often with the assistance of public bodies
and agencies. Thus there were generally situations where projects were
assisted by IRD participants, and while many of them would not have
happened at all without an input from the IRD participants, others would
have happened in some form even in the absence of the IRD programme.
Thus, quite frequently, the IRD participants could not be fully credited
with all the results since others also made major contributions. This naturally
creates a basic conceptual difficulty in measuring the impact of the IRD
programme *per se.*

A third difficulty in measuring the effects of the pilot programme is that
a significant minority of the projects undertaken had inherently non-
quantifiable social objectives. Furthermore, quite a number of the projects
with overtly economic objectives were also of such a nature that their results
would be inherently difficult to quantify. For example, projects aiming to
establish new co-operatives or producer groups were generally intended to
make a contribution to the local economy, but it would often be difficult to
put a precise value on that contribution. Similarly projects aiming to develop
new tourist attractions may well contribute to increasing tourism revenues
for an area, but again it would often be difficult to measure the full
contribution, direct and indirect.

Despite all these problems in assessing the full results of the pilot
programme in a quantitative manner, it is at least possible to attempt to
quantify some aspects.

First, when the pilot programme ended, although many of the projects
were still in the early stages, projects undertaken or assisted in the
programme were reported by the core groups to have led to the creation of
99 full-time year-round jobs as well as 249 seasonal jobs which were full-
time for at least half of the year; this is equivalent to a total of over 224
full-time year-round jobs. In addition, there were 187 part-time jobs. These

projects were also reckoned, by the core groups themselves, to have further targeted or potential employment of 505 full-time year-round jobs as well as 188 which would be full-time for more than half the year, giving a full-time year-round equivalent of over 599. A further 687 part-time jobs, as well as some 1,500 jobs of a rather short-term seasonal nature, were also expected. The twelve pilot areas have an estimated population at work of about 38,000, so that the 604 existing and expected full-time year-round jobs in the projects would be providing employment for about 1.6 per cent of their working population if all the jobs were actually to materialise. Thus, if all of the expected jobs were actually to come into existence, this would amount to an employment contribution of some significance, particularly since employment has been declining in many of the pilot areas.

It should be noted, too, that some other projects were expected to lead to new employment, at least indirectly, but it was not possible to put numbers on this in some cases so that these are not included in the numbers referred to above.

Many of the projects undertaken were not such as to create jobs but they would generate additional or supplementary incomes for people. However, there was often greater difficulty in actually ascertaining the amounts of additional income, since this is less evident and is more sensitive a matter than counting jobs. The additional incomes generated by projects, in cases where this could be counted with reasonable confidence, amounted to IR£616,000 per annum at the end of the pilot period, as reported by the core groups. The potential or targeted additional incomes when projects come to full fruition amounted to IR£4.9 million per annum. But these figures leave out the results of quite a large number of projects where the impact was not quantified.

To put these figures in perspective, IR£4.9 million per annum would provide, say, IR£5,000 per annum to 980 people, or IR£3,000 to 1,630 people. Thus, if this accrued to people such as small farmers, fishermen or others with mainly seasonal or part-time employment and relatively low incomes, this could be sufficient to make the difference between involuntary emigration and a reasonably acceptable living standard for perhaps 2½-4 per cent of the working population of the pilot areas.

The figures on job creation and income generation were provided by the core groups themselves and they have not been independently verified. It might be thought that there would be some tendency for core groups to exaggerate their achievements in this respect, or at least to be optimistic on the question of future projections. This may be so in some cases, and it is quite likely that not all expected jobs or incomes will materialise and that there will be some project failures. However, it seems clear, too, that any bias in the core groups' expectations is not all in the direction of exaggeration.

For one thing, there was some feeling among core group members that it would be a mistake to make exaggerated claims since this might give the impression that a great deal can be achieved without more substantial financial aid for their areas.

It is worth noting, too, that 7 of the 12 core groups gave no monetary figure at all for incomes already generated while 5 of the 12 gave no such figure for projected incomes. This was generally due to the difficulty of giving actual figures, rather than to a complete absence of new incomes, and it means that if some of those giving figures were exaggerating this was likely to be counterbalanced or outweighed by the omission of the unavailable figures.

As regards the figures on new jobs already in place, 10 of the 12 groups provided figures. These figures generally looked realistic in so far as the largest numbers quoted came from areas where they would have been expected since they clearly had a good deal of activity going on relatively early. Most of these figures could scarcely have been greatly exaggerated since most of the groups claimed that less than 7 full-time year-round jobs were in place. As regards the projected new jobs, the number of expected "full-time year-round equivalent" jobs in the future was just over $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as great as the number reported to be already in place, which does not seem greatly exaggerated given that many projects were at an early stage of development. However, there must be some probability that not all of the expected jobs will materialise.

While it would be too much to claim, certainly after just two years' experience, that the approach of the pilot IRD programme could substantially transform rural areas, it does look likely that it can make a distinctly useful contribution to economic and social development. It is too difficult to say whether continuation of the programme would continue to produce additional results at the same rate over many more years. It is possible, of course, that it would eventually become increasingly difficult to come up with more useful new projects as the more evident ideas are exploited, or that the core groups would begin to run out of energy. On the other hand, there were signs of an effect whereby one idea or project begets another and projects become mutually reinforcing, so that momentum can build rather than diminish over time. At the end of the pilot period, it appeared that the momentum of project activity in most pilot areas was still increasing.

It is worth noting that the number of projects which emerged in the pilot period was considerably greater than was anticipated initially by the planning team. When the core groups and co-ordinators were originally asked to draw up their provisional lists of projects for Workshop II, it was suggested that they think in terms of about 9 to 12 projects, including four or five small ones, three or four medium-size ones and two or three large

ones. In practice, however, every core group eventually selected a greater number of projects than this and the average number per core group was 33. Thus the scale of activity which emerged was considerably greater than was originally hoped. It seems that a basic reason for this was that the core groups and co-ordinators successfully linked up with many other local people and organisations which joined in the process, whether through participating in sub-groups or by acting as project promoters. Thus the scale of mobilisation of human resources was considerable and this facilitated the adoption of relatively large numbers of projects.

The method of operation of the pilot programme meant that, for relatively small expenditures on employing paid staff, the voluntary efforts of much larger numbers of people were mobilised. With twelve full-time paid co-ordinators together with quite intensive management and guidance as well as administrative back-up, the programme secured the involvement of about 125-130 core group members (the precise number varied). It also involved a larger number of sub-group members, and stimulated new efforts by many members of other local organisations and other project promoters. Given this high level of voluntary work (or at least unpaid by the state) in relation to the numbers of paid staff, the programme probably gave good value for money, although a precise measure of the benefits and returns to the Exchequer would be very difficult to calculate for the reasons mentioned above. A few of the participants in the pilot IRD programme had previous professional experience in other state-backed self-help programmes and they felt that, whatever else might be said about it, this one achieved a great deal in relation to the money spent on it.

Of course, since the pilot programme was a new initiative and created a new experience for the participants, the people involved may have reacted by making exceptional efforts which would not be fully replicated in an ongoing national programme. Nevertheless, as far as one can judge from the pilot programme, it seems that people are prepared to make significant efforts on a voluntary basis to promote development of their area.

Problems and Issues Arising

There were a number of problems and issues arising in the pilot programme which are worth discussing here. First, it has to be mentioned that some selected projects failed or at least were slow to advance; some details on this are included in Appendix 4 on project activity. One reason for this was failure to find suitable project promoters although the core groups felt that they had the basis of good project ideas. Other projects which were initially selected were found to present various technical difficulties when they were further researched. And, of course, problems with

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securing sources of finance were the main constraint on advancing some projects.

It was also noticeable that some pilot areas were less successful than others in producing tangible results such as new jobs or the generation of additional incomes, within the two-year pilot period. The major determining factor of such varying results was not entirely clear, but it does not seem to have been particularly related to the areas' existing level of economic development. What seems to have been more important in producing relatively quick results in terms of jobs and incomes was the previously existing level of local community development activity and the strength of community spirit. Where such activity was strong, whether an area was relatively poor or relatively rich, the core groups were generally able to proceed more rapidly to produce tangible results. However, other areas which were slower to produce such results did not necessarily fail to make real progress. Some of them clearly made progress in laying the groundwork for more tangible results later on, e.g., by stimulating the formation of more active community groups and co-ordinating them better, and by planning and taking initial steps on projects, depending more on their own efforts, which could be expected to bear fruit subsequently.

An issue which was considered quite important from the start of the pilot programme was that "ownership" of the programme should come to be transferred to the core groups. In other words, they, rather than the co-ordinator, should come to feel responsible for directing and initiating their activities, with the co-ordinator being available to assist in various ways. For the most part, it appears that this transfer of ownership occurred to a noticeable extent, although it could still have gone further. Most groups were still relying a good deal on the co-ordinator to act on advancing projects. However, it was possible for the core groups basically to be in charge while still feeling very reliant on the services of the co-ordinators, and it appeared that this was a common situation at the end of the pilot period.

For the most part, the core groups "bought in" to the programme during the pilot phase, accepting their role and going about it often with considerable enthusiasm. As was outlined earlier in this chapter, there was evidence of a good deal of commitment from the core group members. Such commitment was not always achieved quickly, or not completely in all cases. Probably the factor most commonly causing core group members to have reservations about the programme was the scarcity of additional finance available through it, particularly since some were apparently under the impression at first that this situation would, or at least might, change during the course of the pilot.

Most members of one particular core group appeared to have exceptionally strong reservations about the pilot programme which persisted well into the second year. Their reservations and difficulties with the programme were expressed quite strongly verbally during the pilot period, although their criticisms were less pointed and were expressed in a relatively restrained manner by the time they came to prepare their final written report. Part of their reservations about the programme concerned the lack of additional finance, and the restrictiveness of technical assistance funding. Some of this group's members were also critical of twinning, as well as the format and content of Workshop I.

After that workshop, their subsequent attendance at workshops never exceeded half of the group and was as low as one-quarter on one occasion. In addition, and perhaps quite central to the attitude of this group, there were disagreements from an early stage with the methods of working prescribed for core groups. They felt that the programme dictated that groups should concentrate on developing new selected projects, whereas they felt that they would have done better in a primarily integrating role for existing groups and activities. They also felt that the core group was constrained to assist projects through a sponsoring group or person rather than taking them on directly, which restricted their effectiveness. Together with their lack of discretionary control over funding, these points led this particular group to conclude that the pilot programme was "bottom up" in theory but more "top down" in practice.

Probably arising from both the strength and nature of these disagreements, this same core group was relatively slow to settle on an agreed list of priority projects. Well into the second year the group's priorities still seemed somewhat unsettled, as seen, for example, in withdrawals of some applications for technical assistance funding and their replacement by other applications. They also were relatively poor attenders at workshops, as mentioned above, and there was an unusually high turnover of members of this group, with half of the group leaving and being replaced half way through the programme. It became evident at some monthly meetings with the co-ordinators that these features, taken together, had created doubts among the planning team about whether this really constituted a properly functioning core group. Partly as a result, the same group found it difficult to get approval for some applications for technical assistance funding, which led to further disenchantment.

Despite these disagreements and difficulties, this same core group did find some merit in the pilot programme. They approved of the "bottom up" principle, if not its practice, as well as the idea of core groups, co-ordinators and shared learning through networking, and they did ultimately wish to continue with the IRD programme in a modified form. Perhaps some of the

friction involving this group could have been avoided through better communication at an early stage of the aims and methods of working envisaged. For some time, at least, they seem to have felt unnecessarily restricted in the range of activities which they could undertake, and indeed some other groups interpreted their role more flexibly, engaging in integrating and co-ordinating activities *as projects,* and taking on certain types of projects themselves. But perhaps, too, it would not have been possible to persuade everybody without difficulty to fully "buy into" and accept such a programme. In any case, the difficulties and reservations of one particular group should not weigh too heavily in considering the overall experience of the pilot programme as a whole.

A further issue arising from the pilot programme concerns the method of selection and representativeness of core groups. Most of the groups felt that the method of selection was satisfactory and worked well, but a few felt that there should be at least some element of elections or nominations by community groups so as to have more representative groups. There may well be a trade-off here between effectiveness and representativeness or accountability.

It would have to be said that the core groups as selected were generally quite effective. They also did not generally behave in an elitist manner and the programme design would not have been conducive to their doing so. For they were asked not to use hierarchical structures, e.g., by not having group leaders or chairpersons. They were also positively encouraged to build links and to work with existing community groups, local development associations, sectoral groups and co-operatives, and in practice they did this and most of their priority projects were promoted by such organisations. Also the core groups did not have any funding directly at their disposal, and the limited technical assistance funding was always directed to external project promoters, following submission of applications through the core groups. Thus, there was not a great deal of scope or inclination for the core groups to behave in an elitist or unaccountable manner and they generally involved the wider community in much of what they set out to achieve — and they needed to do so in fact.

If more significant funding is to be made available through a future IRD programme, however, and particularly if this is to be partly available to core groups to use at their own discretion, the issue of accountability and representativeness could become more important. There could be some risk, in such circumstances, that more opportunist or self-interested individuals would seek to be part of future core groups and to use the available funding in ways which would suit themselves.

One option to cope with this might be to form the core groups in a more representative manner so that they would be accountable to those whom

they represent. But this would carry the risk of failing to achieve a good balance of skills and expertise in the core groups. And there is no guarantee that the degree of cohesion, team spirit and commitment developed in most core groups in the pilot programme could be replicated by using quite a different approach to their formation. An alternative approach could be to form the core groups in much the same way as in the pilot programme, placing a good deal of emphasis on the selection of people with involvement in local groups as voluntary activists. And this could be accompanied by clearly specified criteria on the usage of any additional funds, with more intensive and active checking that funds are being used correctly — without, at the same time, interfering with the core groups' freedom to select and initiate a wide range of project types, as in the pilot programme. Such an approach would be more likely to produce similar results to the pilot programme.

A final issue worth mentioning here concerns gaps identified in the range of available state assistance. The core groups and co-ordinators referred to a number of specific needs in this area, including aid for craft enterprises, assistance for community groups and co-operatives, legal aid for such groups, and assistance for community-backed tourism projects. They also felt that there was a general need in such an IRD programme itself for funding for seed capital and feasibility studies for projects.

Chapter 9

LESSONS AND ISSUES ARISING FROM THE PILOT IRD PROGRAMME

This chapter summarises the main lessons and issues arising from the pilot IRD programme. In considering the overall effectiveness of the programme, it should be borne in mind, as was noted in Chapter 1, that the approach adopted was intended to *contribute* to rural development, but it was not envisaged that this approach would be the only policy for promoting development of rural areas. Both the Irish government and the EC have a range of other policies having an influence on rural development. Such policies include those for the development of agriculture, tourism and forestry, policies to expand and to disperse industry geographically, and policies to improve infrastructure and the environment. It was intended that the pilot IRD approach would operate in this wider policy context and would be additional and complementary to other efforts to develop rural areas.

Some would question whether the range of policies influencing rural development amounts, as yet, to an integrated or coherent package addressing the fundamental issues effectively. For example, Cuddy and Ó Cinneide (1990) noted, with approval, that the Commission of the European Communities (1988) prescribed a multi-sectoral approach to the development of rural areas. But they also felt that, in practice,

> ... policy, however, would seem to be proceeding along narrow traditional lines as a mosaic of measures without a central coherent focus. A comprehensive package of rural development policies has yet to be delivered. (Cuddy and Ó Cinneide, 1990, p. 20).

This report does not attempt to assess the effectiveness or coherence of the whole system of policies having a bearing on rural development, since this report is rather narrowly focused on the IRD programme. We simply wish to note that the pilot IRD approach was envisaged as making a contribution within the broader system of policies, and not as being the only policy addressing rural development issues. It was not expected, in itself, to provide all the answers.

The pilot programme sought to bring to rural development policy a programme with an IRD approach. As was outlined in Chapter 1, the term "IRD" does not have a single generally accepted meaning. In the case of the Irish pilot programme, it meant a programme aiming to link and

promote multi-sectoral projects, on a geographical area basis, over a number of years. It also meant aiming to mobilise local leadership and initiative, and to encourage non-statutory or voluntary organisations to foster development projects while availing of the assistance available from statutory agencies. In addition, it incorporated the notion that systematic learning and sharing of ideas, experience and information can be beneficial in a process of participative change and development.

Unlike some formulations of the meaning of IRD, the Irish pilot programme did not involve a particularly strong or explicit concentration on the poorest areas of rural Ireland or on the needs of the poorest people in the areas where it operated. A particular focus on the needs of such people in the pilot areas involved was not ruled out, but whether such a focus would develop depended on the core groups and the people whom they worked with in their local communities. In practice, it seems clear that quite a number of the priority projects selected would have been beneficial to unemployed people and to others with relatively low incomes. However, given the nature of the general objectives of the pilot programme, no attempt is made here to assess explicitly its impact on social equity or combating poverty, since this was not a prime focus of the programme.

General Comments on the Pilot Programme

The pilot programme demonstrated that the approach adopted is capable of stimulating considerable voluntary efforts by local people to promote economic and social development in their own areas. It was clear, too, that those involved generally found the experience worthwhile and looked forward to continuation of the programme in some form. In terms of what it aimed to achieve, the programme could be regarded as successful, providing good grounds for continuing with this approach, with appropriate modifications.

While the pilot programme stimulated and encouraged initiatives coming from local communities themselves, it needs to be recognised that this was not spontaneous and that the programme worked through a focused, directed and quite conscious process. The initiatives taken on projects were genuinely local, but there was systematic central guidance of the overall process. Establishing and guiding the process took a good deal of care and similar care and attention would be needed in extending such a programme to other areas.

The pilot programme showed that genuine results can be achieved by encouraging and assisting local people to decide on and to initiate development projects for their own area. Participants generally responded well to the "bottom up" approach of the programme and they appreciated the fact that their views and expertise were valued and taken seriously by a government department and the European Commission.

Areas

The pilot programme produced no very clear lessons on what is the ideal size for areas involved. It worked well — arguably particularly well — both in the smallest areas (with under 2,000 inhabitants) and in the largest one (with almost 30,000 inhabitants). It seems that a flexible approach can be taken to the size of areas. Many of the participants felt, however, that it is important to delineate "natural" areas with which people can identify. Although this was not a unanimous view, it seems that most participants would feel more comfortable with what they regard as natural areas.

Areas with strong existing community group activity and a good community spirit seemed able to produce significant tangible results more quickly than others, but this was not an essential requirement for making worthwhile progress.

Co-ordinators

The role of the co-ordinators generally worked well and was an essential part of the pilot programme. While previous professional experience of this type of work and prior familiarity with their areas may have been advantageous attributes for some of the co-ordinators, neither seems to have been essential.

The co-ordinators were often under pressure, however, and it would be desirable, resources permitting, to provide them with more assistance and better office back-up and facilities. A flexible approach could be taken to this, providing assistants to those most in need of them, since the pressure of work seems to have varied depending partly on the degree of active participation of core groups. It would also be useful in future to provide full information on the nature and requirements of the job of co-ordinator to candidates before recruitment.

Training

The training programme for co-ordinators was generally very effective in the areas which it covered. Consideration could be given in future to providing more training and information on specific rural development issues and on topics such as business planning. Of course, training while on the job, as was done during the pilot programme, means competing with other demands on the co-ordinators' time, so that it would scarcely be possible to cover every topic of interest and value. Some choices have to be made on this.

The question of a training/induction course for future core group members also arises, to give them a clear view of what a programme of this nature involves. With the experience and outcomes of the pilot programme available, this should now be more feasible and it might form part of an early workshop for new core groups.

Core Groups

The role of the core groups worked well for the most part. Eight members was initially regarded as the ideal size, to facilitate effective and informal meetings, but it seems that effective core groups could be a little larger particularly since there were often some absentees from meetings.

As regards the formation and composition of core groups, the process of selection and the emphasis on obtaining people with a variety of relevant expertise and competence and a record of voluntary activism generally worked well. The process of recruiting core group members was generally successful in identifying people who were to show a sustained commitment to the pilot programme. Some would feel it desirable to have more representative or accountable core groups, but introducing new means of selecting or electing them would carry the risk of failing to create groups as effective as those in the pilot. It would probably be more effective to select them in much the same way as in the pilot programme and to deal with the issue of accountability, particularly if greater funding is involved, by more intensive and active evaluation/auditing of usage of funds.

The informal style of working for core groups was also generally satisfactory, as was the systematic approach to identifying, prioritising and implementing projects. One issue which arose was whether core group members need access to greater out-of-pocket expenses. As it was, their accommodation and direct travel costs (i.e., fares or petrol, not a mileage allowance) were covered for relevant excursions such as workshops or twinning visits outside their pilot areas, while their travel and other expenses arising within their pilot areas were not covered.

Sub-Groups and Advisory Groups

The concept of advisory groups was little utilised in the pilot programme and it seems to have been unnecessary. Sub-groups were widely used, however, and many additional people were drawn into the process in this way.

Workshops

Workshops were an important element in the pilot programme and they generally succeeded in providing inspiration and enhancing motivation. In a broader future programme, they could presumably be held more conveniently for core groups from particular regions of the country.

Issues which arose are whether workshops should be held a little less frequently, whether a longer lead-in time is needed to the first workshop, and whether workshop agendas should be less intensive with more time for informal interaction. There was backing for each of these suggestions from some participants, but they need to be considered carefully. The timing and

agendas of workshops did rather force the pace and this was intended to communicate a "work ethic" and seriousness of purpose. This meant that some participants felt under pressure, but it may well have been important for achieving the overall results.

Twinning

Most participants in the programme found the twinning visits an effective form of shared learning, but there was rather more favourable comment on networking and some feeling that it should have replaced twinning earlier or entirely. In practical terms, however, groups would probably not have had the sort of knowledge about other groups' activities that would have been needed to stimulate networking in the early stages of the programme. Consequently, a formal twinning arrangement seems to have been desirable at least up to Workshop II.

Networking

The networking arrangement was regarded favourably by all who were involved in it and it seems to have been a particularly valuable form of shared learning.

The Planning Team

The planning team, which was responsible for the overall running of the programme, was obviously due credit for its achievements. Most of the core groups commented very favourably on its role.

One suggestion which is worth considering is the inclusion in future of a specialist with "hands on" experience of rural development, although such a person would need to be in sympathy with and supportive of the general approach of the programme. Of course, the role of the pilot programme in general was to stimulate and assist people to take development initiatives, making use of their own expertise and that of the various specialist sectoral development agencies. The programme did not particularly set out to provide additional specialist expertise through the planning team, but the inclusion of a rural development specialist might be of assistance at times.

Some participants in the pilot programme felt that the planning team should have been less remote and more accessible to them. But this was not a very widely held view and a degree of distancing from the people on the ground was consistent with, and probably helped to emphasise the "bottom up" ethos of the programme.

Monthly Meetings

The monthly meetings of the co-ordinators and the consultants managing the programme were an important and useful part of the structure of the pilot programme.

Technical Assistance Funding

The technical assistance funding was widely welcomed and seems to have been generally put to good use. The experience can give some confidence that this is a feasible method of channelling funds to assist worthwhile local development initiatives. The question arose whether there should be greater amounts of funding in a follow-up programme, and whether it should be more broadly available for purposes such as seed capital, feasibility studies and marketing. It seems likely that additional funding could generally be usefully employed provided that there are adequate safeguards.

At the same time, there was a value in holding back the availability of funding until after groups had thought through their projects, identified their priorities and explored other sources of funding.

Linkages with Local Groups

The IRD core groups and co-ordinators generally established wide-ranging linkages with other local organisations such as community groups, local development associations, co-operatives and sectoral groups. Such links were important for finding project promoters, co-ordinating activities for mutual benefits, and generating unexpectedly large numbers of projects. The development of such linkages should continue to be encouraged in a future programme.

Linkages with State Agencies

There were rather ambiguous reports from IRD participants on support and assistance from state development agencies. The co-ordinators reported a number of problems in this area. The core groups, however, generally said that their linkages with the agencies were effective or very effective, but then in their recommendations about half of them called for more formal recognition and/or more positive responses to IRD groups by state agencies. The arrangements for a follow-up IRD programme should aim to ensure adequate support and co-operation from the agencies, given the limitations of their resources.

Gaps in State Assistance

The gaps in the range of state assistance which were specifically mentioned by the IRD participants included: finance for seed capital, feasibility studies, craft enterprises, assistance for community groups, and co-operatives generally and, more specifically, assistance for community-backed tourism projects and legal assistance for community groups.

Sponsoring Department or Agency

Some of the IRD participants favoured the establishment of a new rural development agency or authority to look after a future IRD programme. At the same time, however, most felt that the sponsoring role of the Department of Agriculture and Food was valuable and effective in the pilot programme, and there was also some specific support for keeping a future IRD programme under the care of that Department. It would be difficult to say that a very clear lesson on this issue emerged from the pilot, except to note that the pilot programme was generally quite successful and that it was backed by the Department of Agriculture and Food.

Role of the Programme in Promoting Development

The pilot IRD programme itself offered little in the way of direct financial assistance for development projects, although it did facilitate people in drawing on financial assistance from existing development agencies and other sources. Apart from this, what it did as a means of promoting development efforts was to stimulate new thinking and initiatives, promote the exchange of ideas and information, and co-ordinate and harness the available resources and efforts of numbers of people. Thus, what it offered as a means of promoting development was partly stimulation and support of "enterprise", in the broadest sense. But more than this, it became evident from many of the projects which emerged that, quite apart from the quality or spirit of enterprise of individuals, there are certain types of project activity which can be initiated and developed more effectively through the process of co-ordinating and linking up of people. This made it possible for some things to be done which would have been unlikely or much slower to happen simply by relying on enterprising individuals in isolation.

This applied, for example, to many of the project activities in mariculture or agriculture where it was felt that the best way to proceed was by forming co-operatives or producer groups. It applied, too, to many of the tourism projects which were often complementary or mutually reinforcing, for example by developing a number of tourist attractions at the same time in the same area, together with marketing efforts and relevant training courses. Of course, quite a number of the projects undertaken in the pilot programme could have been done effectively as individual "stand-alone" initiatives. But the notion of "integrated" development had a real meaning for many of them, and the process of co-ordination and integration did contribute a genuinely additional stimulus to development which looks likely to prove valuable.

Further Monitoring and Evaluation

Finally, it was mentioned in Chapter 8 that two years was too short a period of time for a programme aiming to foster economic and social development to be able to demonstrate its impact fully. Many of the projects selected were still in the planning stage or at the very early stages of implementation when the pilot period concluded, and consequently they had yet to deliver the full results that were hoped for. For this reason, there is a need for further, longer-term, monitoring and assessment of progress in the pilot programme areas. As the next chapter outlines, the continuation and extension of the IRD programme will involve some changes in the level and type of financial support and in the institutional support structures, and the effects of these changes should be a focus for attention in any future monitoring and evaluation.

PART IV

EPILOGUE

Chapter 10

NATIONWIDE EXTENSION OF THE IRD PROGRAMME

At the time of the launching of the pilot IRD programme, it was stated that the intention was to gain the experience necessary before considering whether to launch a nationwide IRD programme. Following the conclusion of the pilot phase in October 1990, the existing co-ordinators and core groups in the pilot areas were mostly kept in place while the experience of the pilot programme was being reviewed and decisions on follow-up arrangements were being considered. An early indication that the experience of the pilot phase was being regarded favourably at official level was the recommendation from the Agriculture and Food Policy Review Group (1990, p. 68) that the pilot programme for IRD should be applied nation-wide.

In July 1991, the Minister for Agriculture and Food announced that the government had agreed to his proposals for a nationwide IRD programme. The statement issued by his Department elaborating on this announcement ran as follows:

> The Minister said that the experience gained through the Pilot Programme on Integrated Rural Development, which operated in twelve specially selected areas in the period 1988-1990 demonstrated clearly that, given the opportunity, local communities were only too willing to become involved in the development of their own areas, in setting the objectives and in taking the necessary action to bring them to reality.

> In the light of that experience it has now been decided to extend to the entire country the system which was so successful in the pilot phase. This involves the appointment of official rural development co-ordinators working through Core Groups of local voluntary committed individuals and representatives of organisations interested in the future of the community.

> In the thirteen Western counties (Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan, Longford, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway, Clare, Kerry, West Limerick and West Cork), the role of the existing County Development Officers will be widened to enable them to undertake Co-ordinator

duties in addition to their existing functions. The appropriate training will be provided. The County Development Teams will provide the necessary back-up services.

For the remainder of the country there will be 25 rural development co-ordinators and these will be based in 8-9 strategically located centres.

They will be assigned the duty of stimulating and assisting local communities in their self-help efforts and of providing the guidance and information needed to ensure the success of these efforts. The co-ordinators will have the assistance of regional committees based on their areas of operation and representative of local authorities and State agencies and of the Core Groups in the area.

The Minister went on to say that a national consultative committee on rural development would be established to advise him in regard to progress on rural development.

Between now and the end of 1993, the Minister said, a sum of IR£7.6 million of State and EC funds is available for small and community enterprises under the Operational Programme for Rural Development. Considerable discretion will be given to the regional committees, and to the County Development Teams in the West, in disbursing these funds at local level.

The Minister emphasised that in setting up this new local structure, he had no intention of interfering with any other local arrangements already in existence, or which the local community might wish themselves to set up in the future. His objective, he said, was to ensure that all approaches to rural development should complement each other for the benefit of the community.

Referring specifically to the partnership companies established under the Programme for Economic and Social Progress, the Minister said that those set up in rural areas will be availed of to promote rural development in their catchment areas. The necessary administrative arrangements will be made to ensure that the companies and the new administrative structure which he is setting up will fully complement each other in promoting the good of the rural community.

Concluding, the Minister took the opportunity to express his appreciation of the efforts of all who co-operated in the pilot programme. Their unselfish commitment and dedication, he said, had led to the introduction of a design for rural development which would give the local community a greater say than ever before in shaping their own destiny (Department of Agriculture and Food, July, 1991).

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It is understood that the intention is to have the new structures in place in 1992, and it is expected that the staff and administration costs for that year will be about IR£1 million. By involving the existing County Development Officers and County Development Teams from the thirteen western counties in operating the new programme, it is intended to avoid duplication and to economise on costs.

The above statement is lacking in precise details of how the new programme would operate. For example, it does not elaborate on how the core groups would be formed, what sort of training is envisaged, how would the management role of the pilot programme's planning team be carried out, and whether there would be a built-in process of shared learning with workshops, networking and regular co-ordinators' meetings. However, the arrangements as outlined seem to be at least consistent with the prospect that the new nationwide programme will be broadly similar in important respects to the pilot programme, and it is understood that the intention is to retain the main features of the pilot design.

The local area units envisaged for the new nationwide programme, however, appear to be considerably larger than most of the twelve areas in the pilot programme. The western County Development Officers, in their role as co-ordinators, would mostly be dealing with areas of county size, while the other 25 co-ordinators would each apparently be dealing with an area about half the size of an average county. Such areas would be distinctly larger than most of the twelve pilot areas, although they could be roughly comparable in size or population to the largest of those areas, Inishowen, where the pilot programme operated successfully. It is not entirely clear how much back-up or support will be available to the co-ordinators, whether through the County Development Teams or the new regional committees. But it seems that the new nationwide programme, while otherwise similar in design to the pilot, will involve a less intensive application than the pilot scheme given the area to be covered and the resources to be made available.

It could be a positive feature of the new arrangements that the state development agencies or County Development Teams will be drawn into the programme, if this helps to ensure that they co-operate and assist it as best they can. At the same time, it would be important to ensure that they do not take on too dominant a role, and that committed local voluntary people have a major input in proposing and deciding on development initiatives, since this is a fundamental characteristic of a "bottom up" IRD programme.

To clarify how the new nationwide programme fits into the broader set of policies for rural development, there is currently an *Operational Programme for Rural Development* which was approved by the EC Commission in December 1990. This Programme is made up of a multi-sectoral range of

measures aimed at promoting rural development under five headings or sub-programmes. These sub-programmes deal with: (1) diversification of the rural economy, e.g., through incentives for alternative forms of farm production, (2) small and community enterprises, (3) rural infrastructure development, (4) research and development and marketing in the food industry, and (5) human resource development. Total expenditure on this Programme from 1991 to 1993 is to be IR£104 million, of which the EC Structural Funds are to contribute about IR£59 million.

Spending on sub-programme 2, for small and community enterprise, is to be IR£7.6 million up to the end of 1993, and this is the same sum mentioned in the Minister's statement quoted above, which will be available for small and community enterprises. Thus this amount of IR£7.6 million will constitute a fund which will provide grants, seed capital and technical assistance for projects emerging under the nationwide IRD programme. As was pointed out in Chapter 9, therefore, the IRD programme is to be seen as only part of overall policy for rural development, and it is intended to make a distinctive contribution to that policy by drawing on local initiative and leadership in a programme with a "bottom up" approach.

As a matter of clarification, it is worth mentioning that the LEADER programme is distinct from the IRD programme. The LEADER programme is the EC's own initiative on rural development. The purpose of LEADER is to encourage groups in local communities to organise themselves and to draw up plans for the development of their own areas. There were 34 Irish groups who applied for LEADER funding in 1991 of whom 17 were successful. These groups are to receive total public funding of some IR£35 million — IR£21 million EC and IR£14 million national — over the period to the end of 1993 to implement their plans. This funding will be matched by private investment of a further IR£35 million. Activities to be undertaken by the groups include vocational training, assistance for employment, rural tourism, development of small firms and craft enterprises and the marketing of local produce.

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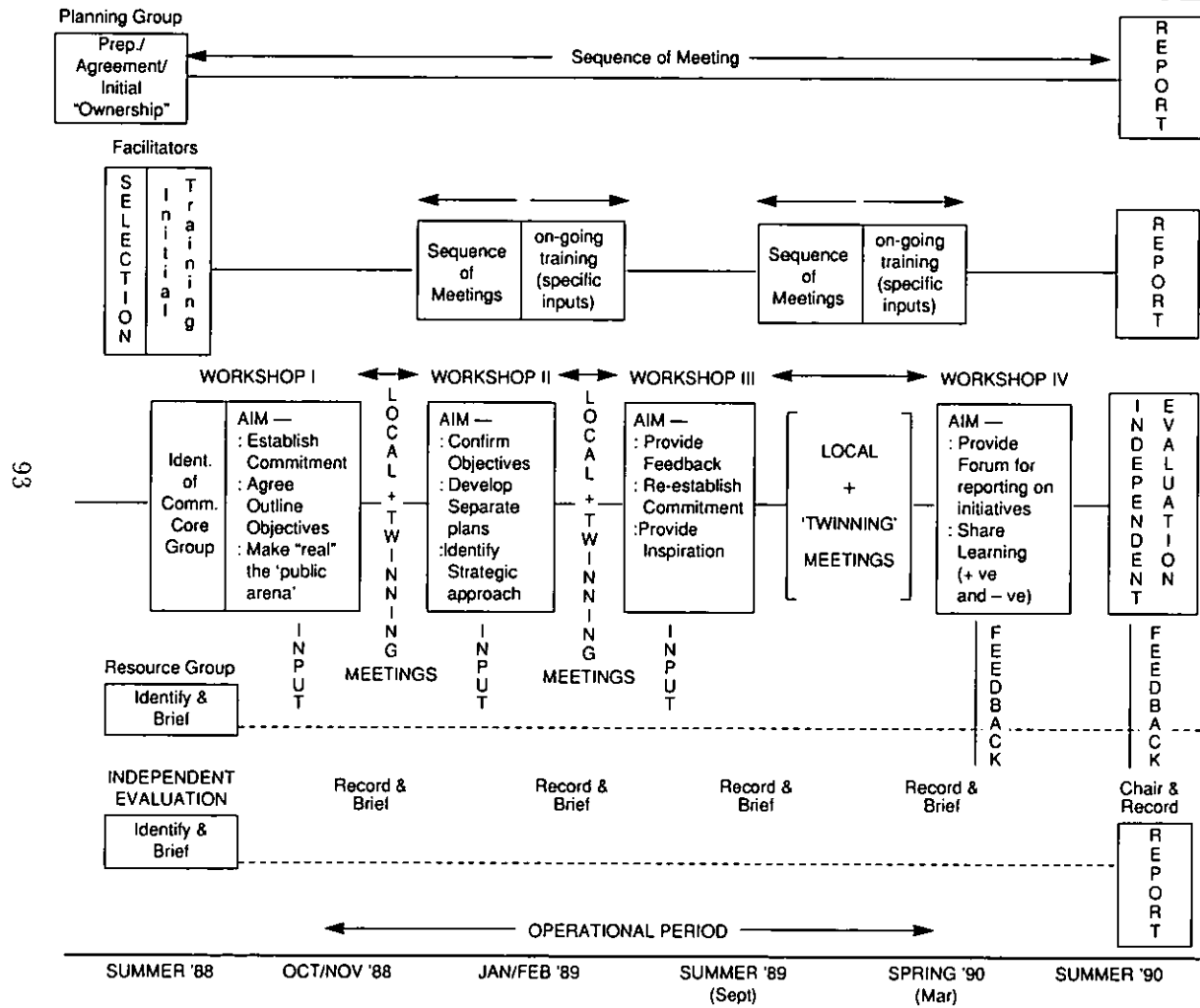
THE ORIGINAL PILOT PROGRAMME DESIGN

Appendix 1

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Planning Group

| Prep./ Agreement/ Initial "Ownership" | ◄—————— Sequence of Meeting ——————► | R E P O R T |

Facilitators

| S E L E C T I O N | Initial Training | | Sequence of Meetings | on-going training (specific inputs) | | Sequence of Meetings | on-going training (specific inputs) | R E P O R T |

WORKSHOP I ◄—► WORKSHOP II ◄—► WORKSHOP III ◄—————► WORKSHOP IV

| Ident. of Comm. Core Group | AIM — : Establish Commitment : Agree Outline Objectives : Make "real" the 'public arena' | L O C A L + T W I N N I N G | AIM — : Confirm Objectives : Develop Separate plans :Identify Strategic approach | L O C A L + T W I N N I N G | AIM — : Provide Feedback : Re-establish Commitment :Provide Inspiration | LOCAL + 'TWINNING' MEETINGS | AIM — : Provide Forum for reporting on initiatives : Share Learning (+ ve and – ve) | I N D E P E N D E N T | E V A L U A T I O N |

INPUT   MEETINGS   INPUT   MEETINGS   INPUT

F E E D B A C K   F E E D B A C K

Resource Group

| Identify & Brief |

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

| Identify & Brief |

Record & Brief   Record & Brief   Record & Brief   Record & Brief   Chair & Record

| R E P O R T |

◄—————— OPERATIONAL PERIOD ——————►

| SUMMER '88 | OCT/NOV '88 | JAN/FEB '89 | SUMMER '89 (Sept) | SPRING '90 (Mar) | SUMMER '90 |

Appendix 2

THE CO-ORDINATORS

The co-ordinators for the twelve pilot areas are listed below:

Pilot Area	Co-ordinator	Previous Occupation	Previous Knowledge of Pilot Area
Cooley	Bernadette Crombie	Socio-Economic Advisor, Teagasc	None
Erris	Seamus O Mongain	Agricultural Advisor, Teagasc	Good knowledge of the area, previously employed in it by Teagasc
Gort	Sean Ryan	Forester in Charge	Good; previously employed adjacent to the area.
Inishowen Peninsula	Michael Heaney	Development Officer; also Project Director, EC Anti-Poverty Programme	Good; previously employed in development work in the area.
Inny Basin	Patrick Chambers	Civil Servant, Technical	None
Macamores	Mary Mallon	Civil Servant, Administrative	None
Manorhamilton	Fionnuala Meagher	Town Planner	Limited to tidy town adjudication and short holiday breaks.
North Western Islands	Martin Regan	Forestry Official	Acquainted with Donegal islands for 10 years. No knowledge of Mayo/Galway islands.
Skibbereen	Michael Hennessy	Forester in Charge	Occasional holiday visits; lived within 25 miles of the area.
Slieve Felim	Tom Fitzpatrick	Civil Servant, Department of Agriculture and Food	Some; lived near the area.
South Western Islands	Pat Kearney	Farmer; Civil Servant, Technical	Limited to occasional holiday visits.
South-West Kerry	Thomas J. Noonan	Forestry Official	None, other than to have driven around the area.

The twelve co-ordinators were in the following age ranges:

30-34 years:	5	40-44 years:	1
35-39 years:	4	45+ years:	2

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Appendix 3

THE CORE GROUP MEMBERS

The core group members in the twelve pilot areas are listed below.

Name	Occupation	Period Served
Cooley Peninsula:		
Peter Savage	Industrialist	2 years
Tommy Elmore	Company Director	2 years
Des Gorman	Accountant	2 years
Brian McKevitt	Hotelier	2 years
Brian Gormley	County Secretary Louth County Council	2 years
Fergus Flynn Rogers	Architect	2 years
Sheila Byrne	ICA	20 months
Liam Woods	Farmer	1 year
Terry Brennan	ESB Executive	1 year
Michael O'Hanlon	Headmaster	1 year
Tim McCarthy	Forester	1 year
Roisin Cox	Craftworker	1 year
Peadar Murphy	Farm Manager	1 year
Padraig Monely	Civil Engineer	1 year
Con Delaney	Industrialist	1 year
John O'Callaghan	Pharmacist	1 year
Vivion Brennan	Farmer	1 year
Don Johnson	Teacher	1 year
Kevin Woods	Sales Executive	1 year
Erris:		
Matt Costello	Teacher	2 years
Fr Gerry Gillespie	Curate	2 years
Eamonn Holmes	Company Director	2 years
Peggy Mangan	Company Director	2 years
Michael Mangan	Company Director	2 years
Eamonn Ó Duibhir	Official — Development Authority	2 years
Michael Ó Seighin	Teacher	2 years
Tim Quinn	Manager — Co-operative	2 years

Name	Occupation	Period Served
Gus Ruddy	Official — Development Authority	2 years
Kevin Walsh	Manager — Development Authority	2 years
Gort:		
Stan MacEoin	Teacher	2 years
James Nash	Solicitor	2 years
Paddy O'Grady	Farmer	22 months
William McLysaght	Businessman	2 years
Eilis Bermingham	Businesswoman	22 months
Paddy Gleeson	Businessman	2 years
Barney Winston	Teacher	2 years
Bernard Fennessy	Businessman	2 years
Paddy Grealish	Teacher	2 years
Tony Diviney	Farmer	21 months
Pat Hayes	Farmer	2 years
Inishowen Peninsula:		
Michael McLaughlin	Teacher	2 years
Carl Fullerton	Co-op Manager	2 years
Robert Carey	Farmer	2 years
Brendan Keaveney	Hotelier	2 years
Sinead McLaughlin	Teacher	2 years
Willie Harrigan	Co-op Manager	2 years
Pat Molloy	County Agricultural Officer	2 years
Pat Bolger	County Development Officer	2 years
Larry Murphy	Agricultural Officer	2 years
Michael Ó Cinneide	Researcher	2 years
John Steele	Fisherman	2 years
Vincent Lynn	Engineer	1 year
Nellie O'Sullivan	Nurse	6 months
Peter Cunningham	Inishowen Community Development Group	14 months
Inny Basin:		
Brian Corr	Farmer	2 years
Nora Daly	Offical — Development Authority	2 years
Sean T. Kelly	Teacher	2 years

Name	Occupation	Period Served
Christy Kiernan	Official — Development Authority	2 years·
John Kiernan	Company Director	2 years
Conor Maguire	Manager — Development Authority	2 years
Dan McCarthy	Farmer	2 years
Matt Nolan	Official — Development Authority	2 years
Marcella O'Reilly	Company Official	2 years
Frank Sheridan	Farmer	2 years
Macamores:		
John Bermingham	Retired	1 year
Danny Cooper	Farmer/Salesman	2 years
Bruce Copeland	Marketing Consultant	2 years
Ned Hammel	Farmer	2 years
Maree Murphy	Teacher	2 years
Pat Rath	Farmer	2 years
Saghi Redmond	Teacher	1 year
Pat Redmond	Businessman	9 months
Charlet Whitmore	Retired	2 years
Manorhamilton:		
Sean Clancy	Company Manager	1 year
Joan Haslette	Company Director	15 months
Ina Keane	Housewife	2 years
Kathleen Keaney	Housewife	6 months
Ian McDonald	Bank Manager	6 months
Paddy McGowan	Clerical Officer	15 months
Gabriel Miney	Local Authority Engineer	19 months
Eithne O'Connor	Evaluator — Farm Diversification Initiative (N. Ireland)	2 years
Sean Sweeney	School Principal	2 years
Tommie Sweeney	Officer — Restoration Agency	2 years
North Western Islands:		
Cornelius Bonner	Ferry Boat Operator	2 years
Anton Ó Gallchoir	Co-op Manager	2 years
Phil "Ban" Boyle	Publican/Businessman/ Supermarket	2 years

Name	Occupation	Period Served
Manus Ó Luathairi	Summer School Organiser/ Secondary School Teacher	2 years
Cathal MacSuibhne	Regional Manager	2 years
Denis P. Doyle	Manager of Tourist Office	2 years
Eamon Ó h-Eanaigh	Co-op Manager	2 years
Aileen Murray	Hotelier	2 years
Michael O'Toole	Former Head of Agriculture Research Station	2 years
Chris O'Grady	Hotelier/Mailboat Assistant Manager of Clare Island Fish Farm	2 years
Paddy Henry	Retired School Teacher	2 years
Padraic McDermott	Assistant County Development Officer	2 years
Tony Dawson	Manager, Tourist Office	1 year
Marie O'Donnell	Bord Failte Official	1 year

Skibbereen:

Liam Barrett	Farmer	20 months
Kieran Cotter	Shopkeeper	2 years
Michael Glavin	Teacher	20 months
John Hayes	Farmer	2 years
Tim Lyne	Technician	20 months
Jerome McCarthy	Teacher	22 months
Dan Joe O'Donovan	Farmer	2 years
Denis Shanahan	Teacher	20 months
Frank Shanahan	Teagasc Official	2 years
Brian Sheehan	Businessman	22 months

Slieve Felim:

Tom McCarthy	Co-op Manager (retired)	2 years
Luke Murtagh	CEO in VEC	2 years
Matty Ryan	Farmer	2 years
Fr Dan Woods	Curate	2 years
Paddy Ryan	Self-employed Businesman	22 months
Willie Keane	Farmer	22 months
Dan Cotter	Teacher (retired)	20 months
Michael Ryan	Farmer and Economics Lecturer	19 months

Name	Occupation	*Period Served*
Agnes Coleman	Housewife	17 months
Seamus Tobin	Enterprise Centre Manager	15 months
Martin Moloney	Finance Manager	5 months
John Sheehy	Farmer	16 months
Denis O'Malley	Engineer	3 months
Paddy Fitzgerald	Farmer	8 months
South Western Islands:		
Seamus O Drisceoil	Co-op Manager	2 years
Breda Collins	Librarian	2 years
Fr O'Shea	Parish Priest	2 years
Jack O'Sullivan	Businessman	2 years
Frank O Domhnaill	Co-op Manager	2 years
Padraic Og O Conghaile	Fisherman	2 years
Peadar O Conghaile	Fisherman	2 years
Colie O Hiarian	Airport Manager	2 years
Liam O Loidean	Hostel Warden	1 year
Pol O Foighil	Businessman	2 years
Miceal O Goill	Teacher	2 years
Caoimh O Goill	Teacher	2 years
M.J. O Ceadachan	Farmer	2 years
Josephine O'Donnell Smyth	Hotel Manageress	2 years
Aishling Ni Shitible	Development Agency	1 year
Martin O Conghaile	Development Agency	2 years
South-West Kerry:		
Denis Cournane	Development Agency Officer	18 months
Kathleen Lynch	Teacher	18 months
Eamonn Langford	Teacher	18 months
Fr M. Murphy	Parish Priest	18 months
Sean O'Sullivan	Bank Manager	18 months
Pat Wiltshire	Builder	18 months
Carmel O'Sullivan	Accountant, Business-woman	18 months
Michael Doyle	Co-op Manager	18 months
Tom Shanahan	Teagasc Instructor	18 months

Note: The South-West Kerry core group was formally established later than the others, as the co-ordinator was not appointed until after the start of the pilot programme in other areas. The longest possible period of service for core group members in South-West Kerry was 18 months.

PRIORITY PROJECTS IN EACH PILOT AREA

In the pilot programme for integrated rural development, the core groups in each pilot area agreed on priority projects which they would aim to advance. This Appendix contains an annotated listing of these priority projects, taking the twelve pilot areas in alphabetical order. It is based on information provided by the core groups and co-ordinators, and any details on the current state of development of projects refer to the time of the end of the pilot programme, i.e., about September 1990.

It should be noted that much of what was undertaken by IRD participants in relation to these projects involved making *some contribution* to advancing them rather than taking sole responsibility for implementing them. Core groups and co-ordinators initiated some projects and assisted in giving impetus to other existing projects, but in most cases external promoters did much of the work, often with the assistance of public bodies and agencies. While some projects would not have happened at all without an input from the IRD participants, others would have happened in some form even in the absence of the IRD programme. Thus, quite frequently, the IRD programme could not be fully credited with all of the results, since others also made major contributions.

It is worth noting too that the projects listed in this Appendix were not all fully implemented by the end of the two years of the pilot programme. Many of them were still in the planning stage or in the early stages of implementation when the pilot period concluded.

Cooley

Large Projects

Marina Development, Carlingford

Plans for a Marina Village have been drawn up by a private investor and the breakwater is at present being constructed. This project was initiated in 1988 and has been supported by the IRD group.

Bridge at Narrow Water

The IRD Core Group support plans to erect a bridge at Narrow Water, linking the Cooley Peninsula with Warrenpoint, Co. Down. This bridge, linking the Peninsula to South Down, would assist industry and tourism in the Peninsula.

Corn Mill

Restoration of a Corn Mill to working order is being undertaken by a private investor. This investor also plans to erect a working forge and is looking for same. This project was initiated in 1987 and the IRD group prompted its reactivation.

Restoration of Medieval Carlingford

Major restoration work is being undertaken by the Carlingford Lough Heritage Trust to restore the medieval fabric of Carlingford — which is designated a Medieval Theme Town by Bord Failte. A new project, supported by the IRD group.

Development of Amenity Park at the Long Woman's Grave

Landscaping plans for this park are being finalised. This is a new project which IRD assisted by liaising with the School of Landscaping, UCD, and by encouraging two community groups to initiate a joint venture on this project. IRD technical assistance funding was also provided.

Preliminary Stages in the Formation of a Third Sector Company for the Cooley Peninsula

Work is still ongoing on this project. However, the group, while accepting that the concept of a Third Sector Company is novel in community development, are concerned about the long-term income generating possibility of such a company. IRD initiated this project.

Scallop Production in Carlingford Lough

The Carlingford Lough Aquaculture Association in conjunction with IRD wish to expand their operation to include Scallop production. Scallop production is new, although the project is an extension of the successful oyster production in Carlingford Lough.

Urban Renewal Programme, Omeath

Initiated by the Omeath Community Council, the aim of this project is to engage the professional services of an architect/town planner to liaise with the local community in order to initiate an urban development programme for the village. This is a new project which IRD has assisted by liaising with

the International Fund for Ireland, local architects and the School of Landscaping, UCD.

Transfrontier Project

The IRD Core Group and the Rural Action Programme in South Armagh are presently working on a community transfrontier proposal in order to optimise Interreg and International Fund for Ireland funding. A new project.

Medium-Size Projects

Improve Jetty in Omeath

This project, initiated by Omeath Community Council in conjunction with IRD, is now being assisted by Louth County Council. It is planned to raise the pier by 1½-2 ft. to allow greater access to the pier.

Park at St. James's Well

This park is being designed by fourth year Landscape Architecture students of the Faculty of Agriculture UCD in conjunction with Cooley Self-Help Group. A new project assisted by IRD by liaising with UCD.

Bottled Water

The Cooley Peninsula is famous for its high quality water. Market research is at present being carried out by the RTC, Dundalk, to determine the market potential of 5 litre and 5 gallon containers of water. A new project initiated by IRD.

Farm Museum

This project, which is being privately financed, stems from a successful Farm Vintage Event which has been held in the Peninsula for the last 2 years and is now an annual event. The Farm Museum project is new and IRD is supporting it, providing information and assistance when requested.

Landscape Omeath

This project is being carried out by the fourth year Landscape Architecture Students of the Faculty of Agriculture, UCD, as part of an overall development plan for Omeath in conjunction with the Omeath Development Association. This is a new project initiated in conjunction with IRD.

Community Sports Pitch at Ravensdale

The local Ravensdale Community have acquired a site to be used as a playing pitch for a variety of sports. IRD has supported this project.

Watergarden in Omeath

Plans are under way by the Omeath Development Association to develop a Watergarden — the first of its type in Ireland — in Omeath. This project is ongoing since 1988 and is supported by IRD.

Revitalisation of Omeath

This project, initiated by Omeath ICA in conjunction with IRD, incorporates a pageant at the Long Woman Grave, the researching of the history of Omeath — the last natural Gaeltacht on the East Coast — and re-enacting the "Fair Day" theme of the 1930s in Omeath.

Soft Fruit

A total of 50 acres of raspberries · has been planted for Lairds of Drumshanbo, Co. Leitrim. It is planned to initiate a further campaign to plant a further 50 acres of strawberries. Groups involved: Teagasc, Lairds of Drumshanbo and local fruitgrowers. This is a new project initiated by IRD.

Small Projects

Cooley Crafts Brochure

Produced in Summer 1989, this brochure lists all crafts, of which there are 10, and craftworkers, of which there are 17, in the area. A new project initiated by IRD.

Carlingford Folk Festival

Held in September 1989, this festival, which is now an annual event, was a success. Organised by the Carlingford Folk Festival Committee and assisted by IRD.

Publicity in "Aspect" and "Business and Finance" Magazines

These articles, initiated by local businessmen, were published to highlight the advantages of locating business in the Cooley Peninsula.

Tourism Brochure of Cooley Peninsula

A full colour brochure on the Peninsula was prepared by the Carlingford Tourism and Festivals' Committee. Initiated by IRD.

Provision of Tourist Information Office

This office will be staffed by FAS trainees: it will be opened in Carlingford by the Carlingford Festivals' and Tourism Committee.

Form Tourism Group for the Entire Peninsula

An initial meeting was held at which all the tourist interests in the Peninsula attended. This group have agreed to meet again to review the 1990 season and to plan for the summer of 1991. Initiated by IRD.

Clean/Tidy Beaches and Overgrown Sites

The Cooley Self-Help Group have cleaned and tidied 5 miles of coastline in the Cooley Peninsula. As a result of their action Louth County Council have agreed to build a car park and public toilets at the Peninsula's largest beach, Shelling Hill. Assisted by IRD.

Restoration of Kilwirra Church and Graveyard

This project being undertaken by the Cooley Area Development Association has the backing of the Office of Public Works. Assisted by IRD.

Programme on Setting up and Running a Tourism Business

As part of the Integrated Programme for Rural Development, CERT organised a 20-hour course on *Setting up and Running a Tourism Business*. This course had an excellent response.

Erris

Large Projects

Carn Holiday Complex

Construction of a tourist complex incorporating a golf course, tennis, bowling and adventure sports, together with caravan park, chalets and hotel accommodation. This is an expansion of an existing proposal to construct a golf course only. IRD encouraged the expansion of the original proposal and assisted promoters in sourcing and preparing applications for funding. To date, most of the golf course is completed, plans and specifications for other elements are prepared, grant applications are pending and negotiations have commenced with private investors.

Sea Angling Project

Provision of sea angling facilities and holiday packages, and promotion of these holidays abroad. The promotion of such holiday packages abroad is new and was initiated by IRD. IRD assisted in preparing a strategy for overseas promotion and sourced funding for this from State agencies. To date, costings of holiday packages are agreed and overseas promotion has begun.

Specialist Holiday Products/Accommodation

Development of specialist holidays and accommodation services. A new development initiated by IRD, which also identified relevant local resources, arranged CERT and FAS training courses and organised a competition for ideas. To date, a rural tourism course has been completed, promoters have been identified for water sports, equestrian activities and guided tours, and the first water sports holiday package has taken place.

Ceidi Fields Project

A heritage development project with both tourism and environmental objectives. This is a new project in which Erris IRD group is participating with other community groups. IRD organised local fund raising, raised local awareness and integrated this with other tourism projects. To date, an organising committee has been formed, IR£48,000 has been raised locally, lands have been purchased, archaeological work has been done, an information office has been opened, and grant applications have been made.

Erris Heritage Centre

A heritage and tourist development project involving renovation of an old church. This is a new project initiated by IRD, which negotiated the provision of the building, applied for a grant to renovate it, and secured FAS schemes. To date, the building has been re-roofed, and the FAS schemes have been approved.

Enterprise/Resource Development Project

An enterprise and marketing project, aiming to establish a company structure, with professional full-time management, which brings together community enterprise and State development agencies. A new project initiated by IRD, which formed an organising committee, held public meetings, undertook local fund raising, prepared a business plan and applied for funding from Irish Resource Development Trust. To date, IR£18,000 per annum for 5 years is pledged from local fund raising.

Medium-Size Projects

Bangor Livestock Mart

The proposal for a livestock mart existed prior to the IRD programme, but IRD assisted farmer promoters in forming a company, in raising share capital, preparing a business plan and applying for grant aid. To date, a site has been purchased, planning permission is granted and grant applications are pending.

H

Farm Forestry and Planting Unit

Promotion of farm forestry. IRD initiated farmer forestry promotion in Erris and organised a series of local seminars with Erris Co-op. To date, 97 people have attended 4 seminars and 900 hectares have been planted by 19 farmers.

Shell Fish Farming

Establishment of shellfish farming is new to Erris and was initiated by IRD. IRD organised awareness meetings, established trials, arranged a mariculture course and identified potential farmers. Fourteen attended the course and 10 are engaged in pilot-scale projects. One person is employed in making equipment.

Natural Oyster Bed Development

IRD initiated a development programme for existing natural oyster beds. IRD encouraged and assisted a local co-op to commission a resource study and prepare a development plan.

Irish Language Immersion Course

IRD organised local "mna ti" into formal groups and assisted in identifying local leaders and teachers for out-of-season courses, and also sourced information and financial assistance. The first such course has been held.

Small Projects

Farm Relief Service

A hoof care and sheep shearing service initiated by IRD, which found a promoter and assisted in arranging training. One operator now provides this service.

Big Bale Silage Service

IRD initiated this service, encouraged a local co-op to invest in the machinery required, and helped prepare costings. Eighty farmers availed of the service in 1989.

Tourism Infrastructure

Tourism signposting, blue flag beaches, walking routes and archaeological/ historical routes. Initiatives of IRD, which identified requirements and liaised with local authority, Bord Failte and others to implement them.

Group Water Schemes

IRD formed new area groups, liaised with the Department of the Environment and the local authority, and assisted with preparing the schemes.

Cultural/Social/Educational Project

Organisation of cultural and educational activities and events. IRD helped to expand existing activities and organise a wider range of events.

Enterprise Ideas Project

An IRD initiative to seek out and disseminate business ideas, to assist in preparing business plans and direct participants to sources of advice and finance. One new enterprise is in production and business plans have been prepared for two others.

Environmental Awareness

Aimed at raising awareness of the value of environmental improvement. IRD helped local people to examine and learn from successful Tidy Towns groups and arranged an environmental study of the area by a third level college.

In addition to the above settled priority projects, the Erris core group also took on projects to promote a timber harvesting unit, craft industry and mariculture equipment.

Gort

Large Projects

Infrastructure

Review and identification of needs for infrastructural improvements, e.g., roads, water, housing, schools' amenities. A long-term issue.

Hotels and Accommodation

Identification of accommodation availability and additional requirements. It was concluded that two Grade A hotels, one Grade B hotel and up to ten approved guesthouses are required in addition to existing accommodation.

Golf Courses

Review of situation concerning golf courses in the area in relation to tourism. There is only one nine-hole golf course, while purchase of land for an 18-hole course is going ahead and another 18-hole course is at the design stage.

Lough Graney Amenity Area

Preparation of plans for amenity development in this area. A new project assisted by IRD, with the benefit of networking, twinning and technical assistance.

Water Sports/International Water Park for Lough Derg

Plans have been drawn up by SFADCO for this. Preliminary funding has been granted from the structural funds but exact details are not available.

Waste Recycling

Collection and recycling of glass, paper, plastic and aluminium. A company was formed to do this by an IRD core group member and his partner. IRD assisted in various ways including provision of technical assistance. The company is now in operation and is expanding.

Caravan/Camping Park

This is regarded as a desirable facility, and at present its feasibility is being considered.

Ardmullan/Fiddaun Castles

These are O'Shaughnessy Castles and an O'Shaughnessy clan gathering took place in Gort in June 1990.

Dunguaire Castle

This castle is owned by SFADCO and is featured on its Banquet Dinner Promotion. Extra funds have been approved for its development programme.

Medium-Size Projects

Develop Angling as a Tourism Product

Little worthwhile progress has been made under this heading. The pilot area has over twenty beautiful lakes ready for exploitation. More work will have to be done at local level to involve the fishing clubs and the accommodation sector.

New Library at Scariff and Kinvara

Scariff

The derelict old school has been purchased by the Mid- Western Health Board, and will be used as a Health Centre, Day Care Centre and a Public Library.

Kinvara

There is no progress to report on the provision of a Library for Kinvara.

Equestrian Centre, Scariff and Peterswell

Scariff

The Craven estate has been purchased by Scariff and District Show Society for the purpose of creating a modern Equestrian Centre and for the development of the half bred horse in East Clare. Over one hundred farmers with an interest in horses have subscribed to this project, and will continue to do so. The development will be phased in over a number of years. IRD provided initial forum to bring together all parties for discussion, and provided assistance with benefit of networking and technical assistance.

Peterswell

Without too much effort on the part of IRD, a new private equestrian centre is now in operation at Skenagh Peterswell. Already the project is a success and employs four people at present.

Agri-Tourism Promotion and Development

This type of development is essentially long term, and the IRD group has made efforts to promote the concept. In close liaison with Teagasc, an Agri-Tourism Course was organised in Gort in Spring 1990, and this was immediately followed by a CERT Course. A similar range of courses is starting in Scariff in Autumn 1990.

Cultural/Arts/Crafts Centre

The IRD group has tried to pull together the various strands of this broad aspect of rural life, but without too much success. Basically, it is aimed to get all persons involved in this activity together to see what can be done.

Festivals, Special Events

Four festivals are in vogue in the pilot area, i.e., Cruinniu na mBad in Kinvara, Oyster Festival in Clarinbridge, Music Festival in Gort, an Irish Music and Cultural Festival in Feakle. The O'Shaughnessy clan also had their Clan gathering in South Galway in June, 1990.

Water and Sewage Schemes

A sewerage scheme was completed in Gort in 1989, and a water scheme is currently being provided in Kinvara. Mountshannon has just completed a sewerage scheme, which includes for the first time sewage disposal units for the cruiser traffic on Lough Derg. It is understood that Feakle Water Scheme is next on the list.

Small Food Processing at Feakle

A client is interested in establishing a Food Processing Plant at Feakle and has been followed up. However, nothing much can happen until the Water Scheme has been completed.

Kiltannon Caves

This has similar potential to Ailwee Caves at Ballyvaughan. Much preparatory work has been done, but putting the physical structures in place will require considerable capital. IRD has assisted with the benefit of networking and technical assistance.

Aquaculture/Mariculture

A report by the National Board for Science and Technology, in its reference to South Galway, stated "the professional value of such an enlarged and professionally worked oyster fishery in South Galway Bay is several million pounds per annum and therefore well worth strong state investment and support". An operational programme is in the process of being put together now for this major resource. IRD has assisted by bringing interested parties together and providing ongoing support.

Mushroom Village

Despite research work in the early period, this project has not advanced any further. It is hoped to get a course on mushrooms going in Autumn 1990.

Enterprise Centres

Promotion of the Enterprise Centres at Tulla, Tuamgraney, Feakle and South Galway with a view to having existing units filled, and the creation of additional ones *in situ*.

Continental Bulls

Two Continental Bulls have been provided for the pilot area at a big discount from the normal price. Also Golden Vale Co-op. has agreed to provide a limited discount for the AI Service of Continental Bulls for the pilot area. The idea is to improve the standard of cattle and beef.

Horse Production

In addition to efforts concerning the Equestrian Centre in Gort, the IRD group have held information evenings to promote horse production as a supplementary farm enterprise.

Suckler Farms

As a result of discussion and meetings with Teagasc and the IFA, two suckler farms were launched in March 1990. Follow-up demonstration evenings were held on both farms in July 1990, and there was an attendance of over 80 farmers on each occasion.

Small Projects

Framework for Development 1990 to 1995

Operational Programme for South Galway and East Clare, based on an economic analysis of the areas. Draft plans have been prepared. Initiated, driven and co-ordinated by IRD group, with help of technical assistance funding.

Environment Ways

Drawings and layout for the environmental way at Lough Derg Drive have been drawn up. New sign posts have been erected.

Streetscape Plans

Plans for Gort and Ardrahan have been drawn up and agreed upon. Gort has made application to be considered as a Theme Town based on its literary and architectural history, and has been successful in its application. Initiated and co-ordinated by IRD, with help of technical assistance funding.

Tidy Towns, The Environment

The following villages entered the 1989 Tidy Towns Competition and secured high marks: Ardrahan, Clarinbridge, Caher, Craughwell, O'Callaghans Mills, Scariff, Feakle, Kinvara, Flagmount and Mountshannon. All these are again entered for 1990 together with Gort and Tulla.

Build Up "Know How", Community Development

Much has been done in developing these skills, and the process continues.

Rebuilding Stone Walls

There are several projects in stone wall building throughout the pilot area and several more are planned. It is estimated that up to two miles of stone walls have been rebuilt during the pilot phase.

Signposting

Generally speaking the signposting in the pilot area was very bad at the beginning of the pilot phase, but there has been a considerable improvement in many areas, and this trend is expected to continue.

Heritage Project

The East Clare IRD sub-group has acquired a long-term lease on St. Cronan's Church at Tuamgraney, for conversion into a Heritage Centre, Interpretative Centre and Tourist Information Office. Work has commenced and 25 persons are employed including skilled, semi-skilled and beginners. Initiated and undertaken by IRD, with technical assistance funding.

Brochure

Design and production of a new tourism/marketing brochure for South Galway. This brochure is badly needed and it is planned to have the brochure ready by Autumn 1990, and to visit the trade fairs in the Autumn and Winter. Initiated and co-ordinated by IRD, with technical assistance funding.

Promote and Assist Job Creation

Business promotion evenings have been held in association with the IDA and the County Development Team, and the process will continue. It is understood that good private projects are coming out of these promotions.

Self Employment

Entrepreneurs are encouraged and helped to get started.

Promotion of Afforestation

A private afforestation promotion evening was held in Gort and it is intended to follow this up with one in Scariff/Tulla. It is hoped that these events, in conjunction with Coillte and Teagasc, will encourage farmers to consider forestry as a supplementary farm enterprise. Downstream employment from produce of existing forests is also being considered.

Thoorballylee Development

W. B. Yeats lived at Thoorballylee from 1913 to 1926. It largely remained in ruin until recent times. A major development programme took place here in 1988/1989, and it was officially opened in June 1989. Eleven workers and one supervisor were employed here under an SES and this gave valuable local employment, and also cleaned up the grounds, rebuilt stone walls, planted new trees, put down new paths, etc.

Coole Park Development

Coole Park was the home of Lady Gregory, who together with W. B. Yeats and Edward Martyn of Tulira founded the Abbey Theatre in Dublin. The Coole Park estate passed into the hands of the Forestry Department on the death of Lady Gregory, and it is now the centre of an OPW major development programme at an estimated cost of IR£400,000.

Kilmacduagh

Kilmacduagh is a monastic site on the Galway-Clare boundary, and is famous for its leaning round tower. The whole settlement dates back to the 12th Century. A development programme is now proposed for here, which will include toilets, cleaning up the graveyard, headstones, etc.

The Environment

The pilot area is environmentally conscious, and values its clean river, lakes, and streams and also clean air. There is no large dereliction or dumps. The IRD group dealt with some dumping problems in the Tulla area, and replanted the area with trees. Nevertheless, pollution from farming, industry and sewage is a continuing concern.

A Structure for Development

Before any project can get off the ground, a formal organisation, group, company, co-op. or friendly society must be formed to "drive" the project. This aspect of Community Development is being worked on.

Visitor Farm

A network of Tourist Office/Tourist Information Points has been established throughout the pilot area in 1989 and 1990, and these are in touch with each other with a view to promoting the pilot area and to keeping visitors in the area for as long as possible.

Holy Wells and Derelict Graveyards

The Beagh IRD sub-group has applied to FAS for a SES to re-establish three holy wells in the parish, and also to clean up old derelict graveyards and rebuild stone walls. The scheme is expected to commence soon.

Village Renewal

Clarinbridge Development Association has applied to FAS for a Social Employment Scheme to rebuild stone walls in the village, to plant trees and shrubs, and to clean up the river which flows through the village.

Inishowen

Marine/Mariculture Projects

Bunagee Harbour Development

Plans and a resource study have been drawn up for development of Bunagee Harbour as a watersports amenity area. Discussions have taken place with Roinn na Mara, Department of Tourism, Donegal County Council, EC Office Dublin. IR£2,000 approved towards study by Donegal County Development Team. IR£400 approved from IRD technical assistance fund. This project will encourage the establishment of various related service industries, e.g., boat trips, equipment hire, etc. A new project.

Mariculture, Tra Breaga

Pilot commercial oyster farm in operation. Comprehensive plans for long-term development have been drawn up. Discussions have taken place with Roinn na Mara concerning designation of the bay and are at an advanced stage. Grant aid approved by Donegal County Development Team, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Donegal County Enterprise Fund and FAS. Project now underway. Two full-time and two part-time workers. Eight local people receiving supplementary income from this activity. Projected employment, a further three full-time, four part-time and some 50 local people receiving supplementary income.

Mariculture, Lough Swilly

Various projects setting up for the cultivation of mussels and scallops. Full development plan being drawn up. This plan is now near completion. Projected employment of six full-time, ten part-time. This will also provide supplementary income for groups such as small farmers.

Inishowen Marine Resource Development

Project for drawing up of resource audit and plans for marine resources around Inishowen. One employed full-time, one part-time at present. Projected employment of four full-time and two part-time, with work experience being provided for students of institutions.

Lough Foyle Shellfishermen's Co-op

A new co-op has been formed and now has 80 paid-up members from Donegal and Derry. This was an IRD initiative. Plans are being drawn up for the development of existing and dormant oyster beds in Lough Foyle. Discussions have taken place with Roinn na Mara, Foyle Fisheries Commission, Donegal County Development Team, Bord Iascaigh Mhara and FAS. IR£900 approved by IRD technical assistance fund towards planning. Co-op will also market produce. 120 people now employed on a full-time seasonal basis (7 months p.a.). Projected full-time seasonal employment of a further 180 and 5 full-time jobs.

Malin Head Fishermen's Co-op

A co-op has been formed to develop inshore fishing resources of North Inishowen (Salmon, Crabs). Plans being drawn up at the moment. Contact with Roinn na Mara, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, FAS, Donegal County Development Team. Seasonal employment (8 months) for 120 people. Full-time employment for three people.

Greencastle Maintenance Carriage Slipway

Plans have been drawn up for the development of a maintenance carriage slipway at Greencastle. Projected employment of 14. This is an essential development for the local fleet. A business plan is now being drawn up for presentation to various funds and agencies, and the project has been helped by the IRD technical assistance fund. A new project initiated by IRD. It will be of benefit to the income of the 48 trawlers based at Greencastle.

Aileach Netfishermen's Association

Development of inshore fishing industry in Lough Swilly. Improvement of access to Inch Island pier.

Tourism Projects

Malin Head Cottage

Development of Malin Head Cottage as Tourist Resource Centre/Interpretive Centre/Restaurant. IR£29,000 approved by International Fund for Ireland. Work has now been completed and cottage is open to the public. Four full-time seasonal jobs. New project.

Scoil na Mara, Inis Eoghain

Inishowen Festival of the Sea was held in Greencastle in August 1989. Cookery demonstrations, entertainment, speakers. Repeated in Greencastle in July of 1990.

Inishowen Tourism Co-op

This co-op has now been formed with membership from all parts of Inishowen and all sectors of the tourism industry. Development and marketing strategy is being drawn up. Promotional activities continuing. Projected employment of two full-time. Supplementary income for B & B's, Shops, Bars, Restaurants, Hotels, etc., Co-op now has 300 members.

Holiday Ireland 1990, Point Depot

Inishowen Tourism had a stand at this fair over 5 days in January. The response has been very good from all parts of this country and the UK. Stand booked for 1991. Promotion also held at Balmoral Fair in Belfast in May 1990.

New Technology Tourism Project

Development of a New Technology Tourism project, setting up computer terminals making all information on the region easily accessible to visitors. (Simulated overflights of region, colour pictures, etc.). Joint venture between

Inishowen, Dun Luiche and Gleann Colmcille. Pilot project being set up in Dun Luiche. A company has now been set up, "Colmcilles Way". Projected employment of two full-time and four full-time seasonal.

Inishowen Golf Challenge

First Inishowen Golf Challenge held in May 1989. To be held as an annual event attracting visitors to the region, mid-week and off-season.

Inishowen Anglers

Inishowen Anglers Association formed to develop this resource in the region. Development plan to be drawn up. Co-op being formed.

Buncrana Leisure Centre

Development of fun pool and other indoor facilities. Extension of existing project. Four extra full-time jobs projected.

Malin Head Boat Trips

Service has been set up with assistance of IFI for boat trips around coast of Inishowen for anglers, etc. Three full-time seasonal jobs.

Bunagee Boat Trips

Service has been set up with assistance of IFI for boat trips around coast of Inishowen for anglers, etc. Two full-time seasonal jobs.

Emigration Monument, Moville

A monument to mark the point of emigration up to the 1940s to be unveiled at Moville. Plaque being made at the moment.

Greencastle Golf Club

Extension of golf links to 18 holes. Club assisted with applications to relevant bodies.

Bord Failte/IFI Hotel Development Programme

Three local hotels assisted with plans for development under this programme.

Farmhouse Holidays

CERT course completed with 27 participants. Development of farmhouse holidays to be encouraged by Inishowen Tourism.

Thatched Cottages

Programme being drawn up to encourage people to avail of grant aid to restore thatched cottages.

Pony Trekking

Assisted by Donegal County Development Team. Two full-time jobs.

Training Projects

Mariculture Training Project

A training project with six trainees is taking place at present. This is being funded by FAS/ICDG and managed by ICDG. All aspects of shellfish cultivation are being covered in this course.

Mariculture Night Classes

This was held over ten nights in October/November 1989. 37 people from all parts of Inishowen took part. Follow-up course being prepared for Autumn 1990.

Engineering Training Programme

This training programme, which is also involved in product development, is taking place in Ballyliffin at present with eight trainees. Product development taking place with local natural resources as main focus (Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fishing). Project ongoing with two trainers employed on a full-time basis.

Community Development Course

Community Development Course held in Moville over 12 nights in February, March, April, 1989. Speakers from relevant agencies spoke on all topics of interest to community groups.

Community Enterprise Course

Held in Carndonagh, completed in January 1990. 25 participants from all parts of Inishowen. (Five months' duration — funded by FAS).

Business Appraisal Course

Held in Carndonagh. Completed in January 1990. Emphasis on Tourism. Twenty four participants from all parts of Inishowen. (Eight weeks' duration — funded by FAS).

Start-Your-Own-Business Course

Held in Carndonagh. Completed in June 1989. Twenty-five participants from all parts of Inishowen. (Seven months' duration — funded by FAS).

Book-keeping/Small Business Management

Night course held in Carndonagh. February, March, April, May 1989. 129 participants divided into 5 classes.

Horticulture Course

Night classes held in Carndonagh and Buncrana. 46 participants.

Inishowen Tourism Course

Twelve participants in Tourism Programme to last 6 months from June 1990. To be certified by FAS City and Guilds. Assisted by FAS. Participants carrying out work on behalf of Inishowen Tourism. (Setting up information centre, production of material, etc.). A new type of course drawn up and initiated by IRD.

Aquaculture Course

Seven-month certified course for 20 people from all parts of Donegal to commence October, 1990. Assisted by FAS.

Heritage Projects

Greencastle Maritime Museum

Development of Greencastle Maritime Museum as maritime museum/ interpretive centre for Inishowen region. IR£69,000 approved by International Fund for Ireland. Work has commenced. Project will be completed in 1991. One full-time job and four seasonal full-time jobs. A new project initiated and planned by IRD.

Inishowen Heritage Centre

Geneaology project situated in Tullyarvan Mill, Buncrana. Teamwork Programme of nine workers completed research in December, 1989. Two employed full-time providing service at present. Projected employment a further two full-time and three part-time.

Inishowen Heritage Resources Project

Integrated project being set up as a joint venture between various heritage and tourism projects in the Inishowen region. Plan to be drawn up for co-ordinated approach to development of heritage resources in the region and joint marketing of it. Participants are Inishowen Heritage Centre, Greencastle Maritime Museum, Inishowen Folk Museum, Tullyarvan Mill, Malin Head Cottage, Fort Dunree, Inishowen Textile Museum.

Inishowen Folk Museum

Development of Wesleyan Hall as a regional folk museum. Projected employment of one full-time.

Community Group Projects

Malin Development
Plans are being drawn up for refurbishment of Malin village, 17th Century plantation village.

Moville Tidy Towns
Refurbishment of Moville Green and playground carried out. Aided by FAS, Donegal County Council.

Greencastle Ferry Port
Ferry Port at Greencastle rebuilt. Service run between Greencastle and Magilligan in summer months. (Donegal County Council Amenities grant of IR£2,000.)

Desertagney Community Association
List of potential projects being drawn up. Improvements to area's water supply to be carried out. Investigation of tourism potential in the region.

Agriculture Projects

Inishowen Lamb Producers' Group
This group is in operation with 113 members from all parts of Inishowen. A Development and Marketing Plan is being drawn up to avail of EC Funding. (IR£900 approved from IRD technical assistance fund.) This project is up and running. 114 farmers are receiving supplementary income from it. It is projected that a further 70 will join over the next year. This was a new project, initiated by IRD.

Inishowen Seed Potatoes
Joint venture headed by Inishowen Co-op to develop and market Inishowen Seed Potatoes. (IR£900 approved from IRD technical assistance fund.) Market research is being carried out. Producer group is being organised. Projected supplementary income for 40 farmers. This was a new project, initiated by IRD.

Organic Farming
A small private project, assisted by FAS, with one part-time job.

Mushroom Growing
A medium-size private project, assisted by FAS and Teagasc.

In addition to the above settled priority projects, the Inishowen group also took on five more projects relatively late in the pilot programme,

namely, Pool Port Development, a Wind Power Project, Inishowen Way, Donegal Shellfish and the establishment of North West Development Trust. Various other projects were also assisted outside the scope of the agreed priority projects.

Inny Basin

Agriculture/Alternative Agriculture

Rouge de l'Ouest Sheep
Introduction of Rouge de L'Ouest sheep with a view to improving sheep carcase quality and increasing lambing percentage, thereby increasing incomes of sheep farmers. A new project in which IRD organised the initial meeting of local farmers to establish a club and assisted in importing the sheep. A club is now established, sheep have been imported and a marketing and information programme has been implemented.

Snail Farming
Establishment of snail farming to supplement farm incomes and create jobs. A new project in which IRD held meetings to initiate and further its development, liaised with CTT, the International Fund for Ireland, the IDA and the County Development Team, and assisted with arranging marketing. A commercial system of production has been developed and market research is promising.

Horse Management
Aimed to revive Irish draught mares on farms, develop a show-jumping centre and provide a horse-riding centre. This was building on some existing activity. IRD had meetings with local equine interests, helped with preparation of plans, liaised with relevant agencies, helped with funding applications and arranged a meeting with Noel C. Duggan of Millstreet. A strong committee has been established, plans have been prepared and support from relevant local interests has been secured.

Flax Growing
Aimed to establish this alternative farm enterprise to generate supplementary farm incomes. A new project in which IRD organised a meeting and further promoted the concept. Forty acres are committed to flax growing and there is potential for four part-time jobs.

Organic Food Farming Information
Compilation of a list of organic producers and provision of information to potential producers and the catering industry. A new project, the need for which was identified by IRD. Information is being prepared.

Horticulture

Mushroom Village

Aimed to create jobs and generate supplementary farm incomes. A new project in which IRD carried out a potential workforce survey, found a site and assisted with funding applications, while a core group member was also the main promoter. So far, a site has been purchased and work-force training has commenced.

Strawberry Growing

Aimed to generate supplementary farm incomes. A new project in which IRD organised meetings with a jam producer, Teagasc and local farmers, as well as an information visit to Warrenstown College. Fourteen growers are committed to planting and a contract price has been agreed.

Aquaculture

Eel Fishing

Aimed to create jobs, generate incomes and regulate fishing. This was an existing activity but it was unregulated. IRD arranged meetings with the ESB and Fisheries Boards as well as local meetings. There are now four part-time jobs and the licence has been transferred from the ESB.

Carp Fishing

Introduction of rare fish to Irish lakes to attract coarse fish anglers. A new project in which IRD arranged meetings with angling clubs, Shannon Fisheries Board and the Department of the Marine. An experimental breeding pond is established.

Infrastructure

Airport Development

Aimed to develop and expand an existing airport. IRD group met with County Council and Department of Tourism and Transport, and assisted with application to achieve regional airport status and thus attract EC structural funds.

Industry/Processing

Mushroom Processing and Packing Plant

Aimed to add value to mushrooms, thereby creating jobs and generating incomes. A new project in which the promoter was a core group member while IRD helped prepare applications for funding. So far, a site has been developed, building has commenced and trial production has taken place in a leased plant, with eight jobs. Good market response.

Sphagnum Peat Processing Plant

A new project which aims to process a local natural resource to create jobs and generate incomes. IRD helped to identify local owners of peatland who were willing to sell, which made this project possible, and helped with applications for funding. So far, land has been acquired and developed, contracts have been signed for raw materials, funding has been secured and building is commencing. Ten peatland jobs.

Mushroom Casing Plant

This project involves substituting for imports, creating jobs and generating incomes. A new project for which IRD identified a promoter, had peat tests done, secured a site and helped with grant applications. Production has commenced with nine full-time jobs and the project has won an IDA best new project award.

Tourism

Tourism Centre/Fishing Lodge

Provision of a focal point for angling and an angling school. IRD identified a promoter for this new project and prepared an application for Bord Failte support. To date, a formerly closed building has been renovated and opened, and there is potential for six jobs.

Coole Ecclesiastical Museum

Conversion of old church to ecclesiastical museum. A new project co-ordinated by IRD, which also prepared plans with help of technical assistance funding and secured a FAS scheme. Plans are prepared and many exhibits have been collected.

Farm Museum/Heritage Centre

Provision of a new tourist focal point for Castlepollard. IRD organised meetings with FAS, Heritage Council and County Development Team, obtained advice on the legal structure and provided technical assistance

funding. Structural work is almost complete and many artifacts have been collected. Two part-time jobs.

Derravaragh Shore Amenity Development

Development of lakeshore amenity to improve environment and generate income. A new project in which IRD organised meetings with local communities, co-ordinated fund-raising and met with the County Council and Bord Failte. Thirty-five acres have been acquired from the County Council and plans are being prepared with IRD technical assistance funding.

Holiday Village Development

Aimed to create jobs and generate tourism revenue. A new project in which IRD identified a promoter, co-ordinated funding and planning permission applications and linked to two other projects. Planning permission has been obtained.

Open Farm

An agri-tourism development to generate alternative income. IRD identified this new project and assisted in setting it up. The farm is open and tourists have been visiting it.

Fishing Map of Area

A new project, intended as a support for angling tourism development. IRD co-ordinated meetings with angling clubs and Regional Fisheries Board. The map has been produced.

Tourist Brochure

A new project intended to support tourism development. IRD identified the project, helped to compile information and provided technical assistance funding. One local brochure has been completed and distributed and another is printed.

Inclusion in Bord Failte Agri-Tourism Pilot Project

Aimed to achieve focused marketing of part of the pilot area by Bord Failte and CIE. A new project in which IRD played a co-ordinating role and prepared a detailed application which is being considered.

Environment

Pollution Control

Aimed to solve slurry pollution problem of lakes and rivers to support development of angling tourism. A new project in which IRD planned

meetings of Sheelin pig farmers and organised support from County Councils, Shannon Fisheries Board, Teagasc and Eolas. There is agreement to build a slurry digestor by Spring 1991 and all pig farmers are to have slurry treated at the plant.

Development of Scraw Bog with Bird Sanctuary

Intended to preserve flora and fauna of ecological interest. A new project which IRD is co-ordinating with Irish peat council. An area is now included in bogland preservation order and used for ecological study. Some tourist interest.

Community Development

Village Approach Improvement

Aimed at improving attractiveness of villages. A new project in which IRD encouraged local participation and organised meetings and support from the County Council, FAS and others. Many improvements have been carried out and five villages have entered the Tidy Towns competition.

Garbage Collection Service

Provision of a regular rubbish collection service at a reasonable price to improve the environment and create jobs. A new project in which IRD organised collection routes in conjunction with the County Council and provided information to the community. This service is in operation.

Forestry

Lough Owel Forest Niches

Promotion of afforestation. Involved organising seminar and information package together with relevant agencies. Land has been approved for grant aid.

Mullameen Forest Walks

Involved signposting existing forests to make them more accessible to the public and to expand outdoor tourism pursuits. IRD organised meetings with Coillte Teoranta and the community. Signposting is nearly complete and Mullameen forest is opened to the public.

In addition to the above settled priority projects, the Inny Basin IRD group also took on projects to promote an innovation centre, a commercial nursery, a community/craft centre in Finea, a map of the area and an English language immersion course.

Macamores

Large Projects

Establishment of a Grade A Hotel

This idea came from the core group and it was followed up by a sub-group. Enquiries have been made with local estate agents. The feedback is that outside investment is unlikely to be attracted to Gorey unless the town becomes known as having registered accommodation. The focus of this project has now switched to possible local investment.

Craft/Enterprise/Community Art Centre/Tourist Office

The result of almost a year's research convinced the core group that it would be almost impossible to start an enterprise centre. The focus then turned to the possibility of opening a top quality retail outlet for crafts. A core group member sought and found three other investors, all residents of Ballycanew. They bought a derelict creamery in the village and are currently making the necessary financial, stock and marketing arrangements. They sought technical assistance funding towards the architects' fees.

Allweather Leisure Centre

This idea came from the core group. Subsequently, a core group member left the IRD Programme and is now chairing a committee which plans to build an All-Weather Centre in Courtown. Recently the IRD group had discussions with this committee's firm of environmental architects and assists them when needed.

Medium-Size Projects

Railway Connection/Coach Tours

This project was chosen to improve the area around Gorey railway station — the first introduction to the area for many visitors — and to encourage a regular bus/coach service. No progress has been made with this project since all the buildings near the railway are in private ownership and are in use. Matters have been further complicated by the demise of the Gorey Tidy Towns Committee.

Cahore Attraction/Sea Angling

A Cahore Community Project committee has been formed at the initiative of the IRD group. A list of amenities which the committee would like to see in Cahore was drawn up. The District Committee of the County Council was lobbied about the state of the pier, slipway and drainage. Further

pressure was brought to bear on the County Council by the Development Association in Ballygarrett (neighbouring village). The County Council have repaired the pier and fund-raising projects are being planned to fund the remaining work.

Interpretive Centre/Information Brochure Material

This project was seen as a heritage centre/open air museum based in Ballygarrett to commemorate the locals who fought at the Alamo. It was treated as a sequential development to the Cahore development. A local group was set up to undertake the project and the IRD group assists them where possible.

Radio Link

A committee was set up to forge links with the local community radio station and to use this as a vehicle to highlight and stimulate developments within the area. The format of the link-up is under discussion. It was decided to make substantial progress on Ballycanew and Cahore before launching a publicity campaign.

Family Records

A need was felt to provide historical family record information for prospective tourists. After some months of activity by an IRD sub-group, it was discovered that the County Council had been computerising records for the last two years and that Tagoat will be the county centre for the Genealogical Institute.

Refurbishment of Graveyards

To link in with the Festival and Family Record projects it was decided to refurbish local graveyards. The cost of insurance for FAS Schemes is posing problems, but the County Council has offered to help with the historic 1798 graveyards.

Small Projects

Calendar of Events

In 1989 some core group members persuaded Junior Chamber, Gorey, to change the format of their annual publication *You and North Wexford*. These changes took the form of (a) mention of the Macamores Region on the front cover and throughout the booklet, (b) articles on the villages in the region and (c) a comprehensive calendar of events. This year (1990) they have dropped "North Wexford" from the title of the booklet in favour of the "Macamores".

Car Valeting Service

The IRD group helped a prospective entrepreneur with costings and a feasibility study. At this point the client did not follow up the project with them and a number of similar businesses were set up in the area.

Souvenir/Emblem

A project to establish an emblem and image for the area. An IRD sub-committee undertook it but little progress has been made with this project as there is no one striking characteristic. The committee intends approaching the College of Art and Design for help.

Brochure of Ringforts/Monuments

Establishment of a tourist trail around local ringforts and monuments. This project was to entice tourists to spend more time in the area. After months of research by an IRD sub-committee, they were informed by the County Tourism Officer that TCD is involved in a similar process. They will now link in and organise walking tours and sign posting.

Postcards

It was felt that a series of postcards of the area would help to promote the Macamores as a tourist attraction. As no major postcard company was interested in helping, an IRD sub-committee is organising a photographic competition and seeking sponsorship towards the printing costs.

CERT IRD Course

A CERT Course concerning rural tourism was organised in the area. A number of people from the outlying villages attended, and reaction was favourable. The IRD sub-group concerned felt that there would have been a bigger attendance if CERT had agreed to hold the course in October/November rather than May/June.

Festival

As there is no festival held in the area, the County Manager asked the IRD group to find out if there would be local support for one. Ballycanew village was celebrating the centenary of a local church, and two Core Group members worked with the festival organisers. Some of the banners and written material emphasised the "Macamores". The festival held in Ballycanew was a success and it is to become an annual event.

Manorhamilton

Large Projects

Integrated Resource Centre

Establishment of a multi-purpose centre with social and educational facilities as well as a commercial wing with tourism facilities and activities. IRD provided the impetus to advance an existing idea, liaised with State and semi-State bodies, secured free professional services and helped with preparing a business and marketing plan. To date, cultural activities have been held, local families have hosted overseas visitors, and plans have been advanced.

Cross-Border Development

A community-based cross-border development initiative facilitated jointly by IRD and Rural Action Project in West Fermanagh. Aims to identify common needs and opportunities and to facilitate a community-based trans-frontier development programme. The existence of IRD made this initiative possible. Successive meetings have been held and a unique community-based Cross-Border Steering Group has been established.

Medium-Size Projects

Stuffed Mushrooms

Production of stuffed mushrooms as a chilled food product. A new initiative taken up by an IRD core group member who got the idea at an IRD workshop. IRD also helped liaise with the IDA, and helped with research and grant application. Due to technical problems, the venture may not be feasible for a small producer, but it is hoped that a solution may be found, or else other potential products.

Machine Knitting Enterprise

IRD helped to identify the potential for this new activity, identified a pool of local machine-knitters, organised a seminar and promoted an instruction course. Some course participants are now doing outreach work for a Sligo business, and it is planned to organise a more advanced course to increase local commercial activity.

Textile Manufacture

Aimed to attract a textile industry from outside the area to avail of an existing local pool of trained sewing machinists. IRD liaised with sewers and State agencies and contacted textile firms. Not successful to date, but

encouraged by some serious interest. If necessary, it is intended to promote development of a local enterprise.

Watersports Development

Promotion of dinghy sailing, both for local recreation and as a tourism attraction. IRD encouraged this new project, liaised with sailing instructors, helped with information on insurance and arranged promotional material. To date, instruction courses have been provided, a club has been established and dinghies have been purchased.

Teleworking Project

Facilitation of establishment of teleworking (remote working using modern communications). IRD initiated this project drawing on ideas gained at an IRD workshop, and brought together people in business, technology and education to discuss it with Professor Cooley who spoke on the topic at the workshop. A good deal of research has been done, the local school is co-operating by emphasising keyboarding skills, and premises for teleworking have been offered.

Kiltyclogher Courthouse Project

Conversion of courthouse into tourist facility with museum, coffee-shop and accommodation. IRD encouraged local Community Council to follow up this previously existing idea, helped to arrange funding applications and identified potential sources of funding. Voluntary labour is committed and funding is awaited.

Small Projects

Community Development Seminar

Seminar organised by IRD with speakers from FAS and County Development team. Aimed at promoting community development initiatives and highlighting availability of State supports. About 60 to 70 people attended.

Agri-tourism Seminar

Seminar organised by IRD, with invited speakers. Aimed at promoting local involvement in agri-tourism, establishing the level of interest and identifying requirements for information.

Agri-tourism Course, Manorhamilton

A 10-week evening course in agri-tourism, with instruction provided by the former socio-economic advisor with Teagasc. Organised and promoted by IRD.

Agri-tourism Course, Drumkeerin

Another course in agri-tourism organised and promoted by IRD.

Angling Seminar

Seminar organised by IRD, with invited speakers. Aimed at raising local awareness of the potential for angling tourism development.

Angling Map and Brochure

In co-operation with Regional Fisheries Boards, work is underway for the production of a comprehensive angling map/brochure for North Leitrim.

Tourist Brochure

Dromahaire tourist brochure, produced and distributed widely. The formation of the local group which undertook the project was stimulated and encouraged by IRD, which also assisted in production and dissemination of the brochure.

Tourist Information Centre

A new tourist information centre established in Dromahaire. IRD acted as a catalyst in the formation of the local group which undertook the project, and provided ongoing assistance to the group.

Dromahaire Tourist Trail

Production of a booklet illustrating a tourist trail, together with corresponding sign posting. The promoting group was initiated and subsequently encouraged and assisted by IRD.

Breifne History Festival and O'Rourke Clan Gathering

A new one-week festival which has attracted tourists from overseas and promises to become an expanding annual event. The promoting group was initiated and assisted by IRD.

North Leitrim Marketing Venture

A planned marketing drive to promote North Leitrim as a holiday destination. The sponsoring group was initiated and assisted by IRD.

Fowley's Falls Project

A local amenity scheme involving the creation of a sign-posted riverside walk by previously concealed waterfalls. IRD provided encouragement and advice and liaised with FAS and County Development Team.

Farm Forestry Talk

An event organised for farmers and landowners to promote tree-growing. IRD identified the potential in this area and organised the event.

Schools' Tree Awareness Campaign

An awareness campaign aimed at promoting tree planting and involving visits to 20 local schools. Initiated and organised by IRD in association with CRANN.

Schools' Enterprise Competition

A project-based competition for the two local post-primary schools. Promoted jointly by IRD, the ICA and the IDA.

Public Lecture on New Technology

Public lecture by Professor Mike Cooley on job creation opportunities using new technology. Served as an introduction to the Teleworking Project mentioned above. Organised by IRD.

Survey of Rural Community Groups in Border Areas

Survey to establish how rural community groups perceive their own needs and opportunities for development. Undertaken jointly by IRD and the Rural Action Project in Northern Ireland.

Conference on Rural Communities in Border Areas

Organised jointly by IRD and the Rural Action Project in Northern Ireland, to highlight the common needs and opportunities shared by communities in border areas.

North Western Islands

Agriculture

Establishment of Machinery Bank

Establishment of farm machinery bank on Arranmore Island as a service to farmers and as a means of job creation. A new project initiated by IRD which also helped to prepare plans. Undertaken by Arranmore Co-op, this project is in operation with two part-time and three full-time employees.

Sheep Marketing and Organic Lamb Production

A new project undertaken on Inishturk, Inishbofin and Clare Island. IRD co-ordinated and organised the various groups involved, and provided technical assistance funding. Exports to Spanish market organised in 1990.

Agricultural Seminar

Intended to inform farmers about grants and services available. Organised by IRD. There has since been an increase in uptake of grants.

Fertilising of Commonage

This project required co-ordination, which IRD helped to provide. However, there were grant problems because the islands concerned are classified as areas of scientific interest. Little real progress to date.

Horticulture

Organic Vegetable Production

A new project undertaken by private individuals. IRD helped to prepare plans and helped with development and marketing. Trials have been completed, a grant has been approved and two are employed part-time, with potential for four more part-time.

Vegetable Production, Outdoor and Tunnels

A new project on Tory Island. IRD helped with preparing plans and co-ordinating with Teagasc and local co-op. Plans have been drawn up and there is potential for two part-time jobs.

Visit to Vegetable Project in Glenties

Organised by IRD to promote motivation and learning. New projects have developed as a result.

Forestry

Private Afforestation

Promotion efforts to develop forestry, co-ordinated by IRD with involvement of Teagasc and Coillte Teo. Five grant applications are proceeding on Inishbiggle. One part-time job and potential for five more part-time.

Forestry Co-op

Proposal for a new forestry co-op on Inishbiggle; co-ordination by IRD. Little progress yet.

Mariculture

Community-Based Fish Farm

A proposed new project for Arranmore to be undertaken by local fishermen. IRD organised survey and meetings. A survey has been carried out by the Department of the Marine.

Shellfish Farming

A new project for Inishbiggle. IRD organised meetings with relevant agencies, helped to prepare plans and helped with follow-up work. A licence has been granted, grant aid is approved and trials have been carried out. One part-time job with potential for twelve more.

Infrastructure

Group Water Schemes

Aimed at improving social conditions and the environment for development on Inishbiggle and Inishturk. IRD organised meetings with communities and Mayo County Council. Two schemes are approved.

Road Maintenance and Development on Arranmore

It was proposed that Arranmore Co-op take over responsibility for looking after the Island's roads. IRD organised meetings on this and liaised with the County Council. A decision from the County Council is awaited.

Rock Box Harbour

Aimed to provide harbour facilities on Tory Island. IRD organised meetings on this. IR£60,000 has been approved for a hydrographic survey and other work.

Integrated Resource and Multi-Purpose Building

Aims to create jobs, provide services and improve social conditions on Inishbofin. IRD helped with preparing plans, co-ordinating and motivating fund-raising, and provided technical assistance funding. A site has been acquired, a FAS project is committed and grants are approved. Potential for three full-time and five part-time jobs.

Tourism

Holiday Village

A new tourism project to be undertaken by Arranmore Co-op. IRD helped with preparing plans and co-ordinating meetings with relevant agencies. A site has been purchased and an architectural competition has been organised. Potential for 3 part-time jobs and IR£60,000 per annum additional income.

Repair to "An Oige" Hostel

Improvements to hostel accommodation. IRD co-ordinated meetings. Renovations were carried out in 1989.

Island Walks and Brochures

New projects for four islands, IRD organised meetings and helped by laying out routes and preparing plans with technical assistance funding. Six routes have been agreed and brochures and work are under way.

Establishment of Angling Club/Stocking of Seven Lakes

A new project for Arranmore Island. Co-ordinated by IRD. The seven lakes are stocked with fish, the club is established and competitions have been held.

Islands' Brochure

Production of a tourist brochure for Irish islands by Bord Failte. IRD helped with supplying relevant information. This brochure has been produced and it is expected to lead to increased tourism revenue.

Employment of Tourism Consultant

Employment of a consultant to draw up a tourism plan for Arranmore. IRD organised and co-ordinated meetings on this and provided material. A consultant was appointed in June 1990 and a plan is in preparation.

Marketing and Development Plan for Arranmore Ferry

Aimed at increasing tourism to the island. A new project in which IRD liaised with relevant agencies while the ferry boat operator was a core group member.

Inishbofin Brochure — Package Holiday

A new project aimed at increasing tourism on Inishbofin. IRD helped by co-ordinating relevant interests. Agreement on this has been reached with local hotels and Bord Failte.

Transport and Communications

Communications Network for the Islands

Establishment of a new technology communications network to promote social, cultural and economic development. A new project in which IRD co-ordinated a range of co-ops and development groups on various islands, and provided substantial technical assistance funding. A report has been prepared and a programme has been set in motion. Potential for two full-time and 14 part-time jobs, with considerable social and economic impact.

Minitel Link-Up Between Islands, IRD Office and Information Technology Centre, Letterkenny

Establishment of a new message service and advertising medium. IRD co-ordinated, organised meetings and prepared material. Three Minitels are installed and a link-up is established.

Ferry Services

Provision of satisfactory ferry services. IRD co-ordinated, organised meetings and helped with preparing plans and technical assistance funding. Plans are drawn up for one ferry. Potential for 10 full-time and 8 part-time jobs.

Cable Car

Provision of cable car service to Inishbiggle. This was an existing proposal and IRD helped with co-ordinating, organising meetings and preparing plans. Little progress to date.

Environmental

Establishment of Dumps

Aimed to provide dumping facilities for each island. IRD co-ordinated community efforts and arranged meetings with County Councils. Agreement reached in the case of Inishbofin.

Provision of Bins and Signs, Civic Weeks

Aimed to tidy up the islands. IRD helped to organise. Civic weeks organised. Erection of bins and signs carried out by community groups.

Tidy Islands Competition

Aimed to work on cleaning up the islands. IRD helped to organise. Good participation in Tidy Islands Competition 1989, but poor response in 1990.

Social and Cultural

Colaiste Samhraidh/Summer School

Aimed to provide a second period of summer school on Arranmore. IRD helped with organisation and research. Project ongoing.

Centenary School Celebrations, 1990

Celebration of school centenary on Inishbofin and raising of finance for multi-purpose building. IRD acted as a link with other school centenary committees.

Establishment of Island Pipe Band

Establishment of a new band on Arranmore. IRD helped to arrange provision of expertise and finance. The band is established with 16 members.

Production of Traditional Music Tape

Aimed to preserve traditional culture and raise finance for multi-purpose building. IRD helped to co-ordinate and organise this new project. The tape will be released in 1990/1991.

Production of Irish Songs and Booklet

Aimed to preserve traditional culture. IRD helped to co-ordinate and organise. Booklet of songs produced and it is aimed to release a recording in 1990.

Establishment of Branch of Glor na nGael

IRD helped to organise meetings on this new project on Arranmore. A branch is now established and a signposting project has been undertaken.

Oireachtas, 1989

An ongoing cultural development project for which IRD organised assistance. Four participants took part in 1989.

Annual Clare Island Summer School Symposium

Aimed at cultural development and increasing tourism. A new project which IRD helped by co-ordinating. First symposium/school held in 1989 followed by another in 1990.

Skibbereen

Large Projects

Harbour Improvements, Union Hall and Baltimore

Provision of breakwaters and access road improvements. IRD encouraged community council to draw up plans; chaired by a core group member. Agreement has been reached on plans and the County Council has agreed to implement them and is starting work.

Golf Course Extension

Extension of Skibbereen Golf Course from 9 to 18 holes, to create two extra jobs and generate tourism revenue. IRD discussed this with the committee over a long period and provided technical assistance funding. Plans are being drawn up.

Mariculture: (a) Mussel Farming and (b) Clam Farming
(a)   Further development of some existing mussel farming activity at
      Roaring Water Bay. Expanded from just three people already involved
      in 1988 to 30 involved part-time by 1990. IRD helped in forming an
      association, organised meetings with County Development Team and
      Department of the Marine, negotiated with BIM, helped with seminars
      and provided technical assistance funding.
(b)   Production of clams, building on some existing efforts. One family now
      working on this on an experimental basis. IRD helped with provision
      of technical expertise.

Sports Centre
   Provision of a new sports centre. IRD, assisted by contacts with the Local
Authority and by fundraising. Fundraising has been successful and plans are
being drawn up.

Slate Production
   Discussions on re-opening of slate quarries have taken place with
landowners and Tegral.

Production of Brochure
   A brochure is being drawn up by an enterprise group for distribution to
industrialists.

Medium-Size Projects

Deep Sea Angling
   An innovative project to make available for hire a suitable boat for big
game fishing in distant waters not previously fished by Irish boats. This
would have potential to attract a new type of angling tourist to the country.
IRD helped to organise preparation of plans and provided technical
assistance funding. Still at the planning stage. Satisfied that a market exists.

Fish Smoking
   Production of smoked fish for the local market. This was going on
previously on a smaller scale but it has expanded. IRD helped by liaising
with relevant State agencies. Two full-time jobs.

Hostel
   Conversion of building for hostel accommodation for tourists. A new
project which IRD assisted with fundraising, planning and technical
assistance funding. Plans are drawn up and have been passed.

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Inland Fishing

Development of inland fishing. A new project which is proceeding rapidly. Boats have been supplied from the Inland Fisheries Board, the season has been extended and development work has commenced on accessibility and parking facilities. IRD helped by organising a group, making contacts and providing technical assistance. Tourism has increased as a result.

Tennis Courts

Provision of tennis courts. IRD helped by making contacts. Repairs to one court are taking place and plans are drawn up for another.

Community Centre, Drimoleague

Provision of a serviceable community centre. IRD helped with organisation and contacts. Work completed and building opened in June 1990.

Pitch and Putt Courses

Provision of two pitch and putt courses. IRD helped with contacts and technical assistance funding. Planning is completed.

Reconstruction and Electrification of Holy Year Cross

Project undertaken by a community group. IRD helped to organise. This project has been completed.

Small Projects

Tidy Towns

New prize-winning entry in tidy towns competition. IRD helped to organise. This success gave encouragement to the community to participate in other projects.

Poultry Production

Commercial production of geese. Interested participants have been identified and a sub-committee is working on provision of slaughtering facilities. Planning has advanced. IRD helped to organise and made relevant contacts.

Bulb and Flower Production

Production of bulbs and flowers for sale. IRD made contacts with relevant agencies. Incomes have been generated and agencies are working with the local group concerned on extension of this project.

Alternative Farm Enterprises

Provision of open farms and activity holidays. IRD helped with organisation and contacts. A few enterprises have commenced and an open farm is under consideration.

Equestrian School

Provision of a pony riding school. IRD helped to make relevant contacts. A premises has been erected and stocked and used for horse breeding. Pony trekking to commence when insurance problems are rectified.

Abbey Theatre Visit

Abbey Theatre visit to Skibbereen to perform "Shadow of a Gunman". IRD made contacts with sponsors.

Walking Route

Laying out of new walking route. Initiated and organised by IRD. Support was secured from Cospoir, Bord Failte and the County Council, and voluntary workers were provided by Voluntary Service International.

Tourist Information Office

Opening of new tourism information office at Baltimore. IRD made relevant contacts for local tourist group. The new office has been opened.

Tree Planting

Tree planting has been carried out by various groups in the area.

Slieve Felim

Tourism

Slieve Felim Mountain Park

Development of over 25,000 acres of forest into a mountain park. IRD co-ordinated community involvement in advancing this project. This is a long-term project to be developed over 5 to 10 years. SFADCO has become involved.

Mining Interpretive Centre at Silvermines

A tourist attraction for the area. IRD stimulated local community support. Plans are prepared.

Interpretive and Outdoor Education Centre at Newport

A tourism and educational facility. First phase is completed and provision of dormitory accommodation is proceeding. IRD assistance included technical assistance funding.

Mini-Tour

Promoted by the Newport outdoor education centre. A new idea generated by IRD, which also provided technical assistance funding. A tour put together for 1990 had to be deferred but will go ahead in 1991.

Foreign Student Tourism Promotion

A new project involving a drive to encourage visits by foreign student groups. An IRD sub-group was instrumental in this. German exchange groups have been hosted.

Production of Promotional Brochure

A new project in which an IRD sub-group was instrumental, and technical assistance funding was provided. 3,000 brochures have been distributed in Ireland, Germany, France, Italy and Spain.

Rural Tourism Course and Formation of Tourism Co-op

A new project co-ordinated and organised by IRD. A successful course was completed and a new tourism group was subsequently formed.

Extension of Slieve Felim Mountain Drive with Signposting

Aimed to improve tourist access and to raise tourism profile of the area. A new project organised by IRD, which also provided technical assistance funding. Meetings with agencies have secured approval. Ongoing.

Village Renewal Programme

IRD had an organising role in this project. Six villages in the North Tipperary part of the pilot were assessed and work is under way on them. Four villages in the Limerick part of the area were then assessed.

Sarsfield's Ride — Cospoir Walk

A new heritage and tourism development project, stimulated by IRD. Progress has been slow.

Agriculture

Farm Development Programme

Aimed to strengthen agricultural efficiency and activity with a view to achieving viable incomes. A new project stimulated and co-ordinated by IRD. Teagasc agreed to operate a small farmer pilot scheme in the area.

Promotion and Co-ordination of Farm Relief Services

Aimed to improve service and generate jobs. IRD stimulated this new project, but progress was limited.

Forestry/Timber

Pallet Assembly Plant

Small industry project to create jobs. IRD assisted its start-up and liaised with SFADCO. In production since 1989. Two jobs.

Treated Stakes Production

A new project which IRD assisted with feasibility analysis. The expert engaged in the analysis departed, which disrupted progress.

Commercial Timber Production by Existing Sawmills

A business and technology audit was accessed through technical assistance funding. A successful partnership arrangement was effected with a third party. Potential for four new jobs.

Investigation of "Niche" Timber Product

New project organised by IRD in conjunction with Thomond College. Received technical assistance funding. A number of meetings have been held and some pointers were established. Ongoing.

Private and Community Enterprise

Extension of Western Development Fund to the Area

Stimulated and co-ordinated by IRD. Secured active involvement of three County Councils and three County Development Teams who made a joint case to the Department of Finance. Outcome is awaited.

Abingdon Enterprise Centre

Consolidation of financial, etc., position of local enterprise centre. IRD provided technical assistance funding. Complete audit and consolidation of the Centre's finances and contractual and legal obligations have been carried out. The Centre is now in a healthier position.

Conversion of Creamery Premises to Enterprise Centre

A new project which IRD assisted by organising and liaising with County Council and agencies, and by providing technical assistance funding. The creamery has been purchased, a local enterprise group is established and an enterprise course has been held.

Location of Mushroom Packing and Storage Plant in the Area

IRD assisted and helped to organise this project. However, problems with mushroom prices raised questions about its viability. Suitable premises were identified and a private company was approached, but this initiative was postponed pending a market improvement.

Specialised Food Canning Proposal

Investigation of this new proposal for Abingdon Enterprise Centre. IRD assisted, helped to organise and provided technical assistance funding. A formal case has been made to SFADCO. Ongoing.

Community Development

Federation of Slieve Felim Community Groups

A new project involving linking up existing community groups from eight parishes. Seen as having ongoing economic and social benefits. IRD sponsored the establishment of the Federation and provided technical assistance funding. A legal structure is being drawn up and SFADCO has assigned a development officer.

Tipperary Business and Rural Development Institute

Plan to incorporate a new rural development dimension in an existing proposal for a Regional Technical College. A government decision would be needed on this and such a decision is awaited.

"Bottom Up" Course to Encourage Collective Action for Development

A new course which was held over six weeks. An enterprise group has emerged from this.

Amenity/Environment

Development of Village Bog as an Amenity Area

A new project assisted by IRD through accessing information, etc. Extensive research on title and lands is completed.

Clare Glens Maintenance and Improvement

IRD initiated this project. An inventory of required improvements was submitted to the two County Councils concerned and discussions were held with councillors. Ongoing.

Protection of Raised Bog

A new project sponsored by the core group. There have been difficulties with private plot owners and little progress as yet.

Social/Educational

Joint Parish Action on Emigration

Aimed to develop solid links with the area's absent youth. A new project assisted and co-ordinated by IRD. An emigration sub-committee was established, a London disco was organised and an emigrant inventory is being compiled.

Joint Parish Action on Insurance Cover for Community Groups

Aimed to reduce the burden of insurance to community groups. A new initiative co-ordinated by IRD. Ongoing.

Incentives to Live in Rural Depopulated Areas

Aimed to bring people back into parishes with significant population decline. A new initiative co-ordinated by IRD. The possibility of securing a pilot programme for certain parishes is being considered.

South Western Islands

Sherkin Tourism Project

Accommodation and leisure facilities being developed by Island-owned company. IR£100,000 raised locally, committed to project. Six jobs created.

Bradan Cleire Teo

A new land-based fish farm using local resources. Idea initiated and project assisted by IRD. IR£99,000 committed by Udaras. Project assisted by Technical Assistance Fund and now at construction stage. Multi-agency involvement — Eolas, Udaras, FAS. Employment created.

Bere Project

Land-based trout farm. A new project with IRD involvement and support from the beginning. Technical assistance support received. Financial commitment from BIM and Department of the Environment. Site acquired and project at construction stage.

An Calad Mor

A pier development project. IRD drove and supported a new approach to a very long awaited project, mobilising local self-help and accessing a certain amount of support from a range of government departments and Galway County Council, rather than continuing to wait for major funding from one government department. This major project is on course for completion.

Interpretive Centre

Promoted as joint venture by local committee, Bord Failte, Udaras. Project commenced 1989, building being renovated. Local contribution — buildings and finance agreed. IRD supported this new project and assisted by Technical Assistance Fund. Proposed opening 1991.

Cais Cleire

Production of organic cheese. A new project, building on tradition. Idea developed and supported by IRD. Supported by Technical Assistance Fund as well as Udaras and IFI. Plant in operation as cottage industry. Employment created.

Transport Service

Provision of satisfactory transport service to Aran. IRD gave new impetus and support. Plans agreed with Department of Transport. Tenders published. New service to be in operation in 1991.

Golf Course and Tourism Complex

Project plans and design drawn up. A new project supported by IRD. BES and private funding. There have been local objections on environmental grounds. Project now held up.

Telecommunications Network

Aims to link Island communities using new technology. A new project supported by IRD. Technical Fund Assistance provided and financial commitment provided by government departments. Project dependent on funding from "Community Initiative Programme". This is a joint project with North-Western Islands.

Knitting Co-op

Aims to produce quality knitwear for continental market. Building on an existing project. Finance committed by FAS. Employment has been generated.

Aquaculture

Raft type fish culture. Plans and design being prepared. Good potential for part-time employment.

Sea Angling

Provision of tourist facilities for sea angling. New project supported by IRD from the start. Boat and equipment provided by local community. Income generated.

Recycling Project

Waste disposal and environmental improvement project. New project driven by IRD. Project commenced 1990.

Hostel Development

Two private projects (a) Bere and (b) Sherkin. New projects driven by IRD from start. In operation since 1990 season. Income generated.

Land Use

Fertilise and division of commonage. New project driven by IRD to promote agriculture development. Project completed.

Organic Meat

Provision of island produce, lamb and beef. New project initiated and supported by IRD. Project commenced 1990.

Organic Vegetables

Project producing requirements for local markets. New projects driven by IRD. Income generated.

Craft Development

Two co-ops formed to promote the industry. New projects driven and supported by IRD. Finance and support provided by FAS. Market led approach adopted, and employment created.

Craft Centre

Units provided for craft workers, building on an existing project. Heavy IRD involvement. Commitment provided by Udaras. Progress made towards three jobs.

Shellfish Projects

Six separate projects cultivating (1) Abalone, (2) Scallops, (3) Mussels. New projects with substantial IRD involvement. Financial supports by BIM and also by Technical Assistance Fund. Employment created and potential looks good.

Adventure Centres

Two projects (1) Cleire, (2) Inis Mor. Provision of new tourist facilities, driven by IRD. Private funds committed and BES funding. Projects at construction stage.

Briaca Cleire

Manufacture of toys using Island image. New project supported by IRD from the start. Project commenced as cottage industry. Income generated.

Suilod Arann

Provision of tourist trails and facilities on Islands. Five separate projects completed and brochure produced. New projects with total IRD involvement. Funding provided by Cospoir and local contributions. Income generated.

Housing

Provision of low cost housing on Islands. New project initiated and supported by IRD. Proposals are at an advanced stage, a site has been acquired and planning permission is obtained.

Forestry and Group Agriculture

Three new projects commenced. New projects driven and supported by IRD. Seven hectares of forestry planted, 1989.

Holiday Village

Provision of tourist facilities on Inis Mor. New project driven by IRD. Design and plans for project agreed. Finance - private and BES funds.

Group Water Schemes

Aimed to improve living standards. The idea existed before but IRD provided impetus. Two projects agreed, two completed.

Organic Lamb

Production of island organic lamb. A marketing plan is drawn up and production is to commence in 1991. This is a joint project with North-Western Islands. Assisted by Technical Assistance Funds.

Fishing Development

Development of small trawler industry. Two private projects commenced in 1990. Employment created.

Tourist Promotion

Tourist marketing of islands. IRD driven and supported. Five separate brochures produced. Island participation in trade shows and exhibitions. A common approach to marketing is agreed. Income generated.

Social and Cultural Projects

These include development of playing pitches, development of island publications, environmental events and development of cultural activities.

Some new projects and some development of existing projects, with ongoing IRD support.

Environmental Projects

Development of blue flag beaches, thatched cottages, island pump facilities, development of roads in partnership with County Council, involvement in Tidy Islands competition, development of island heritage concept and development of awareness of local birds and flowers (with four brochures produced on the last subject). Some new projects and some development of existing projects, with ongoing IRD support.

Provision of Aquaculture Equipment

Assembly of specialised equipment for the mussel industry. IDA supported projects at design stage.

Environmental Agency

Provision of service for coastal monitoring in conjunction with EC agency. Commitment given to provide Helipads on three islands. Air-Sea Rescue to form part of plan.

Vegetable Production

Co-op formed to supply island markets (£IR70,000 value of imports, 1988). Production commenced 1990. Employment created.

Turas na hOilean

Island tours with tourist facilities and services. Commenced 1990. Employment created.

Community Development

Programme of events to help community members manage and develop their resources in progress, i.e., CERT and Teagasc courses, agriculture seminars and a range of classes in crafts.

Community Hall

Plans and design agreed. Funding committed — £IR20,000 locally, £IR30,000 state funds. Project at construction stage.

European Island Council

Linkage established with some European Islands. Draft proposals being prepared. Proposals for National Authority/ Partnership being prepared.

Accommodation Registration

Aimed to increase accommodation available. Island status accepted as recognised category. Registered accommodation increased by 10 per cent. Income generated.

South-West Kerry

Conversion of RIC Barracks into Heritage/Interpretive Centre

Old RIC barracks site and building bought in 1989. Plans and full business plan drawn up for its conversion to a Heritage Centre incorporating an Interpretive Centre Museum. Funding to buy site and building got by local contributions, IRD fund, FAS scheme. Expected EC funds, Irish American Trust. A new project with IRD core group members directly involved.

Kildreelig Village

A deserted village site has been bought by local contributions in 1989. Plans to convert it into an artistic centre, to restore the old thatched houses and use them as studios. Funding from IRD fund; local fundraising has bought the site. A new project stimulated and assisted by IRD.

Theme Town

Kenmare designated an Estate town. Local business people co-operating to remove plastic neon signs and restore the streetscapes. Old estate office will be purchased and used to house the lace exhibition, tourist office, etc. IRD helped by meeting Bord Failte and discussing plans.

Portmagee Designation

Portmagee group working on being designated as a "Fishing Village". Local voluntary group with strong leadership from a core group member.

Tourist Amenities, Sneem

Theme Park Bog Garden developed in 1989, ready for 1990 tourist season. Pitch and putt course developed in 1989/90. Land leased from the County Council. Tree planting, shrub planting and refurbishment of the town. Objective — to win Tidy Towns in 1990. All the above work done by utilising FAS SES schemes and with much local voluntary effort inspired by the parish priest who is a very active member of the core group.

Tourist Survey

A detailed survey of tourists passing through Sneem was carried out in August 1989. It gave valuable information as to needs and deficiencies and what will have to be provided to hold people in the area.

Archaeological Survey

An archaeological survey of the whole area is progressing under a FAS scheme and will conclude with a published volume cataloguing and describing the findings. This will be of use not alone to academics but will be used to put together smaller guides for use by tourists and the general public. All sites will be mapped and signposted. Strong leadership and work being done by two core group members.

Signposting

Through voluntary effort, a Mini Ring Road was signposted in 1989. A new project, with a core group member directly involved.

New Link Road

In the same area, a link road joining two cul-de-sac roads to Bolus Head was excavated and surfaced by voluntary efforts. The County Council have agreed to include it in next year's estimates for tarring. IRD encouraged the local committee concerned and got the Council to include the project in the estimates.

The "Kerry Way"

This walk was opened in late 1989.

Tourism Marketing of the Area

Brochures and marketing. A brochure covering the whole area was printed and put together by IRD South-West Kerry. It is presently being distributed by Bord Failte and through other outlets. Cost over £IR30,000, generated by contributions, levies and advertising fees.

Angling Promotion

In March 1990, a group from Kells travelled to Belgium promoting the local angling facilities. Active core group member involved.

Visual Environment Study

A visual environment study was done for Cahirciveen Tidy Towns Committee by Martin Newell architects. The findings were published and discussed at a public meeting in March 1990. An earlier one had been done for Kenmare and Sneem. Effective in pinpointing to residents what needs to be done.

Community Enterprise

A group in Kenmare did a Start-Your-Own-Business Course in 1989 and have come together and formed a co-op. A premises has been leased and they are open for business, selling Kenmare lace and other lines. Funds paid from IRD for design and forming of lace exhibition, which attracts tourists into the selling outlet being housed there.

Conversion of IDA Factory into Enterprise Centre

The IDA has agreed to lease an unoccupied advance factory in Cahirciveen, and it is presently being converted into an enterprise centre. There are a number of people interested in taking units there. An IRD core group member has been directly involved and IRD networking visits were availed of.

Scellig Crystal

The Rehabilitation Institute, in conjunction with the local community, took over another empty factory and set up Scellig Crystal. It employs seven handicapped people.

Fishing, Aquaculture/Mariculture

Portmagee Fishermen's Co-op secured an Ice Plant for Portmagee Pier from Bofin. It is being installed at present and will mean a saving for the fishing fleet, and more boats will now work out of Portmagee. The provision of an extension to the pier is being pursued.

Valentia Slate

Valentia slate quarries have been bought by a local consortium and a feasibility study has been done by the IDA in 1989, with a view to re-opening. Good employment prospects here. IRD helped to arrange meetings and contacts.

Biological Study Centre

Plans and projected costs of a proposed Biological Study Centre near Caherdaniel have been drawn up. To secure funding is the next step. IRD encouraged this previously existing proposal.

Aquarium

A study was done in 1989 on developing an aquarium. Kells group water scheme plans and study done in 1989.

Outdoor Fishermen's Museum

Collection of items for this is in progress as is preparation of the site.

Agriculture
— One landowner has acquired a herd of angora goats and is processing the wool. IRD helped with contacts and market research.
— A new mart in Cahirciveen opened in 1989.
— Plans for a sheep fattening unit have been drawn up.
— A wool washing/processing project is being investigated.
— The Farm Relief Service is interested in expanding in the area, and meetings have been held to promote it with sheep farmers and dairy farmers.

Forestry Seminars
Two Forestry Seminars were held and there is a marked increase in planting being done by private companies.

Community College, Cahirciveen
Agreement was reached in 1989 and a site is presently under negotiation for a proposed new Community College in Cahirciveen, embracing the three existing schools. Two members of the core group have been very involved.

Cultural
A choral group was formed in 1989 with people from the wider area. They secured the services of a retired conductor and have given a number of concerts. Funding was given by the County Council.
One of the core group is actively involved with the group who got the franchise for Kerry Local Radio to go on air in June 1990.

O'Connell Summer School
An O'Connell Summer School is being planned for Derrynane.

Start-Your-Own-Business Course
A successful Start-Your-Own-Business Course has been completed in Ballinskelligs. One participant secured grant aid and has started a printing business, another is developing a restaurant business, others are pursuing craft business, while others have been placed in employment with a view to gaining further business skills.

Heritage Centre
A new Heritage Centre using a FAS scheme is presently being completed in Waterville. A core group member is actively involved.

Aquaculture/Mariculture
A group of twelve mussel growers in Kenmare formed a Co-op in 1989. They have secured a FAS Management Training grant, employing a

manager. Have sold 130 tons since January 1990. If marketing got right, potential for 5,000 to 6,000 tons generating IR£2.5 million income per annum. Will take 2-3 years to reach this target. IRD encouraged, made contacts and provided some funding.

Vegetable Growing

To supply fresh vegetables produced locally to hotels and shops. Three technical meetings held and field demonstrations; five growers participated. One rented a disused ½ acre glasshouse from Udaras na Gaeltachta. IRD arranged the meetings and encouraged growers in this new project.

Seed Potatoes

To have potato seed produced in a disease-free environment. Circular to local farmers, information and technical meetings. Three producers interested, four acres planted. IRD stimulated and organised this new project.

Courses

Two CERT courses have been completed with fifteen participants in each. One Teagasc agri-tourism course will conclude in Autumn 1990.

Appendix 5

PROJECTS RECEIVING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING

In the pilot IRD programme, funding was made available to help to obtain technical or professional assistance required to advance the priority projects chosen by the core groups. This funding was distributed in two phases. In the first phase, it was decided to make available a total of IR£84,000 from the technical assistance fund, with IR£7,000 going to each of the 12 pilot areas.

In the second phase, IR£42,000 was made available, divided into six grants of IR£5,000 and six of IR£2,000 for 12 individual projects.

The following is a list of the projects which received technical assistance funding in each of the two phases and in each pilot area.

PHASE 1

			IR
Cooley Peninsula	(1)	Marketing Promotion Materials	£2,500
	(2)	Long Woman's Grave	£500
	(3)	Watergarden — Topographical Survey	£1,000
	(4)	Omeath — Revitalisation	£1,000
	(5)	Omeath — Streetscape Plan	£500
	(6)	Kilwirra Church and Graveyard	£500
	(7)	Bush — Site Development	£500
	(8)	Sports Field — Development	£500
Erris	(1)	Carne Holiday Complex	£7,000
Gort	(1)	East Clare Implementation Programme	£1,650
	(2)	East Clare — Heritage Centre	£1,000
	(3)	Gort and Ardrahan — Town Plans	£2,000
	(4)	Waste Recycling	£250
	(5)	Tourism — Marketing Development programme	£1,000
	(6)	Lough Graney Amenity Area	£100
	(7)	Scariff Equestrian Centre	£250
	(8)	Kiltannon (Tomeen) Caves	£250
	(9)	Mariculture Project — Oysters	£500
Inishowen Peninsula	(1)	Seed Potatoes — Producer Group	£700
	(2)	Lamb Producer Group	£700
	(3)	Bunagee Harbour Development	£400
	(4)	Lough Foyle Oyster Beds	£900
	(5)	Greencastle Slipway	£360
	(6)	Malin — Refurbishment of Diamond	£150

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			IR
	(7)	Inshore Fishing Development	£500
	(8)	Tra Breaga Bay — Shellfish	£1,000
	(9)	Textile Museum	£225
	(10)	Burcean Leisure Centre	£300
	(11)	"Inishowen Forever"	£300
	(12)	Moville River Walk	£130
	(13)	Pool Port	£300
	(14)	Aileach — Net Fishermen's Co-Op	£200
	(15)	Inishowen Tourism	£675
Inny Basin	(1)	Snail Project	£1,200
	(2)	Castlepollard Museum	£1,200
	(3)	Rouge de l'Ouest Sheep	£900
	(4)	Lough Derravaragh Amenities	£3,000
	(5)	Lough Sheelin Tourist Development	£400
	(6)	Mayne Heritage Centre	£300
Macamores	(1)	Ballycanew Creamery Crafts	£2,000
	(2)	Cahore Community Project	£5,000
Manorhamilton	(1)	Integrated Resource Centre Development	£6,000
	(2)	Dromahaire Visual Material	£1,000
North Western Islands	(1)	Communications Network	£200
	(2)	Resource Community Centre	£1,000
	(3)	Island Holiday Village	£1,100
	(4)	Clare Island Ferryboat	£400
	(5)	Sheep Marketing Plan	£250
	(6)	Clare Island — Heritage Centre	£800
	(7)	Inishturk — Low Water Landing	£950
	(8)	Arranmore — Community Centre	£600
	(9)	Research and Map Areas of Interest	£1,500
	(10)	Mariculture Project	£200
Skibbereen	(1)	Youth Hostel	£1,282
	(2)	Pitch and Putt Course	£618
	(3)	Drimoleague — Angling	£400
	(4)	Union Hall — Clams	£1,700
	(5)	Mussel farming	£500
	(6)	Golf Course	£2,500
Slieve Felim	(1)	Brochure	£280
	(2)	Hollyfort — Sawmills	£950
	(3)	Abingdon — Consolidation	£2,000
	(4)	Federation of Community Groups	£500
	(5)	Doon Historical Publication	£800
	(6)	Cappaghmore Creamery	£600
	(7)	Mass Rock Sites	£500
	(8)	"Music and Songs of the Hills"	£700
	(9)	Slieve Felim Tourism	£670
South Western Islands	(1)	Communications Network	£200
	(2)	Sherkin Island	£1,656

			IR
	(3)	Land-Based Fish Farm	£1,500
	(4)	Pier and Harbour Development	£1,500
	(5)	Land-Based Trout Hatchery	£1,000
	(6)	Sheep Marketing Plan	£250
	(7)	Cais Cleire	£500
	(8)	Outdoor Adventure Centre	£300
	(9)	Island Holidays	£91
South West Kerry	(1)	RIC Barracks — Conversion	£2,000
	(2)	Bog Garden and Pitch and Putt	£1,000
	(3)	Refurbishment of Derelict Village	£2,000
	(4)	Kenmare Lace	£700
	(5)	Recreation/Leisure/Community Centre	£250
	(6)	South West Archaeological Project	£500
	(7)	Kenmare Bay Aquaculture Co-Op	£550

PHASE 2

Cooley Peninsula	Tholsel — Restoration	£2,000
Erris	Blacksod Bay Oysters	£5,000
Gort	Tuamgraney	£2,000
Inishowen	Heritage Resource	£5,000
Inny Basin	Snail Farming	£5,000
Macamores	Craft Marketing	£2,000
Manorhamilton	Telework Project	£2,000
North Western Islands	Communications Network	£5,000
Skibbereen	Deep Sea Angling	£5,000
Slieve Felim	Newport Outdoor Education Centre	£2,000
South West Kerry	Kenmare Lace	£2,000
South Islands	Community Enterprise Project	£5,000

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