THROUGH A RURAL LENS:
PROGRAMMES, POLICY & PRACTICE -
DEVELOPING OR SUPPORTING THE RURAL?

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Today’s Presentation

1. Are we supporting for development?

2. Rural places are places of opportunity

3. Need to capitalise on existing local strengths
Supporting for Development?

‘Development’ or ‘supports’ ... or perhaps a bit of both

Bottom-up, place-based development ‘vis-à-vis’ Top-down, hierarchical framework of supports

Supporting for Development?

Change at the core of rurality

Productivist
- Post WWII
- Food security

Post-productivist
- 1980s
- Response to over-production
- A more complex countryside

Differentiated Rurals
- Agriculture not integral
- Rural areas vary geographically, socially, culturally ...

Place-based approaches
- Empowerment and Participation
- Bottom-up approaches
Supporting for Development?
Change at the core of rurality

- Agriculture a core EU Policy since 1950s
- 1980s characterised as time of ‘rural crisis’
- Changing policy focus: McSharry Reforms in 1992
  - rural development is no longer co-determinous with agricultural policy
  - introduction of LEADER initiative
- A Myriad of papers and policies since the 1990s
  - Rural Development under the CAP
  - Cork 2.0
  - European Network for Rural Development
  - Rural Development in OECD – Rural Policy 3.0

Future of Rural Society (CEC, 1988: 32) proposed that the countryside should act to

“... take full advantage of the growing demand of urban dwellers for green spaces [where] the crux of the problem is to keep the countryside intact from an environmental point of view, not only so that it can fulfil its function as an ecological buffer and source of natural reproduction, but also to provide it with a new and lasting scope for development as an area providing recreation and leisure for city-dwellers.”
Supporting for Development?
Change at the core of rurality

The context of shifting governance of bottom-up local development North (2007) and South (2014)

Parallel to a weakening of local government which has been taking place for a number of decades
- In Northern Ireland, early 1970s centralisation to the Review of Public Administration
- In the Republic of Ireland, privatisation of powers, ongoing centralised state government, and removal of the dual mandate

Community Led Local Development (CLLD)

Supporting for Development?
(Rural) Supports

**RoI**
- Town and Village Renewal scheme,
- Rural Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, Rural Walks Scheme, Rural Development Fund, CLÁR, LEADER programme, Tidy Towns competition, Dormant Accounts Fund (also supporting disadvantaged urban communities), Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), PEACE Programme, RAPID

**NI**
- RDP Business Development Groups,

Supports are often cross-geographical, so for example RAPID, might have an urban focus, it encompasses what might be defined as large rural towns.
1. Are we supporting for development?

2. **Rural places are places of opportunity**

3. Need to capitalise on existing local strengths
Rural places as places of Opportunity

• Cultural reference points of rural and urban, countryside and town

• The instability of the term and its meaning has the potential to lead to confusing and contradictory policies for the countryside

• leaving uncertainty about the future, putting pressure on traditional economic activities and society, and providing new challenges for the environment.

Rural Opportunity

• Primary activities account for less Gross Value Added; and share of persons employed.

• GVA: UK 4.3%; Ireland 2.5%

• Share of Employment: UK 6%; Ireland 8.6%
Rural places as places of Opportunity

- Improvement may involve:
  - The retention of what is already in place (e.g. cultural resources, community identity and self-esteem)
  - In rural communities and environments – place-based development (Douglas, 2010)

Rural places as places of Opportunity

- Genuine attempts to approach the rural holistically
- Holistic approaches through government policies and programmes
  - Traditional silos
  - Cross-Departmental policies

All-Island approaches highlighted by Brexit

Fine Gael warming to idea of opposition

Swings and roundabouts

Kenny: Election calls for a new politics

Rural Society in Transition. P
April 26th

Co-operation Ireland
ICLRD
School of Agriculture and Food Science
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11/08/2018
Rural places as places of Opportunity

The Rural Development Agenda:

• NPF: “At all scales, our cities, towns and villages offer a range of opportunities for community and social interaction, potential for innovation and prosperity and support and enable their surrounding rural areas.” (p.54)

• National Policy Objective 6 (NPF): Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets, that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity and design quality, in order to sustainably influence and support their surrounding area.

• Presumption of decline and lack of prosperity that must be supported from outside.

Rural places as places of Opportunity

• Rural regions will play a central role in meeting the major global opportunities and challenges of the 21st century (OECD, 2018)

• “Proximity of less than 1 hour travel time to a large urban region is an important predictor of rural growth. Proximity allows stronger linkages between urban and rural places. ... By contrast, in remote rural places there are fewer direct connections with cities and local residents and firms must rely almost exclusively on local providers of goods and services. Strong performance in these remote places tends to be associated with specialisation (OECD Rural Policy 3.0, 2018).”
Rural places as places of Opportunity

OECD’s 6 Mega-trends that will influence rural success:

- Population ageing and migration
- Urbanisation
- Global shifts in production
- Rise of emerging economies
- Climate change and environmental pressures
- Technological breakthroughs

(Rural 3.0)

Local Assets?

Countryside Capital

Do What You Are Good At

Building on what a region/locality has already
1. Are we supporting for development?

2. Rural places are places of opportunity

3. Need to capitalise on existing local strengths

**Rural Ireland needs a dedicated minister**

A minister for rural affairs is needed — but only if they are willing to face up to responsibilities for beyond the next election, writes Michael Clifford.

**Existing Local Strengths**

- Agricultural lobby Vs the Rural Voice
- A right to live in the countryside – strongly connected to ‘home’
- Emotional rhetoric clouding decision-making?
Independent stood firm as turf row threatened to derail Kenny

Existing Local Strengths: getting the focus right
Need to capitalise on existing local strengths

- Rural regions will be central to harnessing the major global opportunities and meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

- Bioeconomy: Trade in food and agriculture, mining and resources, forestry, and tourism has always driven the prosperity of rural people; with an increasingly interconnected world, these strengths will be the basis for new products and services to generate rural prosperity and well-being.

Need to capitalise on existing local strengths

- Build on the legacy of what is now termed Community Led Local Development (CLLD)

- Rebuild from the challenges faced by changes to LEADER

- Multi-actor, place-based approach

- Recognise that while rural areas or low-density economies are different to urban economies, that difference does not equate to stagnation and decline
Need to capitalise on existing local strengths

- A changing mindset
  - Where we revisit the value of local knowledge and strengths

- Infrastructural investment to support rural development

Table 1. Challenges by type of rural region

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural inside a functional urban area (FUA)</td>
<td>loss of control over the future</td>
<td>more stable future</td>
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<td>activities concentrate in the urban core</td>
<td>potential to capture benefits of urban areas while avoiding the negatives</td>
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<td>loss of rural identity</td>
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<td>Rural outside, but in close proximity to a FUA</td>
<td>conflicts between new residents and locals</td>
<td>potential to attract high-income households seeking a high quality of life</td>
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<td>may be too far away for some firms, but too close for others</td>
<td>relatively easy access to advanced services and urban culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural remote</td>
<td>highly specialised economies subject to booms and busts</td>
<td>good access to transport</td>
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<td>limited connectivity and large distances between settlements</td>
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<td></td>
<td>high per capita costs of services</td>
<td>absolute advantage in production of natural resource-based outputs</td>
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