



The Irish LEADER Network

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National Coordinator

What is The Irish LEADER Network ?

- Comhar LEADER na hEireann
The Irish LEADER Network is a network of 36 Local Action Groups. It operates within a legal co-operative framework, underpinned by a co-operative philosophy and mission.

The Irish LEADER Network

Mission Statement

- 'We in The Irish LEADER Network, are a network of local groups, dedicated to the promotion of sustainable rural communities and the preservation of rural fabric; providing the highest quality of services to our rural people; whose members develop as individuals and perform all tasks with pride and diligence'

The Irish LEADER Network's *Primary Aim*

- is acting in union with the member groups and with other relevant interests, to promote innovative models for local integrated rural development and to shape new policies at Irish and European level to underpin these models.

The Irish LEADER Network's *Principles*

In acting to achieve its aim The Network will be guided by the following principles:

- **The Irish LEADER Network** has a strategic role to play in focusing Irish and European rural development policies to adopt a comprehensive approach to rural development and the promotion of social inclusion.

- **The tackling of social exclusion and the promotion of the rights of rural people are essential elements in overcoming rural problems.**
- **The active participation and enablement of rural communities in programmes designed for their betterment is essential in rural development.**

- Collaboration between all sectors and agencies concerned with rural issues is critical to the promotion of rural development.
- Excellence at all levels within LEADER Projects, in terms of effective use of resources, prioritisation of work, and development of effective impact strategies, is key to ensuring the success of LEADER and the Network's rural development policies.

ACTIVITIES of the Irish LEADER Network

- Voluntary Elected Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer)
- Successful Working Groups of Council Membership
- Monthly Meetings at central and other venues
- National Coordinator
- National Small Food Coordinator
- Support of the Presidency of ELARD
- Attendance and Strong Presence at National Events
- National Lobby Group
- European Lobby Group
- Representation on Strategic Government Programmes
- Representation on International Funding Agency
- Representation on Developing World Irish Organisation
- Regular Planning Meetings and Consultation with Irish LEADER Technical Support Unit.
- Regular Contact and meetings with Minister for Community Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs
- Regular Consultation by Government Ministers and Civil Servants

MEMBERSHIP AND FUNDING

- **The Irish LEADER Network** is funded from the subscriptions of its members and the **Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs**.
- The organisation represents the network of LEADER Local Action Groups and promotes any other entity that works in favour of rural development

NATIONAL RURAL **DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY** **2007-2013**

The Irish LEADER Network contribution to the Irish Rural Development Strategy was framed after a most extensive consultation process with its members. It reflects the broad consensus in the consultation process as to the future rural development needs of the country.

It is a vital time for rural development in Ireland and we have a significant role to play in revitalizing and maintaining rural communities with support for social and economic development.

The Irish LEADER Network has a strong working relationship with the Irish LEADER Support Unit, (Officially known at present in the EU as the Official LEADER Network) and promotes this twin track approach for the development of LEADER throughout Europe.

The Irish LEADER Network will:

Continue to promote innovative models for local integrated rural development and will also continue it's commitment in shaping new policies at Irish and European level with the assistance of the Irish LEADER Technical Support Unit.