

Wexford County Development Board

Social Inclusion Measures

Working Group

**Paper Assessing Service Provision for
Traveller Families in County Wexford**

September 2003

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1. BACKGROUND

This working paper has been prepared for the Social Inclusion Measures Working Group (SIM) of the Wexford County Development Board. The SIM is a core-working group of the Wexford County Development Board. Arising out of the Report of the Task Force on the Integration of Local Government and Local Development Systems (August 1998), which was endorsed by Government, the County/City Development Boards (CDBs) were mandated to bring about a more co-ordinated approach to the provision of public and local development services, at local level.

In relation to social inclusion, the Task Force considered that the CDB is the most effective mechanism for the co-ordination of social inclusion measures at local level. In its report of May 2000 on the co-ordination of social measures the Task Force specifically asked all CDB's to establish Social Inclusion Measures Co-ordination working groups (SIM Working Groups).

The objective of the SIM is to examine the targeting of resources towards socially disadvantaged groups within the county. The aim is to achieve greater co-ordination in terms of programme delivery and thus provide the highest possible quality of service at given levels of resources.

The work of the SIM also underpins a number of objectives within the County Development Board Strategy 'Remodelling the Model County'.

Context

The following socially excluded target groups were prioritised by the SIM group for analysis of service provision and recommendations regarding better integration and improved service delivery:

1. Traveller Families
2. Refugee & Asylum Seekers
3. Older People
4. People with Disabilities
5. Children at Risk
6. Unemployed People
7. Rural Communities
8. Lone Parents

This is the first of eight papers assessing service provision for socially excluded target groups in County Wexford. The paper provides baseline data regarding Traveller Families and details of the interventions supplied by each agency. Recommendations are made towards service gaps and improved service delivery to the County Development Board.

2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Introduction

Irish Travellers are a distinct minority group in Irish society. The present National Traveller population is about 30,000 people comprising less than 1% of the total population in Ireland. For Travellers belonging to a distinct social group means that they have a common ancestry, share fundamental cultural values and traditions, have a language of their own and are seen by themselves and others as distinct and different. When planning and implementing appropriate responses to identified needs it is important that agencies and organisations recognise the distinct culture and identity of the Traveller community. According to the guidelines on Traveller Education in Primary Schools the following are characteristics of the Traveller community in Ireland.

Common Ancestry A person is born a Traveller, one simply cannot become a Traveller. Generally Travellers marry within the group and to be described as a Traveller an individual must have at least one Traveller parent.

Cultural Values and Traditions Nomadism has been described as a core value of Traveller culture. This does not necessarily imply the intention to keep travelling. Nomadism is a way of looking at the world, a different way of perceiving things, a different attitude to accommodation, to work and to life in general. Maintaining family ties and linking with the extended family are central to the Traveller way of life. Traveller culture also includes a tradition of self employment, occupational flexibility and economic adaptation. A strong faith and distinctive customs regarding death and marriage are an important part of Traveller life.

Much of Traveller history is largely unrecorded, there has been an oral transmission of culture from generation to generation. Travellers storytelling, singing and music tradition are strong facets of their culture.

Language Travellers have a language of their own. The academic name for the language is Shelta; Travellers call it Gammon or Cant.

Distinct and Different Due to Travellers common ancestry, cultural values and other aspects of their lifestyle, Travellers are seen by themselves as distinct and different. Like other ethnic groups their relationship with settled society illustrates a pattern of discrimination and exclusion.

National Context

The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform in 1998 established a monitoring committee of the 1995 Task Force Report on the Travelling Community. This Report represented the first major study on the situation of Travellers in Ireland. In 2001 the first report of the monitoring committee was launched. The report points out that improvements on the ground for Travellers have been disappointing. However a number of positive developments have taken place which aim to improve the quality of life of the Traveller community, these are:

- A national strategy for Traveller Accommodation was adopted in 1996 followed by the establishment of a dedicated Traveller Accommodation unit in the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. (DEHLG)
- To oversee the implementation of the strategy a National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Group was set up under the DEHLG. In 1999 this

group was established on a statutory basis as the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

- The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act was enacted in 1998.
- Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees (LTACC) were subsequently established in each local authority area. The Housing Department – Wexford County Council is responsible for the LTACC in the County.
- In early 2000 local authorities adopted their five year local Traveller Accommodation Plans
- A Traveller Health Advisory Committee was established in the Department of Health and Children (DHC) in 1998.
- A Traveller Health Unit was established in each of the health boards.
- The National Traveller Health Strategy 2002 to 2005 was launched last year.
- A co-ordinating committee on Traveller Education was formed in the Department of Education and Science (DES).
- An advisory committee on Traveller Education was established in 1998
- The visiting teacher service was expanded 1999- 2000
- Other developments in Education which will have a positive impact on Travellers education are the Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.
- Recent legislative changes to outlaw discrimination were introduced. The Employment Equality Act 1998 provides legal protection against harassment and discrimination in the workplace on 9 grounds including membership of the Traveller community. The Equal Status Act 2000 protects against harassment and discrimination outside the workplace. Both acts are supported by the establishment of the Equality Authority and the Office of the Director of Equality Investigation
- The work of Traveller organisations in building links with the settled community
- The inclusion of Travellers in the Community Development Support Programme which includes South West Wexford CDP, New Ross CDP, Templeshannon CDP, FAB CDP, and core funded groups of Wolfe Tone Women’s Group, Access 2000 and the South East Men’s Network. Also the inclusion of Travellers as part of the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme has allowed for targeting of resources at local level to the Traveller Community. In County Wexford the LDSIP has two Partnerships the County Wexford Partnership and the Wexford Area Partnership. More recently the national RAPID provincial towns strand II programme has been allocated to New Ross and Wexford town to combat social exclusion.
- The recent development of a National Action Plan Against Racism

At national level a number of initiatives have been put in place to support the work of agencies operating at local level to combat social exclusion for the Traveller Community. However Travellers and organisations supporting Travellers such as Pavee Point and the Irish Traveller Movement have expressed particular concerns regarding recent controversial legislation such as the Housing Act 2002, which was introduced without consultation. This Act allows gardai to remove caravans and the owners to be charged with trespass with a fine and/or imprisonment on conviction. The Control of Horses Act, 1996 was necessary to deal with genuine concerns and dangers arising from wandering horses. Traveller support groups have stated the need to examine options to accommodate horses which are an important part of Traveller culture.

3. LOCAL CONTEXT: COUNTY WEXFORD

Baseline Data

The lack of good quality data on Travellers is a major obstacle to monitoring and assessing progress of initiatives on the ground. The availability of reliable information on an annual basis on the numbers of Travellers in all levels of education, in employment and training, or accessing health services is vital if progress in relation to Travellers is to be measured properly. The inclusion in the recent national census of population of a question aimed at documenting information on the Traveller community in Ireland for the first time is a welcomed step.

The most up to date information on Travellers in the County is available from the annual accommodation census completed by Wexford County Council. The latest data available is from the 2002 census.

County Wexford has one of the highest populations of indigenous Traveller families in Ireland with 354 Traveller Families. This represents an increase of 20 families from the previous year. As Table 1 illustrates a significant number of Traveller families are based in the New Ross (132) and Enniscorthy (113) electoral areas.

Table No 1., Number of Traveller Families-Wexford County Council 2002

Area	Number of Families	Change (2001)
Wexford	79	2+
New Ross	132	8+
Enniscorthy	113	6+
Gorey	30	4+
Total	354	20+

Families with Accommodation

The number of families living in houses and serviced halting sites is shown in the following tables.

Table No. 2., Number of Families Housed

Area	LA Housing	Group Housing	Private Housing	Voluntary Housing	Total
Wexford	32	0	21	1	54
New Ross	29	1	38	0	68
Enniscorthy	22	13	26	2	63
Gorey	11	0	7	0	18
Total	94	14	92 (16*)	3	203

**16 of 92 private houses purchased with LA assistance*

The highest numbers of families housed are within New Ross and Enniscorthy but the figure for Wexford is proportionately higher given the lower number of families in that electoral area.

Table No. 3., Number of families Living on Serviced Halting Sites

Area	Serviced Halting Site	Change
Wexford	0	/
New Ross	12	-1
Enniscorthy*	9	/
Gorey	0	/
Total	21	-1

*** 3 bays at Marshalstown and 6 bays at Bunclody**

Serviced halting sites within the County are located at Enniscorthy and New Ross only.

Families without Accommodation

According to the Wexford County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme 2000-2004 the existing locations of Traveller Families who are living

- by the roadside
- at unofficial and unserviced sites
- in yards of houses
- in overcrowded conditions in houses with relatives

highlights the urgent need for suitable accommodation for many of these families. At the time the plan was launched 149 families in the County required accommodation. Table 4 illustrates that the number of families in 2002 requiring accommodation is 127. Some 15 of these currently live in roadside caravans. The majority live in caravans and yards of relatives houses.

Table No. 4., Profile of Families without Accommodation

Area	Sharing Unit	Living - Yards of Houses	Legally parked private sites	Living on Traditional sites	Roadside Caravans	Total
Wexford	8	10	5	0	0	23 (+2)
New Ross	4	24	6	0	11	45 (+6)
Enniscorthy	6	30	0	10	1	47 (-3)
Gorey	2	4	3	0	3	12 (+3)
Total	20	68	14	10	15	127 (+8)

Agency Specific Programmes

This component of the paper has been prepared on the basis of information submitted to the SIM group by the respective agencies.

FAS

FAS have a number of specific initiatives for Travellers in addition to their mainstream programmes. Specific programmes are outlined below.

Table No. 5., FAS Service Provision for Traveller Families

Programmes	Duration	Partners	Numbers	Location(s)	Funding Source/ Cost	Staff Time
Community Employment	ongoing	Credo & others	20	New Ross Taghmon Clonroche	FAS €220,000	N/A
Primary Health Care Project	Nov 2002- on	SEHB VEC CWP	15	New Ross	FAS €40,000	N/A
Community Response Programme	March 01 – Jan 03	WAP SEHB	3 remaining	Wexford Town Taghmon	FAS €32,000 in 2002	N/A

In addition to direct costs of training programmes individual trainees receive a training allowance.

Particular challenges observed include

- Retaining male Travellers in programmes of any kind
- Achieving progression into the workplace.

County Wexford Partnership (CWP)

CWP operate a number of non-specific programmes, which are open to travellers;

- o Local Employment Service
- o Mediation Service

Specific programmes are outlined below;

Table No. 6., County Wexford Partnership Service Provision for Traveller Families

Programmes	Duration	Partners	Numbers	Location(s)	Funding Source / Costs	Staff Time
Primary Health Care	Nov 2002-on	SEHB FAS DSFA VEC	15	New Ross	CWP €132,000 -approx	N/A
Social Economy	Mar. 2002-on	Templeshannon CDG	50	Enniscorthy Bunclody New Ross	SISP €6350	N/A
Gailia Leanbh	Jan 2002	New Ross CDG Family Life Services	11	New Ross	Non financial	One meeting per month

Childcare Training	2003	Traveller Resource Centre	12	New Ross	CWP €8,000	Technical support as needed
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CWP had funding in place for a dedicated traveller worker but were unable to recruit.

Wexford County Council

Local Authority programmes are mainly of a capital nature concentrating on the provision of accommodation. Support programmes are delivered primarily through the 5 members of the social work team. Each member of the social work team works with Travellers to a varying extent. Generally funding for support programmes is secured elsewhere mainly through the VEC and CWP. Current programmes include:

- Involvement in management committee of New Ross Primary Health Care Project
- New Ross Traveller After School Programme providing children's activity session at New Ross halting site
- Women's group at New Ross Halting Site

The other significant support programme, which the Local Authority has developed, was the Traveller Arts programme. This was based in Bunclody and ran very successfully from 1996 to 2000. However it was not possible to secure funding to extend and mainstream the programme.

The majority of Local Authority spend is in accommodation provision. This is through the ongoing capital programme. This involves the provision of 4 group housing schemes and also the provision and maintenance of the 3 existing halting sites. Furthermore 10% of houses in each new Local Authority housing scheme are offered to Travellers. However there are a number of areas in which Travellers do not wish to be housed and so the 10% allocation is not taken up in those areas. The Local Authority also has a full-time Traveller accommodation officer for Travellers.

The Wexford County Council Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee is a statutory social partnership structure established under the Traveller Accommodation Act, 1998. Its membership is drawn from the Travelling community and representatives, council officials and public representatives. The committee played a very successful part in developing the Traveller accommodation plan, Table No. 9. Wexford County Council approved this plan in 2002.

Existing halting site accommodation is provided as shown in Table No. 7.

Table No. 7., Halting Site Accommodation

Area	Location	Number of Units
New Ross	New Ross	12
Enniscorthy	Marshalstown	3
Bunclody	Bunclody	6

Group Housing Scheme provision is shown in Table No. 8

Table No. 8., Group Housing Accommodation

Area	Location	Number of Units
New Ross	New Ross- Hewtland	4
New Ross	Clonleigh	2
Enniscorthy	Drumgoold	12
Bunclody	Bunclody	6

Table No. 9., Traveller Specific Accommodation Proposals; 2003.

Electoral Areas	Units	Accommodation	Status
ENNISCORTHY			
Cherryorchard	8 Houses	Group Housing Scheme	Layout plan has been designed and has been supported by the Enniscorthy Area Committee
Kilcannon	6 Chalets	Residential Caravan Park	Lands zoned. Layout Plan Designed CPO being investigated
*Edermine	6 Chalets	Residential Caravan Park	Vary Development Plan In planning process
Wood Road, Bunclody	6 Houses	Group Housing Scheme	6 Completed & Occupied
Ballynastraw, Bunclody	6 Bays	Temporary Halting Site	To be reviewed
WEXFORD			
Taghmon	3 Houses	Group Housing Scheme	Identify site for 2 houses. Site for 1 house acquired
Park	7 Houses	Group Housing Scheme	Layout Plan to be designed.
*Coolcotts	6 Chalets	Residential caravan Park	Vary Development Plan In planning process
*Kilcorral, Castlebridge	10 Bays	Transient caravan Park	Vary Development Plan In planning process
NEW ROSS			
Clonleigh	2 Houses	Group Housing Scheme	Completed
Ballagh, Clonroche	4 Houses	Group Housing Scheme	1 house completed & occupied 3 houses will be completed end of October 2003
Hewittsland	4 Houses	Group Housing	Completed
*Castlemoyle	6 Chalets 6 Houses	Residential Caravan Park and Group Housing Scheme	Vary Development Plan In planning process
GOREY			
*Creagh	6	Residential	Vary Development Plan

	Chalets	Caravan Park	In planning process
Arklow Road	4 Bays	Temporary Halting Site	Identify site
Ferns	2 Houses	Group Housing Scheme	Identify site

County Wexford VEC

Key VEC programmes are the Traveller Training Centre in New Ross, Youthreach programmes, the Primary Health Care Programme - New Ross and funding to Templeshannon CDP for range of support programmes. Other key initiatives are literacy programmes and the FAS advocate worker.

Table No. 10., County Wexford VEC Service Provision for Traveller Families

Programmes	Duration	Partners	Numbers	Location(s)	Funding Source / Costs	Staff Time
Traveller Training Centre	ongoing	Dept Education and Science	30	New Ross	Dept Education and Science	Full-time
Youthreach	ongoing	As above	10	Enniscorthy, New Ross & Wexford	Dept Education and Science	F/T
Primary Health Care Programme	2 years	SEHB FAS SWWCDP	14	Ramsgrange	Dept Education and Science	P/T 20 hours per week
Support funding to Templeshannon CDG	ongoing	N/A	N/A	Enniscorthy	€8,959 to date Dept Education and Science	N/A

Particular challenges observed include

- Lack of outreach workers within VEC
- Difficulty in engaging male travellers to participate in programmes

South Eastern Health Board

Key inputs are the range of supports provided by Social Workers, Community Welfare Officers, Community Development Workers and all Public Health Nurses work with Travellers in their geographic area. The main focus of the SEHB in relation to service provision for Travellers are:

- To improve the health and social well being of the Traveller community in County Wexford.
- To encourage active partnership and participation of Travellers and their representatives organisations in determining health priorities for their community and in the decision-making that accompanies the allocation of resources.

Actions by the SEHB:

- To identify and maintain a register of members of the Travelling community in Co. Wexford.
- Improve access of the Travelling community to mainstream health and social care facilities and services through the intervention of the Public Health Nurse (PHN) for Travellers. The PHN also ensures where possible that Travellers have access to information and properly utilise medications and special diets prescribed by General Practitioners and Hospitals, as literacy is a major difficulty for the adult traveller population.
- Two Traveller women sit on the Traveller Health Committee. Four Travellers sit on the Steering Committee of the Primary Health Care Project. Two Travellers are represented on the Management Committee of the Primary Health Care Project. One Traveller is represented on the Traveller Health Unit Committee.
- The Public Health Nurse liaises with other relevant personnel including Local Authority, Social Workers, Teachers, Community Development Workers, Housing, Voluntary Organisations and the Health Board.
- To promote health and well-being of Traveller women on a one to one basis and in groups. This often involves the use of videos appropriate to Traveller needs.
- To develop the Primary Health Care Project for 14 traveller women in the New Ross area. The aim is to educate 14 Traveller women in order that they can promote health standards in a holistic way to their own peers. Partners: Women from the Travelling community, FAS, CWP, DSFA, VEC, South West Wexford CDP
- In conjunction with Family Life Services, the Public Health Nurse carries out pre marriage courses for Traveller couples intending to marry. Included in the days programme are violence, sexuality and interpersonal relationships.
- Setting up a Children's Activity Group.
- Setting up a homework support group for Traveller children in Marshmeadows Halting Site
- The SEHB has identified gaps in health services through a health status study of Traveller families under the headings of :
 - Immunisations
 - Attendance at 9 month development checks
 - Hospitalisation of children in first year of life and reasons for it.
 - Family Planning and methods used.
 - Housing Needs & Facilities

- Refuse Collection
- Identify Health Problems in families and how it affected their general activities of daily living
- Alcohol and Smoking
- Baby feeding
- Nutrition
- Dental care
- Safety in the home and around the home
- Exercise
- Women's Health: Cervical Smear Screening, Breast self examination, Anti-natal and post natal care

The outcome of the Health Status Study showed that the uptake of immunisations was 35.55% and developmentals 22.2%. Outreach clinics were set up in areas where there were large numbers of Traveller families. As a result developmental status increased to 92.66% and immunisation status to 69.72%. Special dental clinics were set up for all 12 year old Traveller children where assessments took place and subsequent follow-up.

All the above initiatives are on-going at present. Future Actions:

- The Public Health Nurse with a member of South East Men's Network and the Chaplain for the Travelling Community have prepared and submitted a proposal for funding to the SEHB for a Men's Health Programme for one area of the county.
- Eight Traveller men and women have completed a two day programme in Traveller Culture. It is envisaged that Traveller Culture Training will be available to all SEHB staff in the near future, once funds become available.

Specific Programmes are;

Table No. 11., South Eastern Health Board Service Provision for Traveller Families

Programmes	Duration	Partners	Numbers	Location(s)	Funding Source / Costs	Staff Time
Public Health Nurse for Travellers	Ongoing	Travellers	Population of County	Countywide	Full-time PHN	Full-time PHN
New Ross Primary Health Care Programme	Ongoing	Travellers FAS CWP DSFA VEC	14	South West Wexford New Ross Ramsgrange	Full-time PHN Community Development 20/hrs/week Administrator 7/hrs/week	Full-time PHN

The New Ross Primary Health Care Programme provides training for 14 Travellers to work as home carers in their own environment.

Particular challenges observed include

- The SEHB believe that the allocation of one dedicated Public Health Nurse for Travellers per county within the board does not reflect the significant Traveller population in County Wexford.

Wexford Area Partnership

WAP delivers the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme in the geographic area covering Wexford town and rural surrounds. The Partnership has included a dedicated Travelling Community Programme as part of its strategic plan for the period 2000 – 2006, the aim is to focus on

- capacity-building for self-representation amongst Travellers in the WAP area
- creating informed awareness about Traveller culture within the settled community
- co-ordinating responses appropriate to needs.

In 2000/2001, WAP, with funding from FAS, developed and delivered a Community Response Training Programme. Research into early childhood learning needs was also conducted by participants on the training programme. One participant on this course successfully completed the UCC Diploma Course in Community Development and subsequently found employment in this field. Two other Traveller women were supported to complete the Certificate course. A Traveller Education Strategy was also developed by WAP in consultation with community members and service providers.

WAP also supports the Taghmon Traveller Resource Centre and associated groups and projects, and has supported a Traveller Homework Club in Coolcotts and a Women's Group in Wexford town. Other services provided by WAP actively target members of the Travelling community. These include the Employment Guidance Network, the Cornmarket Project (Substance misuse), IT training and Enterprise Support.

During 2002, WAP developed a proposal to initiate an inter-agency approach to addressing identified social and developmental needs of the Travelling community in its geographic area. WAP negotiated the involvement and support of a variety of agencies and secured funding to develop an integrated programme of supports illustrated in Table 12. The structure and content of this programme models the co-ordinated approach to Social Inclusion measures which SIM is seeking to see implemented on a countywide basis.

The agencies concerned are as follows: National Association of Traveller Centres, Department of Social and Family Affairs, FAS, County Wexford VEC, Wexford Borough Council, Wexford County Council, the South-Eastern Health Board and WAP itself. The implementation of this programme commenced in the final quarter of 2002. It is anticipated that this project will ultimately lead to the mainstreaming of integrated supports and the development of a voice within the Travelling community in the WAP geographic area.

Specific programmes are;

Table No. 12., Wexford Area Partnership Service Provision for Traveller Families.

Programmes	Specific actions	Duration	Partners	Project Numbers	Location(s)	Funding source	Staff time
Establishment and facilitation of Inter-agency Working Group; Development of an integrated Community Support Programme (<i>see below</i>)	Initiation and co-ordination of a long-term inter-agency approach, which provides for more focused development work supporting the Travelling community in the Wexford area.	Ongoing	WAP, National Association of Traveller Centres (NATC); DSFA, FAS, VEC, Wexford Borough Council, Wexford County Council, SEHB	n/a	WAP geographic area	WAP (Local Dev. Social Inclusion Prog.)	Part of the brief of full-time Equal Opportunities Programme Manager
	Programme development and staff support.	Ongoing	As above.	n/a	WAP geographic area	WAP (Local Dev. Social Inclusion Prog.)	Part of the brief of full-time Community Development Programme Manager
1. Community Links Training Programme	Delivery of a full-time training programme to Traveller women, covering health, community development, practical skills and career planning.	Oct 03 – Oct 04	FAS, VEC,	8 participants, acting as outreach workers in their own communities	Wexford town	FAS, DSFA, VEC, Wexford County Council, WAP	Full-time Training Co-ordinator; Outreach work by Adult Worker

	Outreach through practical projects developed by participants within their own community.	Oct 03 – Oct 04		15	Wexford town	As above	Full-time Training Co-ordinator; Outreach work by Adult Worker
2. Youth Development Programme	Development of Taghmon Traveller After-schools Club	Ongoing	Traveller parents, Taghmon Traveller Resource Centre worker and users, Taghmon National School, Visiting Teacher for Travellers, Taghmon Action Group (TAG), Wexford Education Network	12 young people 8 parents	Taghmon	NATC, WAP, DSFA	Full-time Youth Development Worker supported by WAP Education Co-ordinator
	Development of Youth Project targeted at Travellers	Ongoing	Traveller families and youth, FDYS, FAB CDP, Youthreach, VTT other Statutory services, TAG, School Completion Programme	8 young people	Wexford Town, Taghmon	NATC, WAP	Full-time Youth Development Worker
	Promote educational materials and opportunities within Traveller families	Ongoing	Traveller children and families, Taghmon Traveller Resource Centre, VTT, Lifestart, Wexford Education Network, TAG	6 community contacts, outreaching to 20 families	Wexford Town, Taghmon	NATC, WAP	Full-time Youth Development Worker supported by WAP Education Co-ordinator

3. Adult Community Development Programme	Support to Taghmon Traveller Women's Group	Ongoing	Taghmon Traveller Resource Centre, TAG, VEC.	8	Taghmon	WAP, DSFA, VEC	Full-time Adult Worker
	Supporting outreach from Community Links Training Programme	Ongoing	FAS, Primary Health Care Project/SEHB	15	Wexford town	FAS, DSFA, WAP	Full-time Adult Worker, Training Co-ordinator
	Pre-development work with women and men in Wexford town	Ongoing	Access 2000	10	Wexford town	WAP, DSFA	Full-time Adult Worker
	Support to Literacy group in Taghmon	Ongoing	Taghmon Traveller Resource Centre, TAG, VEC Adult Literacy Service	6	Taghmon	WAP, VEC	Full-time Adult Worker, WAP Adult Education & Training Programme Officer

Particular challenges observed include

- Need to develop a co-ordinated focus on Traveller needs in Wexford and Taghmon, in order to boost confidence in the Travelling community and increase levels of participation.
- The provision of core-funding for Community Development-led responses will be essential to planning other actions (e.g. educational supports, group work etc.). In particular, sustained funding for dedicated Community Development workers and a co-ordinated and sustained approach to running costs (e.g. rent for/purchase of dedicated premises in Taghmon and Wexford town).
- Gulf between policy (and strategic planning) and practice in key areas such as accommodation, education and health – issues of under-resourcing and reluctance to tackle potentially controversial issues.

Community Development Sector

The various Community Development Programmes running in the County provide a number of Traveller specific supports. Specific Programmes are;

Table No. 13, Community Development Support Programme

Programmes	Duration	Partners	Numbers	Location(s)	Funding Source / Costs	Staff Time
Primary Health Care Programme	ongoing	Travellers FAS, CWP, DSFA, VEC		South West Wexford CDP		
Education Programmes FAB CDP						
Taghmon Resource Centre	Ongoing			Taghmon		
Transition year programmes		Visiting Teacher Service St. Senan's Primary School ADM		Templeshannon CDP		
Back to education initiative		Dept. Education & Science	10 Women	Templeshannon CDP		
Traveller participant in Community Education Certificate programme	ongoing		1	Templeshannon CDP		
Literacy				Templeshannon CDP		
Development work on application for core CDP funding	ongoing	Travellers New Ross CDP				

Particular challenges observed include

- Need for independent Traveller group to support continuing development of Traveller leadership.
- Pooling of resources and sharing of information to improve targeting of development initiatives
- Increasing secondary school attendance
- A Traveller Youth service for the North of the county; Gorey-Clonroche

- Greater linkages between the Local Authority Social Workers and specific Community Development Projects
- Specific enterprise, education & training programmes for Traveller men
- Development of a tenant participation programme
- Allocation of placement positions for participants on primary health care programme within Wexford Community Care
- Cultural Awareness Training for Public Service Providers

Department of Education and Science

The Department of Education and Science provides funding for two visiting Traveller teachers for the County. The second teacher for the North of the County will commence in September 2003. The visiting teacher supports Travellers to participate in education from preschool, primary and post primary level. Where the formal system is not appropriate to the needs of the Traveller the teacher links with other agencies to find alternative options for students such as youthreach.

Particular challenges observed include

- Alternatives for young boys who leave school early from 13 years of age up
- Transition from primary to post primary especially regarding literacy levels
- Early school leavers question value of education as no employment opportunities for Travellers, no evidence of successful Travellers in mainstream employment
- Need to investigate possibility of pilot summer work experience programme for young people
- Need for Department of Education and Science to have a policy on integrated preschool education as part of overall education programme

4. NEEDS ANALYSIS

It is widely acknowledged that Travellers experience acute marginalisation in Irish society and do not enjoy the same benefits in terms of education, healthcare and social services. Discrimination is a daily feature of their lives. Long term systematic exclusion has meant that Travellers rank the highest in any indicator of deprivation in Ireland (Framework 2002). The following section provides an analysis of the gaps in service provision and the priority needs identified in relation to Travellers in the County.

Traveller Community

- There are a number of pre development and capacity building initiatives happening throughout the County, which aim to improve the quality of life of the Travelling community in County Wexford. However analysis illustrates that this work is largely unco-ordinated and happens on an adhoc basis. There are a number of Traveller specific management groups active in the County such as the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee and the Primary Health Care Group. However, there is no co-ordinating forum/network on a County wide basis providing a multi sectoral approach to service provision for Travellers. WAP are piloting a multi sectoral approach to service provision for Travellers within their geographic area, which may provide important lessons for a County wide approach.
- There is limited research on Travellers in the County besides the accommodation census carried out by Wexford County Council and health studies by the SEHB. There is a need to pool information and resources to establish a county wide data analysis of Travellers needs in the County.
- Travellers find it difficult to participate in Irish society and are excluded from the decision making process. There is a need to support the Traveller voice and identity in the County. This action will require a designated community development worker.
- Mainstream service providers, elected representatives and the settled community have a limited understanding of the distinct culture and identity of the Traveller community. This lack of understanding of Traveller culture results in non-appropriate service provision and tensions in the community.
- Discrimination continues to be a barrier for Travellers.
- Travellers are concerned that they are losing their identity in Irish society. The Monitoring Committee TFTC have recommended that the Control of the Horses Act at national level should be reviewed to assist Travellers to comply with the conditions laid down in the legislation in a way that recognises the role of horses in Traveller culture.
- Predevelopment work is an essential strategy in targeting marginalised groups. There is a need for community development organisations across the County to pool their work, information and resources to develop a County predevelopment capacity building programme for Travellers.
- Travellers are not a homogenous group and service provision must take account of the specific needs of Travellers as individuals in their own right.
- Social opportunities are difficult to organise due to discrimination.

Accommodation

Recent legislation places a statutory obligation on the County Council regarding Traveller accommodation. However, this issue continues to be a priority need for Travellers. In reality one in every four Traveller families continue to live without access to water, toilets and refuse collection according to the Monitoring Committee for the Task Force 2000, which highlights the inadequate facilities.

- There is a continuing need to provide appropriate facilities and infrastructure for many Traveller families with accommodation provision. Wexford County Council has plans to provide a mix of Traveller accommodation in Edermine, Kilcorral, Coolcotts, and Creagh. However there is a need to provide appropriate infrastructure at these new sites in consultation with agencies, community organisations and Travellers. The provision of community/meeting space at Traveller accommodation sites would facilitate enhanced service provision and complimentary supports including women's groups, afterschools, training etc an example is the Marshmeadows in New Ross. There are concerns regarding the rate of progress being made in addressing accommodation needs.
- There needs to be stronger linkages between the LTACC and other service providers regarding accommodation, improved access to health services etc. Again a County wide Traveller Network would facilitate this multi sectoral approach.
- A number of community development organisations could provide supports to the County Council Traveller Accommodation programme regarding estate management initiatives. These include CDP's, Partnerships and voluntary housing organisations such as Respond and Cluid.

Health

The Travellers Health Status report 1987 commissioned by the Health Research Board gave rise to considerable concern about the health status of the Traveller community. Since 1987, no national studies have been conducted. However in Autumn 2003 the Department of Health and Children will hold a number of regional consultative meetings as part of the development of an All-Ireland Traveller Health Study. The study will provide an assessment of health needs as identified by Travellers and a measurement of the health status of Travellers. The following health issues have been identified

- Travellers of all ages have very high mortality rates compared to the rest of the Irish population and Travellers die about 15 years earlier than the general population. (DHSSPS 2002)
- Alcohol abuse, smoking, depression and suicide are priority health issues in the Traveller community.
- The Irish Sudden Infant Death Association 1999 found that the rate of Sudden Infant deaths among Travellers is twelve times the rate in the settled population
- There is a higher birth rate among Travellers with a fertility rate of 164.2 per 1000 women aged 15-49 compared to 70.1 for the overall population in 1987. In addition the age structure of Travellers has a high youth element. In 1996 14 was the median age of Travellers in comparison to the national figure of 31 years of age.

- There is no doubt that Travellers living conditions are probably the single greatest influence on health status.
- Poor access and information on health services

Education & Training

Considerable progress has been made in relation to Traveller education in recent years. This is evident in the greater take up of schooling, improved rates of attendance, more Traveller children continuing with education after compulsory attendance and more adults participating in programmes. However there is still a long way to go before Travellers can be regarded as having equality of access to education as education moves from segregation to integration. Pavee Point highlight that many parents feel that the experience of education for their children has improved compared to their own experiences. Although progress has been made in education many things have not changed however in relation to their children's educational outcome.

- Literacy is a significant barrier to Travellers, adult literacy is particularly low
- Early school leaving and educational disadvantage remain significant issues for Travellers. Many young Travellers find the transition from primary to post primary difficult. The most significant factor being literacy levels at age 8/9 years resulting in children constantly under pressure to catch up.
- Travellers distinct culture and identity is not reflected in the post primary curriculum
- There is very little work in the County on the integration of intercultural education
- Childcare must be provided to facilitate women to access education and training programmes
- Family support and home environment play a pivotal role in the success or failure of a child's education
- Lack of confidence due to negative experiences in the education system and poor literacy levels act as a deterrent to participating in education and training programmes
- Single people have their welfare payments managed by FAS as well as their training allowance. If a Traveller participant misses a day this is linked to their welfare payment, which is also cut. This is not an issue where a participant is a dependent of their spouse. This fear of loss of payments is a major barrier to Travellers participating on FAS supported training programmes
- Socially excluded groups have poor participation levels in third level education, this is particularly the case for Travellers
- Difficult to engage men in education and training programme activities

Employment

Travellers favour self employment and because of poor education and the fear of discrimination they avoid mainstream employment. One of the difficulties in measuring the progress of Travellers in mainstream employment is the lack of available statistics on Traveller employees. In this regard according to the Monitoring Committee on the TFTC FAS revised its application forms for training courses to include a question on Traveller status. FAS the statutory agency with responsibility for employment services assists Travellers as a distinct cohort in the labour market, requiring extra support and targeted programmes. It is estimated that 90% of Travellers are in receipt of welfare payments (Ryan, Traveller inclusion in the mainstream labour force)

- Many Travellers work in the black economy, with no formal support for Traveller economy
- Travellers involved in Casual trading have been greatly affected by the Casual Trading Act 1995
- Travellers have no visible presence in mainstream employment opportunities such as the civil service. Travellers that do access employment are mainly concentrated in professions within the voluntary sector e.g. youth and community work, childcare
- There is a need for enterprise and employment training for men
- Attitude of settled community prohibits access to jobs, discrimination hidden and blatant. Reluctance of Travellers to engage in the formal system due to fears.
- The high level of competitiveness within the labour market combined with a low level of mainstream education attainment within the Traveller community is a barrier
- Travellers find it increasingly difficult to generate income from their traditional economic activities, which include trading and recycling of scrap metal, waste materials, furniture etc.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the information provided by members of the SIM group who have a remit regarding service provision for Travellers, one to one interviews and previous community consultations with Travellers.

Traveller Community

Action	Agency	Outcome
<i>Agencies and Travellers to host a Workshop to explore the best model for establishing a County Traveller network</i>	CDB	Agreed plan regarding membership and model of best practice to facilitate establishment of County Wexford Traveller Network.
Establish a County Wexford Traveller Network to co-ordinate economic, social and cultural initiatives across the County, share information and models of good practice. The Network would be representative of Travellers, Statutory agencies and community organisations actively working with Travellers in the County.	CDB, WCC, SEHB, CWP, WAP, FAS, DSFA, VEC, CDSP	Co-ordinated multisectoral approach to service provision for Travellers in the County.
Research the possibility of securing funding to develop the capacity of Travellers as advocates of their own interests by establishing a County Traveller Support Programme. Programme would include a designated community development worker for Travellers in the County and will build on existing projects and work carried out to date.	Traveller Network, WAP, CWP, CDSP	Establish feasibility of securing funding to develop a County Traveller Support Programme. Follow up CDP funding proposal for Travellers
Expand the current accommodation County census and research projects to include other information categories to provide comprehensive audit of Travellers needs and current service and community /voluntary service provision. Investigate the possibility of providing training to engage Travellers as researchers.	WCC, SEHB & Traveller Network	Provision of data regarding the needs and situation of Travellers in the County, which will inform future service developments.

Develop and implement an information action plan designed to improve Traveller participation and understanding of decision making structures e.g. Right to Vote etc	Traveller Network	Improved understanding, dissemination of information and Traveller participation in decision making structures.
Provide Equality and Intercultural training for service providers	CDB	Increased understanding of equality issues and of good equality practices.

Accommodation

Action	Agency	Outcome
Develop greater linkages between the Local Authority Social Workers and specific community development projects	WCC, CDSP, WAP, CWP	Improved targeting of resources to the Traveller community
Increase awareness of the role of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee. Review the mechanisms for feedback with Travellers	LTACC, WCC, Traveller Network	Increase in appropriate accommodation to meet the needs of Travellers
Through the establishment of a County Traveller Network develop a plan for the inclusion of infrastructure and outreach services at planned accommodation sites for Travellers	Traveller Network, WCC, LTACC	Co-ordination of outreach services to Travellers within their own local community. Improved access to service provision.
Develop linkages between the local authority and SEHB to examine options to improve environmental health at halting sites	WCC, LTACC, SEHB	Identification of possible actions to improve facilities and better health status for Travellers involving joint approach by WCC & SEHB
Develop and implement Tenant Participation programme. Develop integrated estate management strategies to facilitate better relations and understanding between Travellers and the settled community, particularly in relation to planned developments.	LTACC, WCC, CDSP, WAP, CWP, SEHB	Increased participation and involvement of Travellers in managing their accommodation. Foster good relations between the Traveller community and agencies.

Health

Action	Agency	Outcome
Extend the Primary Health Care interagency model in New Ross to the North Wexford/Wexford areas. Initially run pilot taster programmes to determine needs and extension of the programme.	SEHB, Primary Health Care Management Group	Develop the skills capacity and confidence of Travellers to work as primary health care workers in their own community through peer education and information programmes
Develop linkages between the Primary Health Care Programme and the Community Mothers Programme	Primary Health Care Management Group, SEHB, Lifestart, CDSP	Link to available trained skills pool of Travellers to work as community mothers to improve access to supports for young isolated mothers and disseminate information on child development, health services etc.
Investigate progression routes for trained skills pool of primary health care workers including placements within Wexford Community Care	SEHB, Primary Health Care Management Group	Progression into employment for participants of Primary Health Care. Establish model of good practice for future projects
Promote preventative health strategies utilising role play etc to increase Travellers awareness on nutrition, exercise, womens health issues. Link with community development practices. Utilise existing community buildings to run programmes.	SEHB, WCC, VEC, CDSP, WAP CWP	Dissemination of health information in user friendly and innovative ways. Improved health status.
Pilot mens health programme in the County targeting Traveller males. Perhaps in the Gorey/Enniscorthy area of the County due to the concentration of resources in New Ross. Establish linkages with community projects supporting Travellers	SEHB, South East Mens Network, Chaplin for Travelling Community, CDSP, CWP <i>* A project has started in New Ross</i>	Participation of Traveller men in health programme to improve their health status and respond to identified health needs.
Develop linkages with the county childcare committee and implement specific programme on child	SEHB, County Childcare Committee, WAP, CWP, CDSP	Promotion of supports for young parents in their child's development

development		
As outlined under Accommodation actions develop linkages with the local authority to examine options to improve environmental health	SEHB, WCC, LTACC	Joint targeting of resources to improve facilities and health status for Travellers

Education & Training

Action	Agency	Outcome
Provision of intercultural and anti racism training for teachers at primary and post primary level and education providers e.g. Youthreach	Traveller Network, primary & post primary Schools	Increased awareness and promotion of intercultural initiatives within the school environment
Implement diversity education programmes for early years childcare groups	County Childcare Committee, Childcare providers, Community projects	Introduction in early years education to the Traveller culture. Promotion of integration between Travellers and the settled community
Support Travellers to progress from primary to post primary school through the Meitheal Programme and 3 school completion programmes in Gorey, Bridgetown and Wexford.	Meitheal, Wexford Education Network, CWP, WAP, CDSP, VEC, SCP	Co-ordinated approach to reduce early school leaving and encourage Travellers to remain in the education system through the provision of appropriate supports
Develop linkages with the Access officer regarding progression routes, taster courses and information tours etc of the third level Wexford Campus	Wexford Campus, CDSP, CWP, WAP, VEC	Implementation of appropriate programmes to reduce educational disadvantage & improve participation of travellers to third level.
Support Travellers adult and community education by developing links between community projects and the VEC regarding the Back to Education Initiative.	VEC, WAP, CWP, Wexford Education Network, CDSP	Dissemination of information and promotion of BTEI resulting in increased community education programmes for Travellers.
Continue to strengthen and develop linkages to integrate literacy programmes with core training modules and supports for Travellers	VEC, CDSP, WAP, CWP, SEHB	Implementation of literacy supports to encourage Travellers to engage in education programmes
Implement after schools clubs for Travellers including at new planned accommodation sites. Ensure appropriate inter	WCC, LTACC, County Childcare Committee, SEHB, FAS, VEC, DSFA, CWP, WAP, CDSP	Provision of supports for Traveller children through local after school clubs. Provision of supports within the home environment.

cultural resource materials for children. Support parents involvement in Education		
Co-ordinate youth service providers to develop Traveller youth service for North of the County Gorey/Clonroche and Wexford area	CWP, FDYS, CDSP, Gorey SCP, WAP, <i>Foroige</i>	Co-ordinate supports to Travellers by youth service providers to build their self esteem, identify progression routes and alternatives to the formal education system and recognise and value their culture

Employment

Action	Agency	Outcome
Outreach employment guidance services to facilitate personal progression plans.	LES, WAP, CWP, Jobs Club, FAS, DSFA	Develop linkages with existing community structures and centres increasing access to employment guidance services
Support Travellers through outreach work to progress to FAS supported employment programmes e.g. CE	FAS, LES, CWP, WAP, DSFA	Increased uptake of employment supported programmes. Improved progression routes into the workplace
Research, develop and implement in consultation with Traveller men a specific enterprise and education programme based on skills and the Traveller economy. Investigate the Bray Traveller Project.	Traveller Network, FAS, DSFA, LES, WAP, CWP, VEC	Pilot programme in response to low participation levels of Traveller men in education, training and employment programmes. Promote progression routes for Travellers.
Implement information awareness programme and linkages between business and employers through established groups such as the Chamber of Commerce to develop progression routes for Travellers from Training into (self) employment	LES, WAP, CWP, FAS, Chamber of Commerce, Business interests	Improved communication, information exchange and identification of progression routes for Travellers in partnership with the business community. Breakdown barriers of stereotype.
Organise information session on employment in the formal economy, entitlements, pensions, budgeting, household management etc	Citizens Information, SEHB, MABS, CDSP, LES, CWP, WAP	Increased understanding of pensions, management of money. Improved household income.

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