



2020 Annual Report **Highlights & Impacts**

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During 2020, in common with other organisations, SECAD experienced challenging circumstances brought about by the pandemic, Covid-19. In early March, all employees were asked to stay at home and to work remotely. This was made possible by the swift intervention and support of the SECAD Board, to approve a substantial investment into computers and other IT equipment to allow staff members to establish home offices. Luckily, before the pandemic hit, several of our teams led by the Management in SECAD had begun to develop training materials and guidance for clients that was being recorded and made available through the SECAD website (www.secad.ie). This foundational work proved invaluable as it created a bedrock for what is now an incredibly important reservoir of support for clients and communities, the SECAD Online Learning Platform.

This online 'tool-kit' offers expert guidance to people looking to return to work, develop new skills and build personal confidence. It offers training opportunities also to community volunteers including guidance to those who want to develop more sustainable and biodiversity enriching projects. There is a huge range of training offerings for small business owners and managers to help their business resilience during this challenging time. Importantly, the SECAD team also

includes guidance for business owners and managers to deal with the stress and mental challenges that they are facing.

A core group of SECAD's services are focused on those that are marginalised, people often not reached by state supports or for a variety of reasons not accessing other services. This SECAD 'support' will start in the form of building our clients confidence through 'personal development' and then progresses from there towards a goal that our client would like to achieve. This might be for some clients, the confidence to be a volunteer, many would like to return to education and for others it can be to return to employment or self-employment. SECAD offers these supports through a range of funded initiatives called 'programmes' such as the (i) Social Inclusion (ii) Healthcare (iii) Ability and (iv) Female Entrepreneurship Programmes. In each of these cases, most clients would have had issues with accessing and using information technology. The SECAD teams therefore not only had to design and deliver the training materials and modules online, but they also helped each client, through individual attention to their specific challenges, to overcome these fundamental barriers.

SECAD also provides Community Work Placement supports via the Tús and Rural Social Scheme, where normally our participants (counting more than 200 people in 2020) would be on the ground working for community groups across the area. All of these had stand down in compliance with Government Guidelines. The SECAD Tús and RSS supervisors maintained contact with every participant, developed agreed actions with each person, including for many helping them to access core skills development programmes and other positive actions. SECAD's Wild Work Initiative also moved their supports onto an online platform with the addition of a range of supporting video-tutorials being added to the **website www.wildwork.ie**.

SECAD's Community Benefit Fund services moved fully online, aided by the excellent initiative of having an online application process in place since 2019 and it was this team that organised our first community 'zoom' meeting with a project panel based in County Tipperary, just a few days after the first lock-down. Across 2020 our team distributed funding of over €600,000 to community projects across the Island of Ireland including a targeted initiative for communities providing basic food and medical support to the most isolated. Similarly the **safefood** Community Food Initiative, which is managed by SECAD, supported 14 organisations in the North and Republic of Ireland to deliver their support online, thus enabling healthy eating programmes to continue to be developed in these targeted project areas which include some of the most disadvantaged communities on the Island.

Our largest European rural development investment fund, called the 'LEADER Programme' is managed by groups like SECAD Partnership who then allocate this funding by means of grants to relevant projects (enterprise, social or environmental) across our area. These funds are provided in large awards (often several million euro) and distributed in grants that range generally between €5k to €200k over a defined period of usually every 4 to 6 years. If funds are not fully allocated, they can be 'lost' to the community. SECAD have managed LEADER Funds since 1996, funding over a thousand projects in that time, creating sustainable jobs, underpinning resilient community

services, and encouraging creative, positive environmental action. December 2020 marked the end of the latest round of LEADER Funding and with over €2m yet to be distributed when the pandemic hit, it would be a massive challenge to allocate these funds before year end. However, this was achieved which is testament to the dedication, perseverance, and professionalism of the SECAD LEADER Team.

SECAD Partnership is a professionally supported and managed local development organisation which has a voluntary Board of Trustees. SECAD's strength and ability to attract investment, public and non-public funds, to support our goals and our target beneficiaries, is dependent on the capacity of the SECAD Trustees, the Management Team and the Staff Team. An imperative for the organisation's future will be to invest in maintaining and expanding the skills and of the organisation at each of these three key levels.

We are delighted that SECAD has successfully negotiated what was globally a very difficult year and would like to recognise and thank our directors and staff, investors, and clients for the critical part each has played in these achievements.

SECAD Chairman
Mike Walley

SECAD Chief Executive Officer
Ryan Howard

UN Sustainable Development Goals

...How they link with SECAD Partnership and our Work

The UN Sustainable Development Goals were agreed in 2015 to help frame how we can consider and implement an approach to a fairer, most sustainable, and balanced world. Much of our sustainability issues arises from 'imbalance' creating societal division, greater separation between 'rich' and 'poor', powerlessness, exploitation, resource mismanagement and environmental degradation. Collectively the impacts of these will likely lead to increasing strife, poverty, war and a rapid increase in extinction events.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) invite each of us, from Governments to each of us as citizens, to consider how we can bring about the changes needed to seek a 're-balance' and a more resilient world.

Through our work, SECAD is investing in a variety of ways to positively impact the sustainability of our region, local businesses and communities, and supporting initiatives that are aimed at addressing resource gaps and the restoration of eco-systems essential to a more sustainable future.



Sections 1 and 2 of this report looks at examples of where SECAD is supporting access to employment, self-employment, rural and local business development and initiatives to support more female ownership of enterprises. These are all directly related to UN SDG's (#4, #5, #9 and #10) which promote better employment options and developing the infrastructure to support local enterprise development.

Sections 3 and 5 outline a range of supports for community and local community-led social services development that relate to UN SDG's (#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #10, #11 and #12) which offer support to the most disadvantaged, promote and provide new educational opportunities, looks to highlight and address issues of equality and integration, focusing on utilising sustainably produced produce whilst encouraging conversations about designing more sustainable rural towns and villages.

Section 4, SECAD Environmental Investments, specifically focus on an initiative developed within SECAD called 'Wild Work' which is a response to the

lack of coordinated or coherent policy instruments and investments to help communities and local businesses (and our citizens) to implement community led projects that would have a true and lasting positive impact in terms of restoring biodiversity and habitat. These in turn reflect the ambitions of UN SDG's #13, #14 and #15.

Finally, as a Local Development Company, SECAD is itself set up a 'Partnership' between the key development actors that are needed to bring about sustainable change and positive action across the three pillars of sustainable development (Social, Economic and Environmental) in line with UN SDG #17.

We would encourage all reading this report to consider your response to these challenges and please encourage others to do likewise. We hope this report and the works outlined will encourage more people to play an active role to get involved in positive action with the aim of achieving a more balanced, sustainable future.

SECAD Partnership's Vision & Mission

Vision

To be recognised as a leading European development organisation, enabling vibrant, sustainable and inclusive communities.

Mission

SECAD is a dynamic and pioneering social enterprise which works in partnership with diverse stakeholders to provide services, facilities and investments for the benefit of the communities we serve.

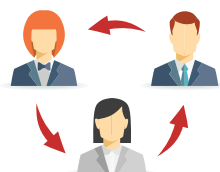
SECAD Partnership Impact 2019



95

People receiving Business Start Up & Business Sustainability support

SUPPORTING ENTERPRISE



8

Social Enterprises receiving training & mentoring with 3 receiving SICAP grants

48

Female Entrepreneurs receiving training through WREN

969

Number of people taking part in Tourism related training



Wildwork

HELPING PEOPLE HELP NATURE HELP PEOPLE



ENVIRONMENT

SECAD Environmental Investments

750
sq metres

Metres of native wildflower seed sown by Wild Work directly

53

Education & awareness sessions

28

Pollinator-friendly landscaping & habitat management projects

15

Biodiversity Action Plans & Recommendations Reports

2,475

Packs of native wildflower seed distributed to the public

25

Children & families from disadvantaged areas engaged through 'Discover the Wild Side' outdoor nature & biodiversity events 2020

488

Individuals supported on a 1-to-1 basis



74

People progressed into Employment

141

Young people 18-24 years towards training &/or employment options including Young Filmmakers Project

211

Active Tús & RSS Participants throughout 2020

95

Women receiving tailored personal development training under the PEIL programme through WREN & Healthcare (48 WREN & 47 Healthcare)

ENABLING EMPLOYMENT

78

Individuals receiving sector specific skills for work training



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

98
sessions

Online training sessions as part of My Town, My Plan 2020 (1057 attendees)

47

Local Community Groups to govern, plan & represent social inclusion & equality issues

28

New Communities' families engaged through community integration projects involved food diversity & celebration through food festivals (28 adults & 32 children)

32

Vulnerable people receiving wellbeing & personal development supports

14

Children & families supported through healthy eating & lifestyle programmes including Making Health A Habit in 2020 (25 adults, 33 children)

243

Children under 15 years supported in positive mental health through Schools intervention programme

14

Community Food Initiatives supported in Northern Ireland & Republic to deliver healthy eating actions through safefood CFI



242

Projects throughout the island of Ireland offered financial support from 2020 Community Benefit Funds.



SECAD 

SECTION 1: SUPPORTING ENTERPRISE

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Supporting Enterprise

Enterprise Support Service

During 2020, SECAD Partnership facilitated six start your own business courses. Two were classroom based prior to mid-March when we transitioned to on-line using the Zoom interactive platform. We then held four courses on-line to bring us to the end of the year. Demand was high as we saw clients who were newly unemployed consider the opportunities that self-employment might bring during a time when few employers were hiring.

We conducted a survey of all clients in April 2020 and almost eighty percent of our clients were either unable to trade or partially trading. With this clear information, we began by designing a number of on-line courses which examined the options for selling on-line as well as a courses designed to discuss both the opportunities and the threats that the pandemic had brought to our clients.

We saw strong take up from those applying for the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance (BTWEA) in 2020. The BTWEA is a financial support to those starting a new business. Given that the Department of Social Protection was compelled to concentrate on payments to people effected by the pandemic, it was good to see that referrals and approvals of BTWEA continued even if at a lesser volume. Careful monitoring of each course was conducted on the final day of each course using Survey Monkey to assess the client's own perception of how much they learned as a result of attending. This has been an important tool for us to measure impact, learning and for the client to feedback to SECAD on their experience of learning with us.

Heads Together Series

Through our Heads Together Series, clients received guidance to help them trade through the pandemic.

Three workshops were provided:

- Selling on-line workshop June 2020 (on-line) (13 participants)
- The opportunities and threats of Covid 19 workshop (on-line) (9 participants)
- Ask and Advise – information sharing/networking July – Nov 2020 (on-line) (6 participants)



Ask and Advise

In July 2020, as a result of a survey of existing enterprise clients, SECAD Partnership decided to pilot a networking offering among its enterprise clients. The idea behind the initiative was that clients could learn from the experience of each other but also to be guided by a business mentor who facilitated the sessions. At each session, a number of clients would put forward a problem or issue that they experienced and seek the guidance of the group. The sessions tend to work better when there is a small group and people draw on their own varied backgrounds and experience which makes for a lively debate and sharing of advice. Attendees also share ideas and tips for self-improvement and efficiency from a business perspective.

Compiled by Donna Cleary, Development Officer

Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN)

The WREN programme is co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Social Fund through the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020 and is delivered by SECAD in partnership with Ballyhoura Development. The WREN programme was created because a gap had been identified by the EU – not many business leaders are female – and SECAD wants to be a part of the solution to this problem.



Eight major challenges for women in business were outlined in a Forbes article in 2018:

- Lack of financial supports, often denied loans on cultural and gender basis
- Demands from family, expected to be wife and mother as well as professional
- Fear of failure, known and unknown
- Lack of connections, can be expensive, causes women to delay starting up a business
- Gender Inequality, Gender Lens Investing (GLI is a strategy or approach to investing that takes into consideration gender-based factors across the investment process to advance gender equality and better inform investment decisions (Global Impact Investing Network))
- Limited knowledge, not knowing where to get the required supports
- Less-established business networks, social and traditional constraints
- Timidity, fear of been seen as proud and boastful

The WREN programme seeks to address these challenges through providing training that includes Personal Development and Business Development training as we found that building the participants' confidence is an essential element to business success and growth. Women need to believe in themselves and their product/service in order to succeed. The Personal Development module covers subjects including:

- Confidence Building
- Emotional Intelligence
- Time Management
- SMART Goals
- Positive Self-expression
- Learning Styles
- One to One Coaching

The Business modules include:

- Business Strategy
- Market Research
- Finance / Taxation
- Sales & Marketing
- Creation of a Business Plan
- One to one Business Coaching

Showcase in Páirc Uí Chaoimh – If I can see it, I can be it.....

In February 2020, SECAD organised a showcase event in Páirc Uí Chaoimh to mark the end of the first WREN programme. There were over 70 people in attendance and the guest speakers included:

- David Stanton TD, Minister of State for Equality, Immigration and Integration
- Ryan Howard, SECAD CEO
- Tara Shine, Change by Degrees
- Paula Cogan, President of Cork Chamber
- Paul Healy, Rubicon Centre, CIT
- Eileen O Keeffe, Ballyhoura Development
- Isabelle O Driscoll, UCC student and WREN supporter
- Frances Doyle, SECAD

Fifteen WREN participants, who had recently completed the programme, displayed their products and services, which included pottery, bakeries, book publishing, wedding supplies, nutrition, holistic supports, floristry and much more.

The event was open to members of the public who were interested in learning more about the WREN programme. They were provided with the opportunity to view the stands and gain firsthand information about WREN from the participants who had just finished the programme. This is women supporting women, lowering the ladder and allowing others to avail of supports to enter into business.

The WREN programme incorporates the eight challenges outlined above as it is believed that through naming the challenges, we are taking away the unknown for the participants, allowing them to gain the skills and experiences to make a start in business, and building confidence to work through these challenges.



Like so many training/support providers, we had to rethink our methods of course delivery with the arrival of Covid 19. With 17 women ready to start the programme in April, we flipped from classroom based training to Zoom and through reacting quickly to the needs of the participants, we managed to start on time. SECAD felt that in a changing world, women starting out in business would need support more than ever. It became all about the pivot, selling on-line, teaching on-line, and providing the one-to-one sessions on-line. We are proud to say that four WREN programmes were delivered on line between SECAD and Ballyhoura Development.

Feedback from clients on the new teaching method was positive:

“no travelling, no need to get childcare as for much of the time children were off school and participants felt they gained valuable IT skills by forcing themselves to come on line, improved on-line sales skills”

Compiled by Development Officer Frances Doyle

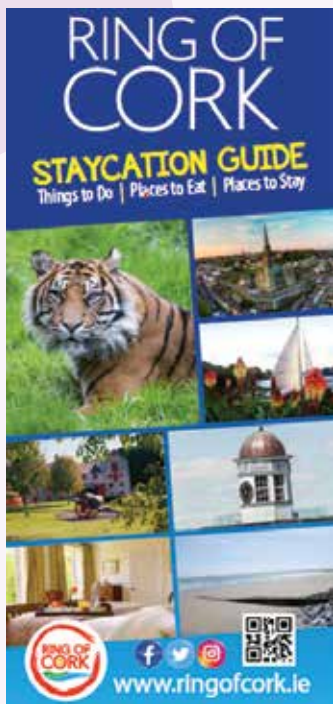
SECAD & Tourism

Tourism Town Skills Programme

SECAD's main support for tourism businesses in 2020, was through the delivery of the Tourism Town Skills Programme. It commenced in October 2019, with the ambition to deliver 100 workshops under 9 training topics, locally in 9 towns across South and West Cork, over two years. The training programmes

included Public Relations, Customer Service, Local Menu Development and Digital Marketing which included a suite of 5 workshops.

Pre Covid, training continued to be delivered in hotel venues and a total of 35 workshops took place with 341 participants attending across the region.



Due to Covid 19, face to face training had to be adapted and delivered online via Zoom. In April 2020, the first of our online training programmes was delivered. There was an appetite for digital marketing as tourism businesses had to adapt quickly and improve their skills in order to sell online. Boosting Online Sales, Getting Paid Online and Evolving Your Social Media Strategy, were very popular workshops, that were designed and delivered in April.

There was demand for training right through the Summer months when 14 online digital workshops were delivered between April and August 2020 with a total of 211 participants attending

417 participants attended 27 workshops, in October and November. The programmes delivered were in Customer Service, Smart Menu Design, Public Relations as well as more Digital Marketing.

By the end of 2020, 76 workshops were delivered, and 969 nine participants were upskilled. Going online made training much more accessible and convenient for those working in the tourism sector.

Networking & Support

Traditionally SECAD, through Ring of Cork, organises specific networking events and familiarisation trips but in 2020, this could not happen in the traditional way. The online training gave people an opportunity to see some familiar faces where break out rooms and chat was encouraged. An online Tea @ Ten coffee morning was organised in May to bring people together informally. When restrictions allowed, an outdoor small gathering for the B&B sector took place at the Red Store Restaurant, in Youghal.

Regular communication was maintained with Ring of Cork members who were contacted via email and phone with relevant business, training, financial, Covid and health supports.

Ring of Cork hosted their first Virtual AGM/Seminar on 7th December 2020. The guest speaker was Clare Cronin, MY Greenway Project Manager and she spoke on the topic "Progress & Next Steps". Ring of Cork members were also given an opportunity to tell their story in a 5 minute Virtual Soap Box style presentation. The Virtual Soap Box speakers were:

Michael Martin – Titanic Walking Trail

Paula Brennan – Youghal Clock Gate

Sean Mc Keown – Fota Wildlife Park

Deirdre Roberts – Midleton Greenway Bikes & Bites

Daffyd Lewis – Carrigaline Court Hotel

Eddie English – Sail Cork

Mike O Riordan – Ziplt Course Manager

Although it was online, it was an opportunity to bring people together.

Promotion

Fortunately Ring of Cork's website had undergone a recent revamp and during the year, it was enhanced to promote members' businesses. A special section was dedicated to members where they could find information on Covid and other industry supports.

2020 was the year of staycations and Ring of Cork designed and developed their staycation guide. All members were listed in the online brochure which has a special turn page feature. <https://www.ringofcork.ie/staycation/>. Social media and online competitions were used to launch and promote it online and the brochure was also available to download as a pdf.

There is a Blog section on the Ring of Cork website and 8 articles were written and used effectively to promote as many members as possible in the stories. These were also promoted on social media.

Compiled by Development Officer Elga Ryan

SECAD & Social Enterprise

In 2020, SECAD Partnership continued to support social enterprises within our SICAP area, with both specific individual organisational supports and supports to bring different groups together to work as a collective. Working in collaboration with the Irish Social Business Campus (ISBC) of which SECAD is a partner, recruitment took place for a social enterprise incubator programme which was offered to budding social entrepreneurs across the district. A four-month programme was developed which allowed each participant to develop their business which had to have a demonstrated social impact.

Does your organisation or business care about the positive **social impact** at least as much as the financial goals?

Applications are now open for an incubator programme, designed specifically to create and develop sustainable businesses that make positive social impact.

'Business for Social Impact' Incubator Programme

SECAD, Middleton, Co. Cork
January – May 2020

Our 4-month peer-learning programme includes:

- Educational workshops
- Sessions with consultants
- Connections
- Mentorship
- Personal journey support
- Public showcase day

We provide a space to discover the possibilities, explore different revenue streams, look at the bigger picture – to focus on what's important rather than what's urgent, it is also a great chance to become part of a group of like-minded people and access valuable advice from experts.

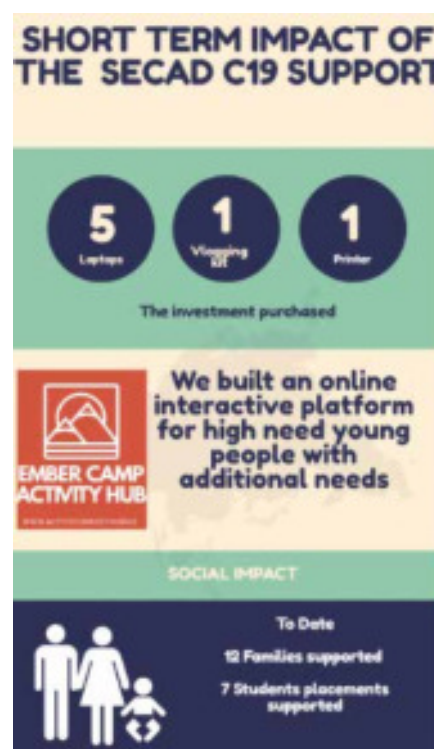
From March onwards the incubator programme meetings took place online and this worked very well, negating the need to travel by continuing to meet using Zoom. Some great businesses have developed as a result of the incubator and these businesses are making a difference in people's lives currently.

Cloyne Men's Shed was a social enterprise that we worked with at the start of 2020. The group developed out of an identified need to reduce social isolation for men in the East Cork area. They availed of mentoring support to develop a business plan and to plan for the move to new premises. Across the organisation, SECAD was able to offer them support

to apply for funding through the LEADER programme and this cross-company approach worked very well in this respect.

At the beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic, we offered grant funding to social enterprises that were actively working with vulnerable people. This was a very difficult time for the organisations that we support, in terms of making applications and receiving quotations. However, both Active Connections and Community Radio Youghal approached us in order to apply for SICAP grant aid and were successful in their applications.

Active Connections were viewed as a critical service and remained open to support young adults throughout the pandemic. They use adventure and the outdoors as a means of supporting positive behaviour in young people. SECAD Partnership assisted their work by supporting them to purchase equipment which allowed for more online supports between the staff of Active Connections and the young people at risk. Active Connections produced an infographic which set out the impact of the funding.

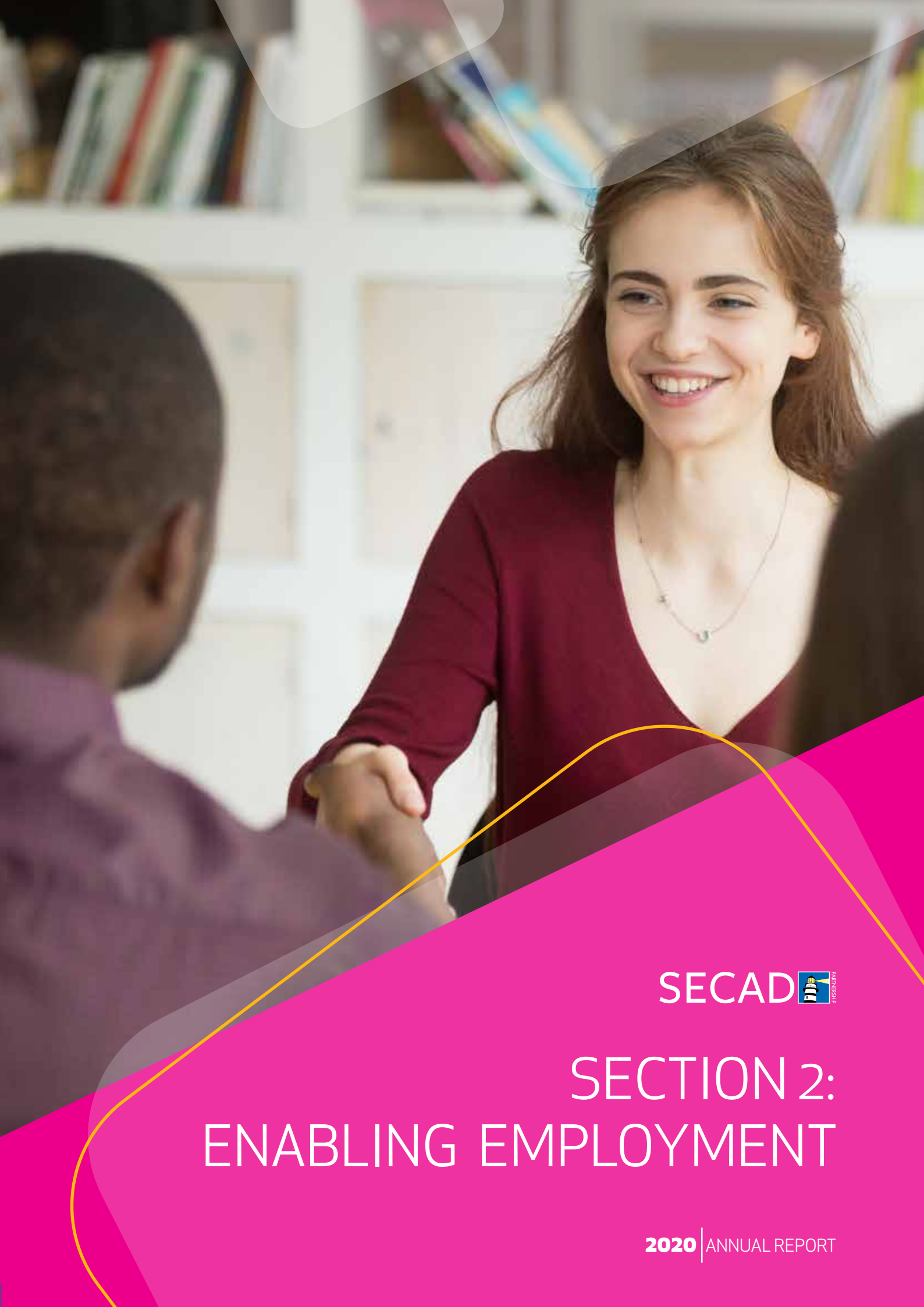


Community Radio Youghal was also supported through SICAP funding in order to commission ten short radio broadcasts on the impact of COVID 19 on those who are caring for vulnerable young people and adults. While many day services had closed with no planned re-opening dates, Carers in particular were under enormous strain. The programmes were an opportunity for Carers to share their advice and connect to support agencies to reduce the fear that was experienced by Carers and those they cared for at that time.

Also in 2020 SECAD joined with the Irish Social Business Campus to take part in a series of online workshops relating to business strategy and values. Many of the social enterprises that we support across the region attended these sessions and took time to re-focus their business strategies in line with new guidance relating to COVID 19. Many social focussed businesses were closed at that time and it was an opportunity to upskill and share experiences with other social entrepreneurs. These interactive sessions were very practical in nature and much benefit was gathered by those attending the online sessions.

Compiled by Donna Cleary, Development Officer





SECAD  PARTNERSHIP

SECTION 2: ENABLING EMPLOYMENT

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Enabling Employment

SECAD Employment Services

Our Employment Support Service underwent significant change during 2020. The rise of the pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns meant our traditional one to one in-person services could not continue. As a result, the service adapted to using video conferencing technology Zoom and MS Teams to provide one to one support to clients. Those who were particularly impacted by the digital divide and found using digital technologies particularly difficult were supported via telephone. However, some clients who found technology challenging were, if ready to do so, gently supported to begin using applications such as Zoom via their phone or a computer, as an important stretch point.



The lockdowns of 2020 were experienced very differently amongst our client base. It was observed during the year that a significant number of our client base required increased support on personal development and wellbeing. This involved signposting to a range of support services including the HSE's Stress Management video series as well as helplines. We also circulated support newsletters from the Local Authority which listed the range of pandemic related community supports and services. Furthermore, there was increased need for the team to apply their Coaching skills and active listening to support SICAP clients around confidence, self-belief, strength spotting, transferable skills, mindful practice, reframing challenges (what is in our control, what is not) more so than employment matters in many incidences.



A significant change that occurred in our interaction with our client base when it came to preparing for a return to work, focused on many clients' desire to take greater control of their career path and gain greater meaning from work. There was a particular focus on planning to pursue work that offered greater flexibility and work/life balance. Increasingly we worked with clients to explore blue sky options, exploring resources to create a new vision for the future / create a new career. We supported clients to reframe their situations, identify clear, realistic options and find the will to carry out those development actions.

Linked to the above we were actively creating awareness on what the labour market now demanded to support clients to move beyond feeling stuck and make informed decisions. We also provided support to generate new awareness on a wide range of blind spots around CVs, interview skills, general job hunt approaches. There was a misconception amongst some clients that because they engaged in other services their CVs and interview skills were up to scratch, but this often was not the case and further development support was required.

Compiled by Kieran Butler, Development Officer

SECAD Online Learning Hub



SECAD continued to innovate as the lockdown progressed by building a new Learning Management System (LMS). This platform saw the organisation embark upon offering e-learning content to our client base. The SICAP, Wild Work, Healthcare and WREN teams developed a diverse range of accessible courses across employment, lifelong learning,

biodiversity, wellbeing, and enterprise. This was a particularly important departure as it allowed us to add further value to our client base, through the creation of online learning content. This facilitated our clients to engage in further development work independently, whilst also continuing to avail of our one-to-one services. This was a major piece of work which resulted in staff quickly developing skills in screen recording and content creation for an online purpose. The team continues to work in developing their skills to create further content for the LMS and continues to add new courses and recordings of live content. SECAD's Online Learning Hub can be found at: www.training.secad.ie.

Compiled by Kieran Butler, Development Officer

SECAD Employment Fair 2020

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a redesign of SECAD's 2020 Employment Fair to an online delivery which was a new departure for the SICAP team. The 2020 Employment Fair was delivered via Zoom Webinar and focused on 3 industries that were particularly interesting career spaces in a pandemic world. The industries included Biopharmaceutical, Healthcare and Real Estate/Property Management. Pfizer represented the Biopharmaceutical sector, Home Instead Senior Care, the Healthcare space and Free the Way representing Property Management.

All three companies discussed routes into the sector, the skill sets required, and the typical job options to be found in each of these respective sectors. The SICAP team delivered a comprehensive presentation on the education/training opportunities that exist and made particular reference to training options to facilitate a transition into Biopharmacy, Healthcare, and Property Management. The training highlighted was offered by CETB, Cork Training Centre, Springboard, as well as

relevant apprenticeship routes. We also discussed a variety of e-learning platforms to support general upskilling and engagement in lifelong learning. In total 60 people tuned into the event.

Compiled by Kieran Butler, Development Officer



SECAD Health Care Initiative

Programme 2 of SECAD's Healthcare initiative began in November 2019 with great hopes for a second successful rollout. Vicki Kelly was the Course Co-ordinator for the programme and also the facilitator of the Personal Development module.

The participants were recruited in the months prior to January 2020 and the inaugural class was held in the SECAD building in Midleton in March 2020. There were 18 participants around the table on the first day and it provided a lovely start to the training. It was an opportunity for the participants to get to know each other and to become a cohesive group prior to the Healthcare Modules commencing. The Personal Development aspect of this first class involves an honest sharing of each other's stories and an opportunity to evaluate where each person is in their lives and identifying where they want to be in life and career. The subsequent classes provide techniques on how to achieve their goals efficiently.



In March 2020, SECAD and Ballyhoura Development jointly won a Special Recognition Award at the AONTAS Star Awards at a ceremony in Blackhall Place in Dublin. It was a very special occasion for us and we were very proud to accept this award on behalf of our participants and the companies we represented. Little did we know what was ahead of us all as within a fortnight we were plunged into lockdown and SECAD closed its doors in line with COVID 19 government guidelines.

The Healthcare Programme faced a huge challenge, although it was felt at the time that this was just a short chapter in our lives, and we could take stock after a couple of weeks when the guidelines were sure to change. However, as we now know, this became our "new normal" and the consequences of this lockdown impacted the programme massively. This impact had both positive and negative repercussions as we took the Personal Development to an online live platform within a couple of weeks. A word called "ZOOM" entered our vocabulary and we had to find our way around this wonderful means of hosting classes and discussions. Unfortunately, we lost several of our participants because of their fear of technical/online matters. This was challenging and a new recruitment process had to be started. Some of these participants did not own a laptop or live in an area with a great internet connection or have internet in their homes. More participants found themselves home-schooling young children and did not have the hours to spend on their own learning as they had to prioritise their children's education.

The training team had to deliver a programme originally designed for the classroom via Zoom. Presentations had to be tweaked, books had to be delivered to the participants' homes as the shops were closed and one to one meetings, which are an integral part of the programme, were held on the phone or on Zoom. The workload was huge for everyone, and stress levels were high until we all became used to this system. Great credit is due to the participants taking part in this modality of studying as they embraced this challenge and had fun with it. We had babies on laps and dogs barking in the background until each of us developed a new system for organising our homes to suit this new way of attending a class. Coffee breaks were still advocated, and we got to know each other and support each other during the break times.

The CETB (Cork Educational Training Board) delivered the accredited QQI modules in an integrated manner which allows all participants to achieve two Major Awards. The modules chosen were:

- Care Support
- Communications
- Work Experience
- Infection Prevention & Control
- Palliative Care Support
- Care of the Older Person
- Health & Safety
- Intellectual Disability
- Care Skills



Dolores Mullahy was our initial trainer and when she moved to pastures new, she handed the baton to Mary Hartnett who provides a wealth of experience as a trainer through her background in the Healthcare industry. The programme is designed around the

school year which is beneficial for participants with school going children, so mid-terms and holidays are our holidays too.

During the year, we held a coffee morning via Zoom and invited our Programme 1 participants to join us and offer advice. This qualification meant a lot to them and they were our newly qualified frontline workers working in the eye of the COVID storm. They were exhausted as Healthcare Assistants in a pandemic would be and they were proud of the job they were doing. They told very sad stories of the effects of the virus on our vulnerable in society and the loneliness of our elderly when the nursing homes and hospitals closed their doors to visitors. They also celebrated the patients that survived and left with a clean bill of health and saw the importance of a qualification in Healthcare to help these people be cared for professionally.

This programme is very different to the first roll out but at its core it is quite similar. All our participants are, by nature, carers. They give of themselves, and they love the camaraderie that this group offers them. We were also visited virtually by UCC and various Healthcare professionals and appreciated the contributions and insights they had to offer. The programme is more than the Level 5 QQI qualification. It is about women upskilling and joining the workforce in an environment of positivity and hope, despite the Global pandemic.

Compiled by Vicki Kelly, Development Officer

Get Job Ready

After the lockdown was implemented in March, SECAD transferred all “Get Job Ready” training, with the exception of Safe Pass courses, to an online delivery through using Zoom. The online courses that were offered included Customer Care, Retail, Revive Renew Restart (building resilience) and two Primary Certificate in Food Safety courses.

The Food Safety course is accredited by the Environmental Health Officers of Ireland Association (EHOIA) and SECAD’s course was the first time that the EHOIA had allowed it to be delivered online. SECAD and the tutor worked with the EHOIA to

devise a means of delivering the course so that the EHOIA could validate the results of the exams that each participant takes at the end of the course. The EHOIA Cert which is valid for 5 years is beneficial for anybody, working in the food & catering sector and the service sector.

Two Safe Pass courses were delivered in October once restrictions were lifted – 1 in Midleton and 1 in Macroom. The 20 participants attended in person and were required to comply with the regulations put in place by Solas.

68 people took part in one or more Get Job Ready online courses during 2020 and this was achieved through providing one to one assistance to the participants before courses started. This included helping them to set up a zoom account, talking our clients through accessing a zoom meeting and sending resources, handouts and workbooks to participants by post. This was particularly useful for our clients who could only access training through their mobile phones.

As part of our end of year review of SECAD services, we surveyed our online training participants to gain feedback on their experience of online training. Many of our “Get Job Ready” training participants have access to computers or laptops because they own one or they have been able to borrow one but at least 36% of our clients had to access training using a mobile phone or tablet. This limited our participants’ ability to engage fully in the training. 70% of the respondents had not taken part in online learning before.

SECAD staff encouraged clients to up-skill or return to education by taking on-line courses. However, while, we were able to help people to find training that might be of interest to them or to deliver our taster courses in an online setting, it highlighted the restrictions for people who do not have digital skills, appropriate computer equipment and / or adequate internet access. Our experiences over the past year have also highlighted for SECAD staff, the challenge

of transferring traditional classroom based learning to online, and the complexity of engaging with participants in an online setting, especially when they can only access the training through a mobile phone.

Online education suited some of our clients because of various issues including transport, childcare, mental health issues, etc. We found that because of Covid restrictions, we were able to introduce a new cohort of people to adult education via online platforms. Many people have a fear of attending courses for various reasons and are more likely to try something new online because of the anonymity and the familiarity with their surroundings in their own home.

Feedback from two of our online participants included:

Instructions were simply explained by co-ordinator over the phone before course began as I wasn't able to attend the first briefing on zoom. SECAD co-ordinator and course tutor were easy to understand and explained the process simply.

Comfortable and relaxing environment. Vital especially to those of us with severe anxiety. Course was detailed and laid out in a way we could understand without problems. If we had questions, they were answered and explained thoroughly. I learned a lot from the course and met some cool people.

Compiled by Sinéad Conroy, Development Officer

Ability Programme

SECAD participated in running one of the 27 Ability projects in Ireland. This programme is co-financed by the Irish Government and the European Social Fund as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020 through Pobal.

Training in the Ability programme was centred around a group of students who were working 2 mornings per week in the very pleasant education room in the Midleton Football Club. Training engagement included art, music, cooking, ceramics, interview skills, Job Club and drama. One of the students’ favourite activities was Social Farming so with the help of two of the women from the Healthcare programme, Ability students went to Leahy’s Farm in the SECAD

bus. The Healthcare workers were necessary for supporting the students with higher needs such as epilepsy.

The assistance from the Healthcare workers became invaluable during the first lockdown when students were at home and materials for supporting their education could be delivered safely using the training in infection prevention and control that they had both just completed. This training came into use again as the Ability group was able to run the 2020 graduation using social distancing measures in real life. This was a particularly joyous event where the group got to say goodbye to each-other as they continued on their journey.

Case Study



Aisling is a young lady who participated in the Ability programme during 2019-2020. During the year before Covid she participated in training but did not participate in Social Farming as she lives on a farm. Aisling had completed her vocational assessment with the programme in 2019 and was keen, with the support of her family, to get employment. In early 2020 she started work experience in Ballyseedy, a local café, where she received training as a barista.

We kept in close contact with her family during this time, monitoring her safety while she was working in this very public environment. However, as the extent of the danger that Covid 19 posed to people with Downes Syndrome became apparent, Aisling withdrew from this work.

During lockdown Aisling engaged in virtual training with packages of art materials, the **safefood** Cookery Book. Aisling also successfully completed SECAD's online Primary Cert in Food Safety course.

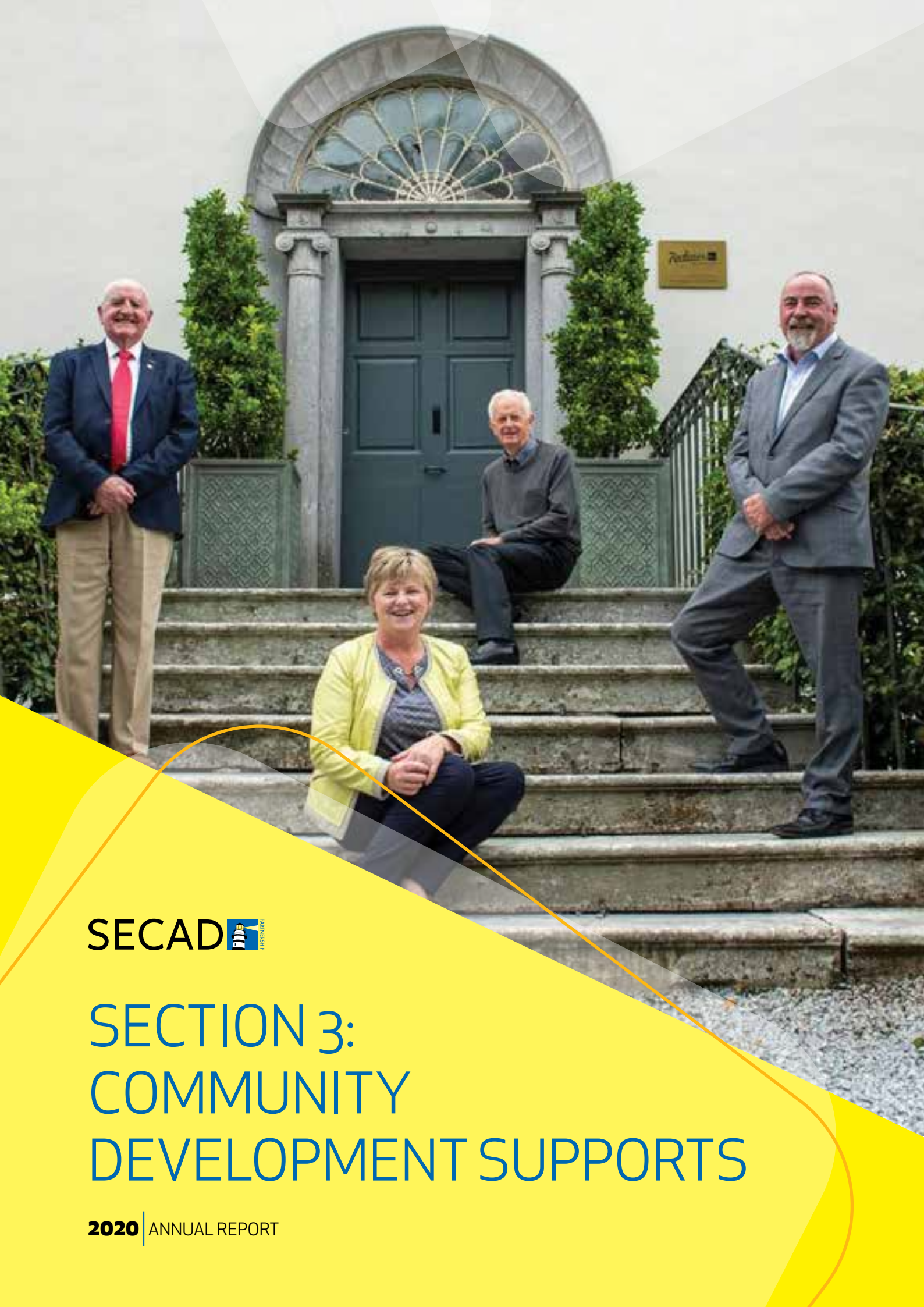
All the participants received an Ability programme branded jacket and bag, and materials from Cork Sports Partnership. Instructions for the use of the materials was given by phone call and email. Using the art materials, Aisling created a set of greeting cards which were distributed through the SECAD links with the Meals on Wheels to people who were very isolated during the lockdown.

Aisling's family said that the programme was a great support during lockdown, saying:

'I would particularly like to thank Danielle for the special effort she put in during lockdown. SECAD provided more support to Aisling than any other group.'

As soon as restrictions allowed, Aisling returned to 1-1 training in SECAD using our outdoor classroom and created a pollinator friendly window box and art projects.

Compiled by Danielle Sheehy, Development Officer



SECAD  PARTNERSHIP

SECTION 3: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORTS

2020 | ANNUAL REPORT

Community Development Supports

Rural Development Programme 2014-2020

Carrig Centre, Ballincollig

As implementing partners for LEADER South Cork LAG, Leader West Cork LAG, and in partnership with Cork County Council Local Community Development Committees (LCDC's), SECAD has proudly supported a number of organisations to secure funding for community projects. An example of one of these projects is the Carrig Centre in Ballincollig.

This project involved the refurbishment of the former Gunstore in Ballincollig and the project promoter was the Carrigrohane Union of Parishes. These premises are now known as the Carrig Centre. The project involved three elements in the refurbishment and were grant aided €122,594 in LEADER funding in the SECAD area of South Cork. The elements included the installation of a playground and Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), installation of an audio-visual system with recording studio as well as the installation of a lift to enable additional access to the Mezzanine floor. The building is now back to its former glory and is a great amenity to the community in Ballincollig.

Compiled by Donna Cleary, Development Officer



My Town, My Plan Community Training Programme

2020 saw the continuation of the SECAD My Town, My Plan programme which commenced in September 2019. The LEADER funded community training programme was delivered simultaneously in Carrigaline, Cobh, Midleton and Youghal in South Cork and Kinsale, Clonakilty, Rosscarbery and Skibbereen in West Cork and was developed and delivered in conjunction with SECAD by the Hincks Centre.

The aim of the programme was to positively impact on the innovative development of a cohesive town plan in each location. In developing the plan, the participating groups maximised their town's potential, based on their town's strengths and unique value proposition.

The programme consisted of 12 sessions per town group, covering four Core topics common to all and four Options topics. Each town group had the opportunity to choose the latter, from a comprehensive list, relevant to that town's vision/plan for the future. Over the course of the programme, training workshops provided information, stimulated discussions, linked resources and developed ideas for each of the areas in conjunction with the community. Each town had an assigned facilitator who delivered the Core sessions and worked with the group on their visions / plans for their own area. The Options sessions were delivered by subject experts.



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Community Support Package Grants

A SICAP funded community support package was established in the Spring of 2020 to assist with the safe re-opening of community halls and facilities. Mentoring sessions were offered as part of this package along with an optional small capital grant of up to €2000.

Mentoring comprised of general and networking support from one of two mentors. These sessions with the groups addressed the individual needs of the organisation, which ranged from looking at staffing and rotas, financial implications, and detailed business planning for those organisations which employed staff (in addition to support from volunteers in running their facilities).

Ten community facilities were successful in their application and nine of these availed of the capital grant totalling just under €13,000. The capital grant support assisted with the purchasing of COVID-19 related items including:

- Hygiene Products
- Hand Sanitation Stations
- Covid-19 Signage
- Disinfectant Fogging Machines
- Reusable Masks & Face Covering
- Perspex Screening



The capital grant was a lifeline to financially depleted facilities as it allowed them to safely open their doors and be fully compliant with COVID-19 regulations.

The community groups who benefited from the Community Support Package included:

- Cumann Na Daoine, Youghal
- Aghada Community Centre
- Great Island Community Centre, Cobh
- Carrigaline Community Association
- Glanmire Community Association
- Comhaltas Cosanta Chuil Aodha (Mhuscraí)
- Ballymacoda/Ladysbridge Community Council
- Glountaune Community Association
- Macroom Leisure Centre/community facility)
- Douglas Community Association

Compiled by Tara Doyle, Development Officer

Cork County Council COVID-19 Community Support Programme – Town Teams

On Sunday 29th March 2020, the Chief Executive of Cork County Council held the first meeting of the Cork County Council COVID-19 Community Support Response Forum. During this meeting Cork County Council COVID-19 Community Support Programme was established. This enabled the coordination of a multi-agency response in the delivery of services and supports to vulnerable citizens across County Cork.

Within the SECAD area, five Town Teams were set-up in Youghal, Cobh, Midleton, Carrigaline and Macroom. Each team had a representative from An Garda Síochána, HSE, SECAD, Municipal District Officers, local library, and community leaders.

Practical issues were discussed to ensure that information and support was available particularly to any vulnerable individuals.

Assistance included:

- Shopping
- Collection of prescriptions
- Rubbish collection
- Transport to hospital appointments
- Linking of available volunteers to services such as Meals on Wheels
- Book deliveries through Cork Library Service
- Linking to local voluntary groups which were providing some of the above services

Calls to the dedicated Community Call Helpline were directed through to the Head Librarian in each town. They in turn would contact the Town Team representative who had the potential answers to the query. As a resource for these teams, SECAD carried out a survey of local voluntary groups who had adapted their services to provide support to those in need in their communities, and the Town Teams were able to refer directly to these local community databases for more local ongoing support as necessary. These were revisited and addressed during the second lockdown in November. Below are some of examples of the queries that came through the helpline system to the SECAD representatives.

An elderly disabled man living in Midleton couldn't change a fluorescent lightbulb in his bedroom. His friend who was in his eighties would normally do this for him but he was cocooning. The SECAD staff member contacted the Midleton Care & Repair team, a risk-assessment of the job was carried out and it was completed within a few days.

Call from the Carrigaline Librarian to SECAD Town Team member, 15th April 2020.

An elderly lady living in Cobh, had not left her house in weeks and was afraid to do so. She had not picked up her pension and there was no food left in the house. SECAD staff immediately contacted staff in Cobh FRC and explained the situation. Within hours, a network of supports was in place.

Call from the Carrigaline Librarian to SECAD Town Team member 15th April 2020

A lady in Midleton with mental health issues called the helpline looking for support and someone to talk to. SECAD staff contacted the local community guard to drop by and check she was ok, other services were contacted including the HSE and FRC, the lady was contacted by a mental health support worker and weekly phone calling supports were put in place.

Call from Midleton Librarian to a SECAD Town Team member 30th April 2020

Compiled by Tara Doyle, Development Officer

New Communities

SECAD Information day in Cobh for the Syrian Community

An information morning was arranged on 4th March in Cobh Community Centre by SECAD and HSE Resettlement Programme staff to introduce the range of services and supports available through SECAD to members of the Syrian community. This enabled SECAD to identify some of the diverse needs in terms of one-to-one employment support, skills for work training and SICAP soft supports and courses. This collaboration moved online due to COVID restrictions and many of the individuals who attended that information session have continued to engage with SICAP employment supports and services via Zoom.

Information Gathering Sessions – Riverside Emergency Accommodation Centre, Macroom

On 27th February 2020, SECAD SICAP Employment Support and Community Development Officers arranged an evening Information event. This took place in Riverside Emergency Accommodation Centre, in the resident's community/function room. The purpose of this event was to provide information on the immediate supports on offer through the SICAP programme. An expression of interest form was presented by the Development Officers to all in attendance. That evening a total of 21 adults submitted interests in a variety of activities, the main being employment, CV/interview supports and career guidance, followed by training, upskilling, health, wellbeing and biodiversity.

Following this event, residents who registered their interest were contacted individually. It became clear that the needs within the centre were extremely diverse. Some residents were educated to degree level, had excellent spoken and written English, held residency and work permits but were employed in low skill/low paid positions in the Cork area. Other residents were unskilled with very poor spoken English.

"A lady from Nigeria held a pharmaceutical degree and was a lone parent with two boys. She had permission to work in Ireland and held residency status. She found low paid labouring work in a factory several miles away, but on occasion worked late into the night on shifts. She wanted to work in her chosen profession but did not have the knowledge of how to go about this in Ireland".

SECAD SICAP Officer

The Development Officers decided another visit to the centre was necessary as it was evident that simple everyday tasks like making phone calls and appointment setting was beyond some of the residents. This second session took place on 12th March, the day the country decided to close all schools, days before the national lockdown and the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 was unexpected, but it did not put an end to contact with the residents, as all SICAP staff worked from home remotely and individual engagement with the residents continued online via Zoom.

Syrian Community in Cobh – Living in Ireland through English

It was established from SECAD's information day in Cobh that there was a need for families to gain a better understanding of living in Ireland and informally practice speaking English. A six-week course was designed through the Integrating New Communities SICAP action.

Eight online Zoom sessions were arranged to take place between 7th April and 30th April. On average eight adults attended the hour-long session. Many of the sessions discussed COVID-19 related topics including current guidelines, what is social distancing and how to practice it, hygiene and its importance, what to do if a family member gets sick, how to explain COVID-19 symptoms to a GP, shopping etiquette during COVID, online resources, home schooling, transport and how to maintain physical and mental health.

Community Sponsorship Ireland

During 2020 supports continued to be delivered to the Syrian families who recently resettled in Ireland through the Community Sponsorship Ireland programme. Engagement with the families and committees were conducted by phone or Zoom meetings. ETB English classes continued during lockdown via Zoom and where possible in small socially distant gatherings and many attended the "living in Ireland through English" sessions. Collaboration with a Cork City group, the Croi Wilton group and SECAD was also established during the year. This CSI group could not find accommodation for their family within the city so their only option was an apartment in Midleton. Preparation for the family's arrival was ongoing throughout 2020 and SECAD assisted the committee in forming new local connections.

Compiled by Tara Doyle, Development Officer

Healthy Eating & Wellbeing

Come Dine with Us! **safefood** CFI at Home Initiative

In August 2020, SECAD applied for the Community Food Initiative at Home grant, which is administered by **safefood**. SECAD was successful and approval was given to deliver an online healthy eating course to families with children under 12 years. This fund provided for the purchase of ingredients to make a healthy meal at home.



SECAD designed a programme called “Come Dine with Us!” which was delivered by SECAD’s HFME Tutor. Each week, the 14 households agreed on the healthy meal that they would each cook from recipe book provided. They cooked the meal on the designated night and the next morning a Zoom session was held with the participants to discuss the outcome of the meal and offer tips and advice to each other.



Each household relayed how much they enjoyed the experience and what a distraction it was for the whole family when considering the COVID-19 situation. Most of the children got involved in the cooking or food preparation and were sad to see it finish. A total of 25 adults and 33 children participated on the programme. Below are some final comments from the participants:



“The kids miss it already, so we are going to continue our own on Tuesdays. My son has asked for black bean burritos for his birthday instead of pizza!” Household with Children who have learning disabilities

“We had fallen into a rut food wise and with picky eater kids, had given up trying new things, but this has made a change for us as a family.” Lone parent household

“It improved my relationship with my son because he participated with the preparation of the food with me” New communities’ household

“Keeping occupied during COVID-19 gave me a focus to make an effort for the family foodwise and it brought excitement to our family around dinner.” Lone parent household

“Family cooking. Something to do. Good Craic on Zoom meetings.” Unemployed household

Wellbeing

During the height of COVID-19 restrictions it became apparent there was a need for wellbeing activities that could be delivered safely. Reports from the Town Teams and other agencies relayed the same mental health concerns. In response to this, SECAD delivered two online Zoom wellbeing courses during the year.

Making Health and Happiness a Habit

The first Wellbeing course delivered by SECAD in 2020 was called, “Making Health & Happiness a Habit”. It was delivered over a six-week period between 14th April and 19th May. This course covered topics like, breathing and meditation, hydration and food, nutrition and our mental diet, mind-set and self-care, movement and exercise and sleep. Approximately 40 participants attended one or more sessions. This course was delivered during the most restricted period of COVID-19 and had wide-reaching participation within the SECAD area.

Discover Winter Wellness

As Winter was approaching, a further lockdown was on the way. Again, agencies were relaying the mental health issues they encountered in their work. SECAD decided to deliver a second shorter wellbeing course called “Discover Winter Wellness”. This course would prepare people for the long winter ahead. It was delivered over a four-week period from the 16th November to 7th December. It focused on building winter resilience, Autumn alignment and self-care. Again, this course had a wide-reaching participation with approximately 20 individuals registering for one or more sessions.

Compiled by Tara Doyle, Development Officer



Tús & Rural Social Scheme Community Work Placements

Tús

On 4th March, new Syrian community families living in Carrigtohill & Cobh were invited to an information day & workshop in Cobh which was organised by SECAD's Tús Programme. SECAD's Employment Support and Community Development Officers, the Le Chéile Resettlement Coordinator, the HSE Refugee Supports Worker & the CETB Officer were also present. A Q&A session for the families was facilitated during the workshop to discuss pathways to study, work and employment support. The relaxed nature of this event was enhanced by the Syrian families who brought their own ethnic food which they had prepared for all the attendees.

On 16th March, the Tús & RSS Team and all the Tús & RSS Participants began working from home. In April, Tús & RSS workers carrying out essential work were allowed to return to work if necessary, following a Covid-19 Risk Assessment for each position. Stay at home participants were encouraged and assisted by their Tús Supervisors to take part in online courses and study.

In May, in compliance with levels 3 & 5 government guidelines, Return to Work (RTW) safety protocols were prepared & updated by the Tús team who carried out risk assessments on work placements on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Frequent Zoom team meetings were held by the Tús Team to prepare necessary safety documentation and protocols.

By 8th June, RTW paperwork & protocols were completed and Covid-19 declarations were collected from returning participants. Site visits and inspections were carried out by the Tús Team and then the participants began returning to work on a staggered basis starting with outdoor staff and continuing over the subsequent weeks with retail and other indoor staff.



On 29th June, Tús Supervisors conducted a Tús information workshop for Migrants at the Direct Provision Centre in the Travel Lodge on the Kinsale Road following a request from the HSE Refugee Supports Worker. Attendees at the workshop were informed about work placement opportunities that might be available for people with an entitlement to work, and also volunteering opportunities. However, at the time sourcing voluntary work under Covid-19 was proving to be a difficult task.

From the start of the first Lockdown, Tús Supervisors on SECAD's Care & Repair team provided daily telephone support to many elderly service users and provided a much-needed avenue for conversation, and to deliver groceries if required. A weekly bulk grocery delivery was also made by our Tús Team to FoodCloud's Waterford distribution depot.

In September, four Syrians who had attended the workshop in March were assisted to make Tús self-referral applications as under their Refugee Stamp 4 entitlement, they can take up employment opportunities. The placements included one person in warehouse/logistics, one person providing support to a Charity shop and two people providing general maintenance support in Fota House. In addition following a risk assessment visit, a new placement provider application was approved for The Priory in Cobh, who are a closed order of Nuns. During what was a very challenging year for the Tús programme, 57 people began Tús placements.

The Tús Team facilitated the video recording of testimonials in Fota House by members of SECAD's SICAP Team and by SICAP and Tús Participants. The Tús piece was subsequently used in a promotional video by the Department of Social Protection.

Compiled by PJ Dennehy, Coordinating Supervisor of Tús & RSS Programmes

SECAD Rural Social Scheme (RSS)

The Rural Social Scheme is made up of Farmers and Fishermen in the low income bracket. They work 19.5 hours per week in their local community, providing valuable support to the various projects in their locality. While most of the participants are lone workers out in the field, the arrival of Covid-19 meant that a different approach had to be taken to protect the public and the workers themselves.



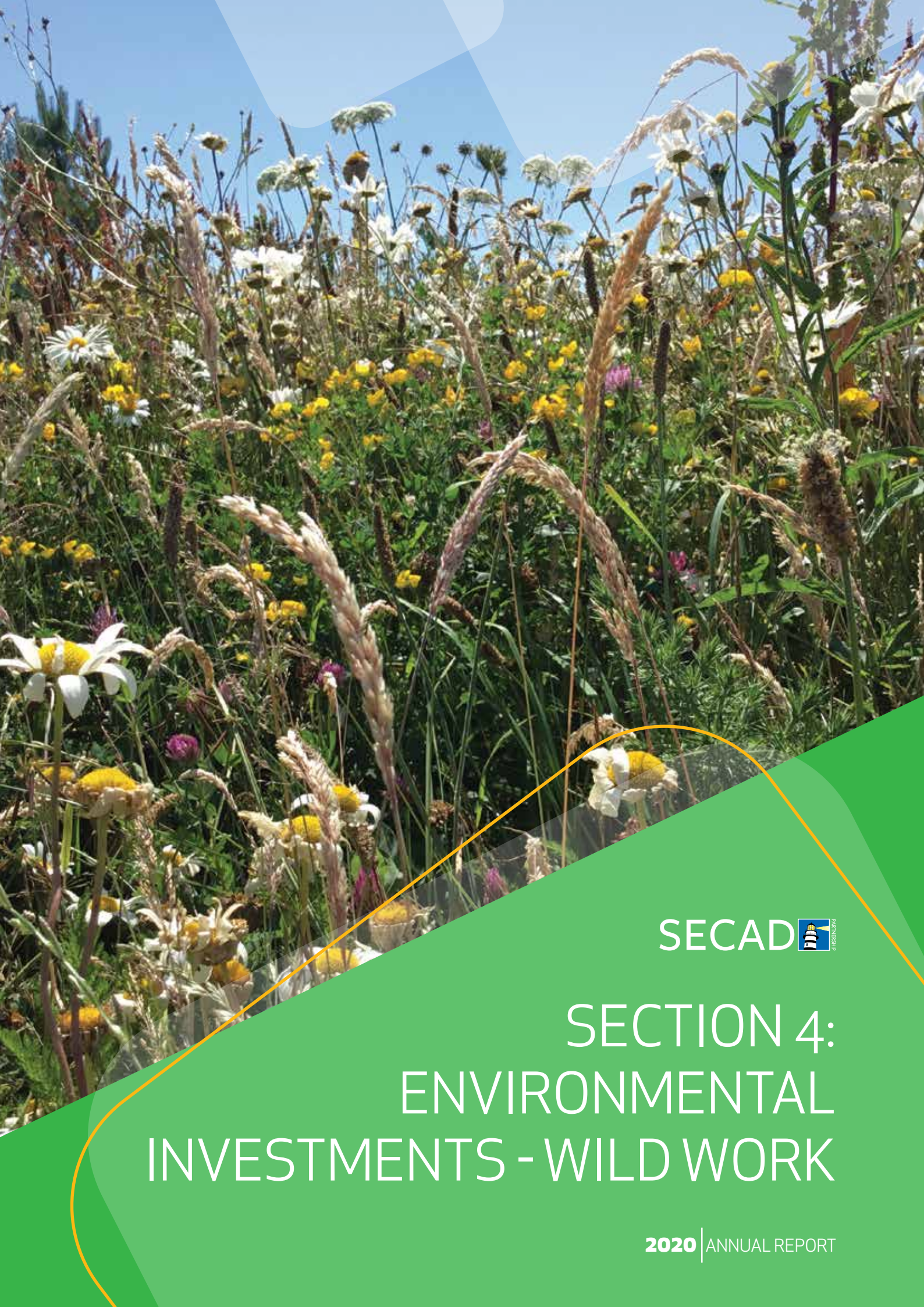
Consequently, the internet, the local Library before it too closed and Zoom and Alison Courses became the norm. Some of the participants became interested in the history of where they are working, St Mary's Abbey in Youghal being a prime example along with Youghal Clock Gate. Others did online courses in gardening, carpentry, flower arranging, letter writing, getting to know your phone, Internet on-line and equestrian matters.



All had varying degrees of success with their online activities, as some were just beginners, but all gained confidence in their own ability as the year progressed, to work on Zoom. Some joined into other Zoom meetings that held an interest for them, while others just made new friends on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Some Induction training and Return to Work Protocols was also undertaken with both the Groups and Participants to facilitate the phased re-opening of the country. With almost every RSS work location closed, apart from the "Field Of Dreams" it was a tough time for the participants in 2020.

Compiled by Declan Barron, RSS Supervisor



SECAD 

SECTION 4: ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENTS - WILD WORK

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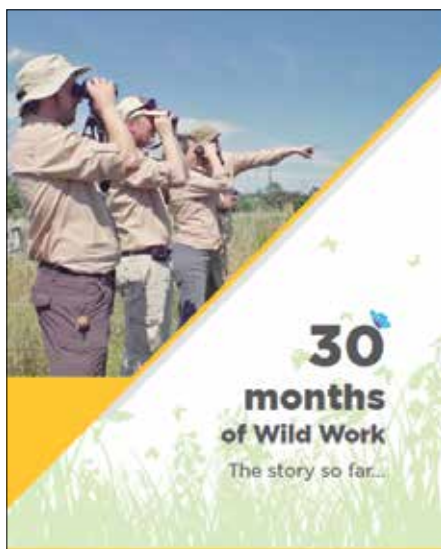
SECAD Environmental Investments

Wild Work

On 3rd March 2020, Wild Work celebrated 30 months of achievements at an event held in Páirc Uí Chaoimh which was attended by over 100 people, bringing together nature enthusiasts from across business, community, farming, education and state sectors. Many of the attendees had been part of the Wild Work journey, and the event was a chance to reflect with them on how far we had come. We were also delighted to welcome new clients and partners and to share our vision for the future of Wild Work.



To mark the event, the document “30 months of Wild Work. The story so far...”, which beautifully captures the Wild Work journey, was published. It can be downloaded from our website at: <http://www.wildwork.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Wild-Work-the-story-so-far....pdf>



Wildwork

HELPING PEOPLE **HELP NATURE** HELP PEOPLE

The impact from our March event was diminished by the Covid-19 lockdowns which occurred soon after. However Wild Work staff took the opportunity to expand and improve on our expertise by developing new skills in the digital space. We developed a YouTube video series entitled “Wild Worker’s at Home” https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCedoCxOBzQdB90rOGi_q-Nw and a Wild Work Podcast <https://wildworkpodcast.podbean.com>. From this experience we have developed videos and podcasts as a new service offering that can be combined with our more traditional educational activities such as outdoor walks and talks.

We were also delighted to secure significant funding from LEADER (EU Co-financed Rural Development Programme) in partnership with two other Local Development Companies – West Limerick Resources and Cavan County Local Development. This project will deliver a co-ordinated approach to biodiversity conservation and promotion using an innovative new training experience combining outdoor classrooms, virtual reality experiences and online learning. This will possibly be the largest biodiversity training programme to occur in Ireland. The background work to the project is well underway with training to be rolled out in January 2022.

Compiled by Karen Loxton, Development Officer



SECAD 

SECTION 5: CORPORATE & PUBLIC SERVICES

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Corporate and Public Services

Community Benefit Fund Management

Covid emergency funding was made available by the NTR and the ESB, through the Wind Farm Community Benefit Funds. This funding was designed to maximise the Resilience of Neighbouring Communities who live close to Sustainable Energy Assets and to support them to help their most vulnerable community members to get through this challenging period.

Covid-19 has had an unimaginable impact on all our lives. However there has also been a greater sense of comradeship across service providers and a deserving recognition of the dedication, energy and bravery of those who are our frontline defenders against this global pandemic.

But for those that are most vulnerable, at risk and alone, it is at the local community level that their fears, needs and requirements are best understood. It is through local people working often as volunteers with local community services that the most vulnerable can be best supported to endure and survive this crisis.

Two of our funders, NTR and the ESB implanted a Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund Covid-19 Response Programme across their funds, to meet the needs of their most vulnerable residents, friends and neighbours.

Communities within close proximity to the Wind Farms were targeted and asked to identify the organisation that they recognised as having the greatest positive impact on the lives of those most vulnerable in their community. SECAD surveyed all the community contacts within these targeted communities and with the support of the SECAD Development Officers, the nominated organisations were assisted in completing their Covid-19 Community Resilience Plan. 100% up-front payments were issued to successful groups.

Groups were asked at the end of the 12-month period, to complete a report quantifying the numbers of interventions, people supported and range of supports provided.

The programme was a huge success, with a total of €159,996 awarded across both funders and 53 communities were supported. ESB provided funding of €109,784 and supported 37 communities. NTR provided funding to 16 communities in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and provided funding of €19,125 and £26,235.



"The funding received made it possible for us to provide a voucher to the identified households, which enabled them to spend in the local shop on food provisions. We have continued to support our community in many ways since we were faced with the effects of Covid and the feedback we have received express's gratitude from people that not alone did they receive the benefit of this voucher but they have the confidence that a locally based support network is available to them if and when required."

NTR Covid-19 Fund, Clare O'Kane Drumquin Healthy Living Partnership One Response



"The Officers, Committee and Members of Drumquin United FC would like to place on record their heartfelt thanks to NTR organization and employees Katie Kearns and Elaine Barrett for the generous community fund contribution. The impact of the project was immense with nearly 150 vulnerable members of our community benefitted. Our project was cross-community, helping both Catholic and Protestant neighbours. This has also positively impacted on relations within the village. Overall, the project has had tremendous benefits in and around Drumquin as articulated above and has encouraged the membership of our football club to adopt altruistic practices and make contributions in other areas as well as sporting."

NTR Covid-19 Fund, Sam Dennison, Drumquin United FC

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NTR Covid-19 Fund, Sam Dennison, Drumquin United FC



"The SECAD Covid fund was a blessing for our club. With all other fundraising activities suspended due to Covid restrictions this fund allowed us to prepare our club for return to training. We were able to purchase signage, sanitizing equipment for sanitizing balls sliotars etc, hand sanitizers, hand cleaner, paper towel dispensers and traffic safety cones. We installed the hand sanitizer at the entrance gate as well as outside the dressing room doors. We also provide hand washing and drying facilities to ensure proper hand hygiene for the adults and kids alike. We were able to erect signage and put up safety cones for parents to drop their kids safely at training when it resumed."

We were one of the clubs in Kerry who hosted a successful Cul Camp also, having our facilities ready and adhering to all COVID safety guidelines by the GAA return to play protocols as well as national guidelines was brilliant for our small club. We thank SECAD Wind Farm Covid fund sincerely."

ESB Covid-19 Fund, JoAnn Murphy, Kilgarvan GAA Club

"As a consequence of this funding the swimming pool opened on the 31 July until 31 August and close to 1000 swimmers used the pool during this time. The pure joy and excitement in the village that the pool was opening was wonderful and gave everyone a great boost and inspired confidence that the village would not let Covid break their spirit. Several families booked additional sessions for birthday parties as seen as safe place to meet. 6 lifeguards were trained up as Covid Officers and the pool adopted a new booking and payment online system (which will be used and improved upon for the future). As a consequence of the funding for the hall and youth centre the hall re-opened and has been used for gymnastic classes (in pods of 6) and the Youth Centre is back in use for the Naonraí."

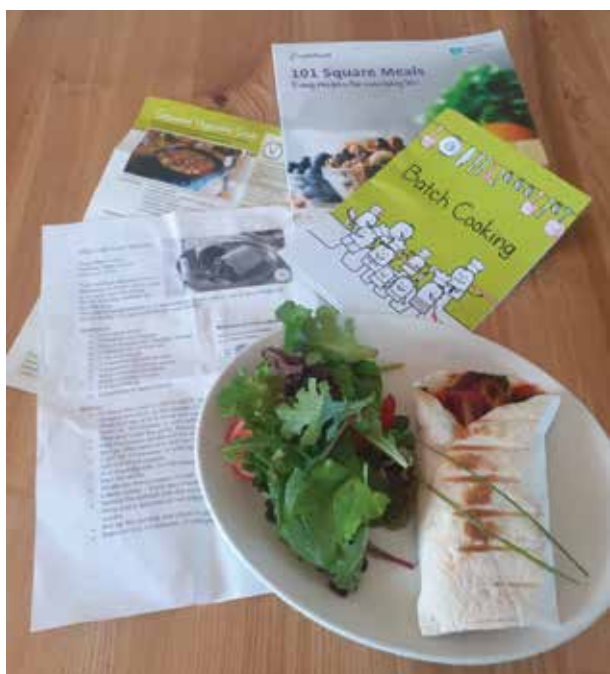
ESB Covid-19 Fund, Caroline Nolan, Comhaltas Cosanta Chúil Aodha

Compiled by Elaine Barrett, Administration Team

safefood Community Food Initiative

SECAD continued to coordinate and administer the Community Food Initiatives (CFI) on behalf of **safefood** during 2020. SECAD has co-ordinated the CFI since 2016. The CFI was established by **safefood** to create awareness of the benefits of healthy eating and to provide families with the skills and knowledge to be able to provide healthy food options for themselves and their families. The current format was developed by **safefood** and SECAD and encourages the 14 partners (CFI Leaders) based throughout the island of Ireland to use a community development approach to engage and work with families.

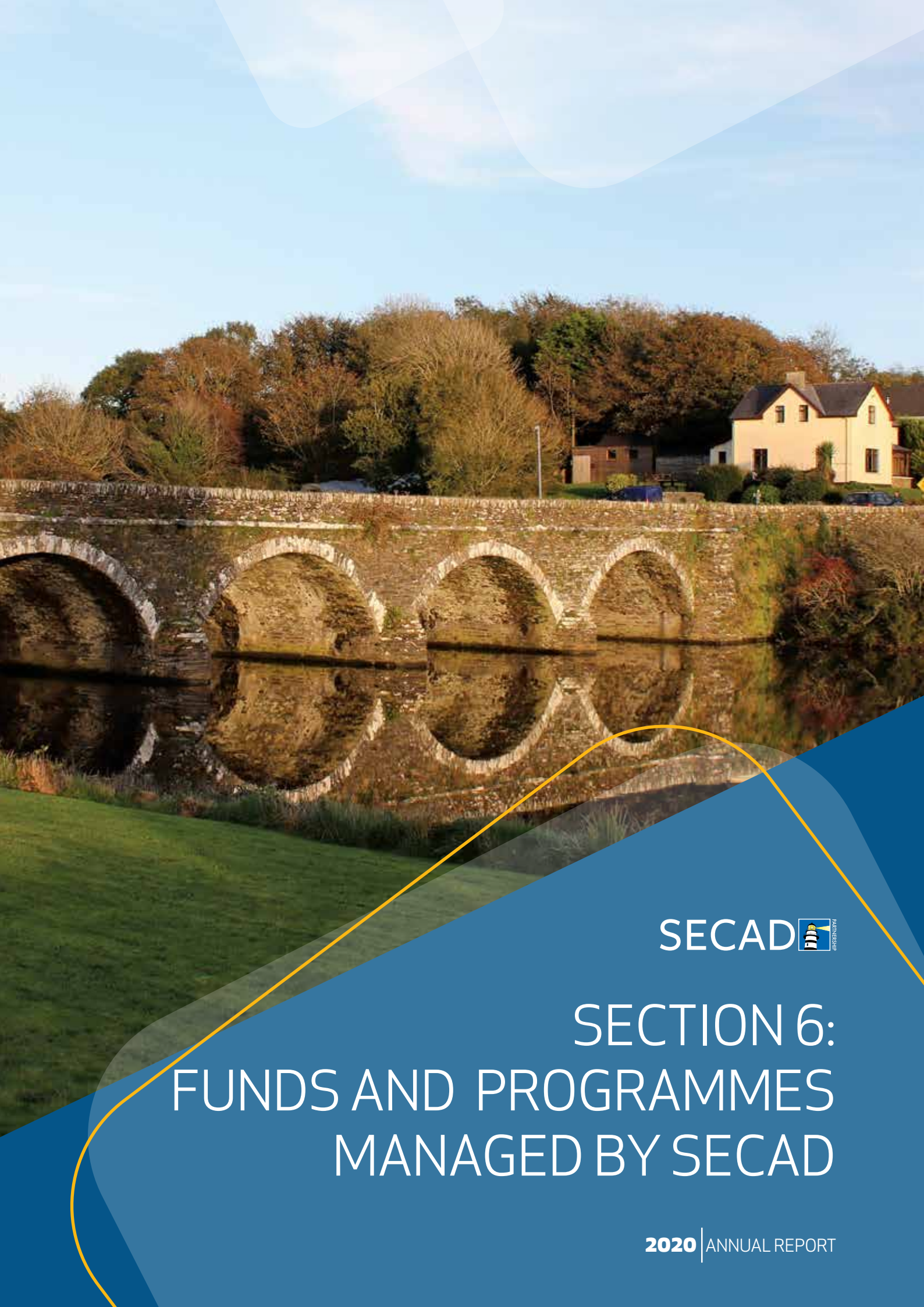
Community Development can be defined as the means of providing support, advice, information and training to individuals and groups which is tailored to their own particular requirements and this support can be provided through community groups, and statutory and voluntary organisations. 2020 generated new and unique challenges and it was a year when the community development approach was very important for the effective delivery of the Community Food Initiative.



The CFI performed many functions during 2020, in that it brought people together to not only gain new skills and knowledge but also to connect with other people in their own community. The CFI plays a crucial role in empowering people to develop the skills that will allow them to provide healthy food for their family. In 2020, this empowerment spread across whole families as more children became involved and learned how to prepare and cook healthy meals. Participation in the CFI allowed children and parents to interact and learn together to a much greater extent than in other years.

The CFI provided a very welcome boost to participants and managed to support the needs of a diverse audience throughout the island of Ireland. The joined-up approach which was followed by all the organisations involved in the various Steering Groups meant that the CFIs were able to adapt content to meet the needs of their own participants and could target online and physical resources to reinforce the message after each session, e.g. videos, posters, leaflets with nutritional information. Through the various communication methods used, the CFI Leaders could provide more support outside of the sessions and also the participants could support one another to understand the content and discover ways to overcome challenges.

Compiled by Sinéad Conroy, Development Officer



SECAD  PARTNERSHIP

SECTION 6: FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES MANAGED BY SECAD

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Section 7: Funds & Programmes Managed by SECAD

SECAD Partnership CLG

SECAD Partnership CLG is a local development company established in 1995. SECAD is a not for profit, community led organisation with charitable status. SECAD works with a range of clients and stakeholders in rural areas including community and voluntary groups, disadvantaged target groups, job seekers, businesses (including private and social enterprise), farmers, schools and the corporate sector.

SECAD provides a range of innovative rural development and social inclusion supports, to motivate and enable our communities to create a more vibrant, sustainable and inclusive society, in partnership with public, private, academic and community partners.

SECAD has evolved from managing a single funding programme into a platform for managing and delivering a wide range of funds and services including, social investment and employment supports, on behalf of the Irish Government, State Bodies and the EU.

SECAD currently delivers a number of major programmes alongside other smaller schemes and initiatives, including LEADER 2014-2020, the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme 2018-2022, the Rural Social Scheme, the Tús Programme, PEIL 2014-2020 (WREN, Healthcare & Ability), Community Sponsorship Initiative, Community Development Initiative & the Savour Food Initiative.

Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

The aim of SICAP is to reduce disadvantage and promote social inclusion and equality through local, regional and national engagement and collaboration. Its vision is to improve the life chances and opportunities of those who are marginalised in society, living in poverty or unemployed through community development approaches, targeted supports and interagency collaboration, where the values of equality and inclusion are promoted, and

human rights are respected. SECAD has delivered previous iterations of SICAP since the mid-1990s.

SECAD is currently delivering SICAP 2 which began on 1st January 2018 and runs until 2022, across the South Cork area, with an annual contract value of €812,902.

LEADER

SECAD has been delivering the LEADER Programme since 1995. The current iteration of the programme is LEADER 2014-2020, which is being delivered in two 'Local Action Group' areas, South Cork and West Cork with a budget of €5,295,634 across the two areas.

The LEADER Programme supports local and community projects across a diverse range of themes

including; Rural tourism, enterprise development, rural towns, access to broadband, basic services targeted at hard-to-reach communities, rural youth, protection and sustainable use of water resources, protection and improvement of local biodiversity, and development of renewable energy. The programme is co-financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020

SECAD is delivering three projects under PEIL 2014-2020:

1. Female Employability (Healthcare Opportunities)

SECAD is a partner in a Healthcare Opportunities Training project with Ballyhoura Development CLG. The Healthcare Opportunities programme is running in various locations throughout Cork and Limerick over a three-year period offering participants the opportunity to gain a Healthcare Assistant Level 5 qualification.

The programme is specifically aimed at women who have been out of the workforce and who are not in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance. It particularly appeals to women who are interested in training to

work as a care assistant in a care home, community setting or a hospital. The training is free, flexible and an excellent way to upskill and gain a new career option.

The programme is co-funded by the Irish Government through the Department of Justice and Equality and the European Social Fund, through PEIL 2014-2020. Funding is being provided under the Employability strand of PEIL to promote gender equality and to create new employment opportunities for women.

2. Female Entrepreneurship – Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN)

SECAD is leading this female entrepreneurship project, WREN, to support female entrepreneurs living in Cork and Limerick who have a concrete business idea and wish to become self-employed or who are already in the early stages of business development.

The training programme includes personal development and business skills training, one to one and group mentoring, female 'role model' sharing of experience and support, themed networking and experiential learning events, formation and facilitation of the facilitated networking sessions and a range of other supports. The training will lead to an accredited award.

SECAD is working in partnership with Ballyhoura Development in Limerick and Cork Institute of Technology's Rubicon Centre, Hincks Centre for Entrepreneurship Excellence and Department of Technology Enhanced Learning on its delivery.

The WREN Project is co-funded by the Irish Government through the Department of Justice and Equality and the European Social Fund, through PEIL 2014-2020 to promote entrepreneurial skills and business start-up amongst women in the region.

3. Ability Programme

SECAD is currently delivering the Ability Programme with our partners, IRD Duhallow (lead partner) and Ballyhoura Development CLG, on behalf of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (via Pobal).

The Ability Programme aims to support young people with disabilities (18-29 years of age) to improve their employability through a range of person-centred supports. Participants on the Ability programme will be supported with tailored training and career guidance support.

Training includes the development of soft skills, confidence, communication, self-awareness, life skills & personal development. A focus is placed on work preparation training for young people with disabilities, including job search strategies. Existing linkages on the ground with local employers are utilised to facilitate supported work sampling, work experience placements, work shadowing, volunteer placements and place and train schemes.

For the purpose of the Ability programme, people with disabilities refers to people with physical or sensory disabilities, mental health conditions, acquired disabilities, intellectual disabilities, hidden disabilities and people on the autistic spectrum. In order to qualify for support, Ability participants must also be:

- in receipt of disability allowance or invalidity pension; or
- in receipt of illness benefit for more than three months

Tús – Community Workplace Initiative

The roll out of the Tús Programme was announced by the Irish Government in December 2010, as a direct response to the downturn of the Irish economy, which caused unemployment numbers to rise considerably. The aim of Tús is to provide short-term, quality work opportunities for those who are unemployed, by providing 12-month work placements in local not for profit/community organisations, who provide services of benefit to local communities.

While responsibility for the operation of Tús rests with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, it is managed at a local level, on the Department's behalf, by Local Development Companies (LDCs) like SECAD. LDCs (and in the Gaeltacht areas, Údarás na Gaeltachta) were selected by Government to deliver Tús which SECAD began operating in July 2011. SECAD has a current allocation of 220 places for people coming from the Live Unemployment Register and employs 11 Tús Supervisors to manage those placements.

Rural Social Scheme (RSS)

The Rural Social Scheme (RSS) was launched in 2004 by the Irish Government and is aimed at supporting low-income farmers and fishermen/women. The RSS was set up to provide income support for farmers and those in the fishing industry who are in receipt of long-term social welfare payments, and to provide services of benefit to rural communities.

The RSS allows those on low-incomes, who are unable to earn an adequate living from their farm holding or from fishing, to earn a supplementary income in return for 19.5 hours work per week, undertaken within the community and voluntary sector. SECAD delivers the RSS on behalf of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP).

Community Food Initiative (CFI)

In 2016, **safefood** invited tenders from either nongovernmental organisations or state bodies who have knowledge of and strong links with the community sector, to manage their Community Food Initiative (CFI) for 2016-2018. SECAD was the successful tenderer and was awarded the contract to deliver the CFI 2016-2018. In 2018, **safefood** initiated a new tender process to deliver the next round of the CFI. SECAD once again was successful and will manage the CFI from 2019 to 2021.

safefood is an all-island organisation set up to promote awareness and knowledge of food safety and nutrition issues on the island of Ireland. Since 2016, SECAD Partnership has delivered **safefood's**

Community Food Initiative (CFI) to positively influence the eating habits of low-income families and to identify and promote best practice in communities.

On behalf of **safefood**, SECAD works with 14 community-based organisations across the Island of Ireland – 5 in Northern Ireland and 9 in the Republic of Ireland. Each of these organisations (CFI Leaders) has a 'social inclusion' focus and experience of working with local communities. SECAD supports CFI Leaders to act as champions for the CFI in their area, to develop strategic links with key agencies and to deliver a combination of large-scale workshops and smaller initiatives with target groups.

Windfarm Community Benefit Funds

Since 2014, SECAD has had the role of Grant Making Organisation for a number of commercial entities across Ireland to administer their Windfarm Community Benefit Funds across the island of Ireland. The aim of the Windfarm Community Benefit Funds is to 'make a contribution to local community activities'. SECAD is currently contracted to the ESB, Coillte, the NTR and Innogy to manage their Windfarm Community Benefit Funds.

SECAD began in 2014 with 9 funds, increasing to 15 funds in 2018. SECAD's role involves liaising with community representatives in the vicinity

of windfarms, forming local Community Liaison Committees / Advisory Panels where necessary, advertising the fund, managing the grant application process, screening and assessing of fund applications, presenting project recommendations to the funders, managing and distributing grants to successful applicants and preparing reports and other documentation required by the funders. SECAD also provides capacity building supports to community groups / potential applicants in the area of benefit of those windfarms.

Wild Work

SECAD has a long history of involvement in environmental projects and initiatives. SECAD was actively involved in the consultations undertaken as part of the development of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and is one of only a few community based organisations in Ireland who are recognised in the plan as being actively involved in the promotion of biodiversity.

Wild Work is a unique initiative developed by SECAD with biodiversity at its heart. Wild Work supports those who are committed to helping nature and has a particular focus on connecting business, biodiversity and local communities. Wild Work also supports the work of both local and national organisations involved in the conservation and protection of our natural environment.

Wild Work supports employment activation, providing work experience for people interested in this type of work and also employs workers (short term contracts)

who have been long term unemployed to undertake the physical works e.g. creation of wildflower meadows to support pollinators, etc.

Awareness raising, training, technical support and physical works are among the services provided by Wild Work, to promote biodiversity. This may involve awareness raising and training for communities and employees of industries in the area, technical support e.g. supporting industries and community groups to develop biodiversity action plans and physical work on public and private land.

SECAD has provided services to a range of bodies and organisations in the area e.g. Cork County Council, Cork Airport, local Tidy Towns organisations, Pfizer Ireland Pharmaceuticals, Midleton/Fermoy Garda Youth Division, Hovione Cork, Dairygold, GSK, Crann Centre, Glenilen Farm Ltd., and PJ Hegarty among others.

Community Sponsorship Ireland (CSI)

Community Sponsorship Ireland is a pilot initiative that has been put in place by the Department of Justice & Equality to support local communities who want to assist Syrian refugee families arriving in Ireland, who have been granted official refugee status and asylum here. These families are currently based in UN refugee camps in countries such as Lebanon and are urgently awaiting resettlement.

The Initiative enables communities to offer practical supports to the Syrian family upon their arrival in Ireland and to embrace them as part of the local community through housing and other social

supports, including assisting the family to engage in Ireland's educational and social life and become part of the wider community. The aim of the programme is that, by the end of the 18-month initiative, the lives of the refugee family are stabilised enough to live independently without additional community supports.

The Department of Justice & Equality invited SECAD to become part of this pilot initiative. SECAD's role is to provide assistance and support to community groups wishing to be part of the initiative and to guide them through the process.

Community Development Initiative (CDI)

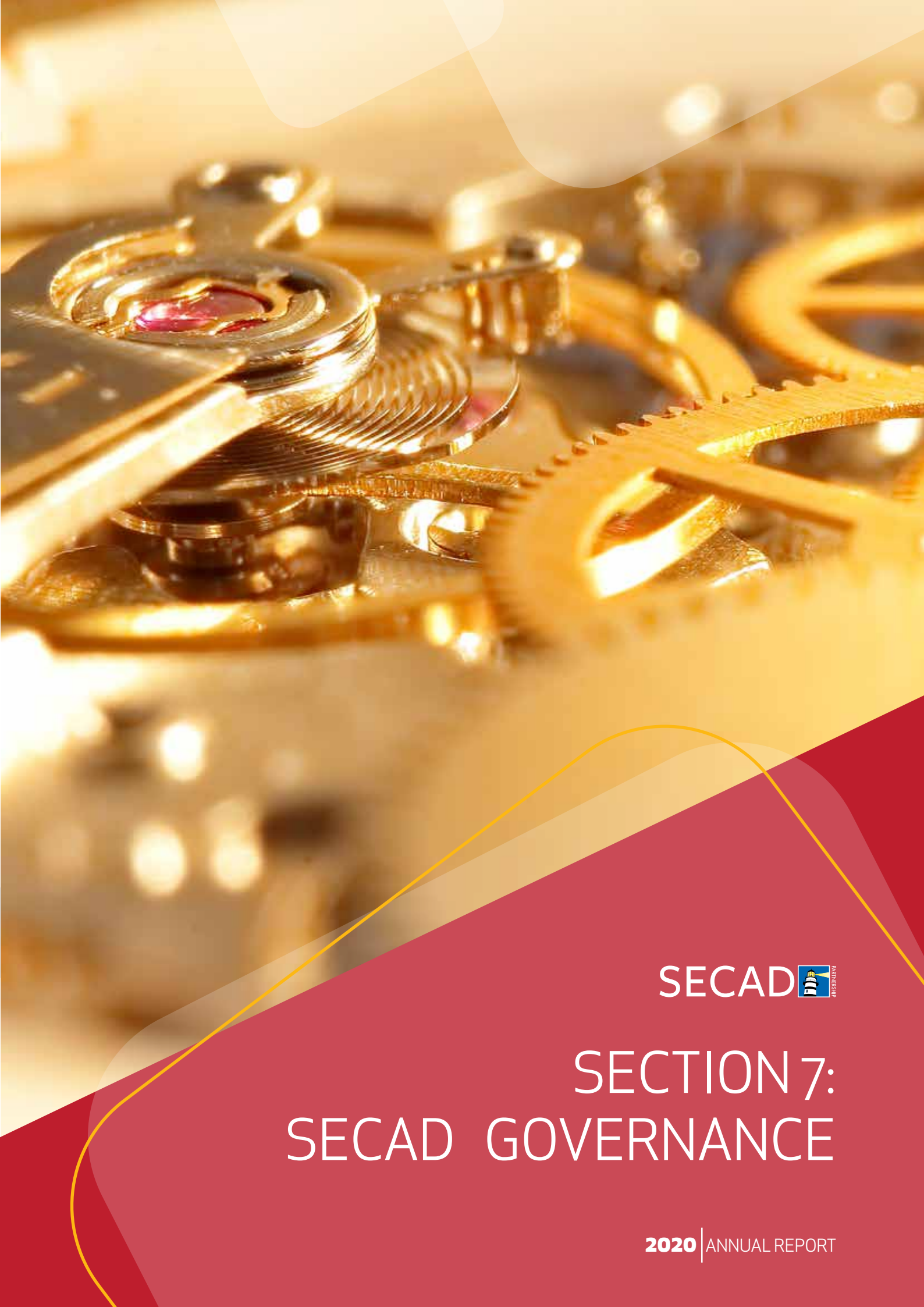
The Community Development Initiative (CDI) is a programme developed by Cork County Council in partnership with LEADER Implementing Bodies across the County of Cork and its three Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs). SECAD is a LEADER Implementing Body for LEADER South Cork and LEADER West Cork.

The CDI value is €500,000 per year for the period 2018-2022. The funds are to be distributed periodically (e.g. every two to three years) over the seven years so that the level of funding in each 'call for projects' will be substantial.

The aim of this scheme is to fund local community development with small scale capital projects to

a minimum of €1,000 and a maximum of €25,000 per project, to improve the range and/or quality of community-based facilities within Cork County communities, thus leading to a better quality of life.

Starting in 2019, the first three years of the fund (valued at €1.5m) will be distributed to projects across the county. During this period, SECAD managed circa 130 applications, preparing them for evaluation by the LCDC. Thereafter all projects awarded funding within SECAD's LEADER catchment areas (South and West Cork) will have their claims processed by SECAD. Payments processed and approved by SECAD will then be awarded their grants by Cork County Council.



SECAD 

SECTION 7: SECAD GOVERNANCE

2020 | ANNUAL REPORT

SECAD Governance

SECAD Partnership CLG is a not-for-profit, community-led organisation with charitable status. SECAD strives to ensure that it operates to the highest standards through, for example, implementing the 'Governance Code for Charities' which sets out a wide range of checks and counter-checks to ensure that proper systems and procedures for the management of funding, private and public, are maintained.

SECAD also invests in the governance skills of our Board and staff each year. SECAD continues to invest in technology to protect our processing of financial and personal data adopting appropriate policies, practices and systems to record and store all information gathered as part of our work.

The following people are central to the management and operations of SECAD Partnership CLG.

Our Board Members 2020

Our Board Members 2020

- Patrick Cronin
- Gerard Mac Mahon
- Maurice Smiddy
- Michael Walley
- Cllr Deirdre Forde
- Damian Craven
- Steven Foott
- Edmund Stack
- Don Stockley

Officers of the Board

- Michael Walley (Chairperson)
- Gerard MacMahon (Vice-Chairperson)
- Damian Craven (Treasurer)

Project Evaluation Committee

- Mark O'Keeffe
- Christy O'Sullivan
- Tom Hughes
- Anthony Barry
- Oliver Sheehan
- Michael McCarthy
- Denis Ring
- Adrienne Harrington
- Caroline Gallagher
- Harry Bollard
- Mary Hickey Griffin
- Sinead Morgan
- Susan Gallagher
- Joe Burke (LEO South Cork)
- Deirdre O'Mahony (LEO West Cork)
- Sean O'Callaghan Cork County Council (LEO South & West Cork)

Our Team 2020

Management Team

- Ryan Howard - CEO
- Suzanne Kearney - Assistant CEO and Operations Manager
- Laura Mason - Administration & Finance Manager and Company Secretary
- Toni McCaul - Strategy & Programme Manager

Finance & Administration Team

- Clare Walsh
- Elaine Barrett
- Magdalena Bosiacka
- Anne Coughlan
- Miriam Montagne
- Li Chai
- Catherine Scully
- Eilish Walsh

Development Officers – Enterprise, Employment and Community

- Nuala O' Connell
- Elga Ryan
- Sinéad Conroy
- Katie Kearns
- Danielle Sheehy

- Kieran Butler
- Frances Doyle
- Margaret Hartigan
- Vicki Kelly
- Cora O' Donnell
- William O' Halloran
- Karen Loxton
- Finbarr Wallace
- Donna Cleary
- Tara Doyle
- Tanya Fitzgerald

Tús Community Work Placements and Rural Social Scheme Supervisors

- P.J. Dennehy (Co-Ordinator)
- Frances Burke
- Declan Barron
- Noel Costello
- Joe Dilworth
- Aoife Fouhy
- Eilish Hurley
- Magdalena McLeod
- Barry O'Sullivan
- Mark O'Connell
- Billy Mulqueen

Summary of SECAD Financial Accounts for 2020

SECAD Partnership CLG

(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having Share Capital)

Income & Expenditure Account Financial year ended 31 December 2020

2020

Operating Income	€3,007,830
Operating Expenditure	(€3,009,134)
Deficit of Income over Expenditure	(€1,304)

Balance Sheet As at 31 December 2020

2019

Fixed assets

Tangible assets	€80,710
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Current assets

Debtors	€263,866
Cash at bank and in hand	€1,449,712
	€1,713,578

Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(€937,267)
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Net current assets	€857,021
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Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(€18,491)
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Net assets	€838,530
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Charity Funds

Restricted funds	€131,352
Unrestricted funds	€707,178

Total Charity Funds	€838,530
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Notes

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Notes

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2020 Annual Report

Highlights & Impacts

SECAD Partnership,
Owennacurra Business Park,
Knockgriffin,
Midleton,
Co. Cork

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 www.facebook.com/secadcork

www.secad.ie