

Unit 6: Chapter 22

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Learning Outcomes from this chapter

On completion, you should be able to:

- Explain the term 'community development'
- Describe the economic and social benefits of community development
- Identify the importance of community initiatives in the development of the local economy
- Outline the impact of state agencies in assisting indigenous Irish businesses

Community development

Community development is a voluntary or professional effort to support and develop the social and economic activity of a local community for the benefit of the community



Economic benefits of community development

Direct employment	Local jobs: increased income and local spending
Spin-off effect	Increased demand for local service providers and suppliers
Enterprise culture	Enterprise is encouraged when local entrepreneurs succeed

Social benefits of community development

Sense of pride	New clubs and groups start up: locals are proud and empowered
Community spirit	Feelings of growth and prosperity replace 'doom and gloom'
Slows depopulation	More jobs and clubs keep locals from migrating

Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs)

Mentoring	Experienced business experts shadow and support entrepreneurs, offering one-to-one advice and guidance.
Training	Workshops target key skills, such as creating business plans, paying employees, creating cash flow forecasts.
Networking	Events allow entrepreneurs to mix, share ideas/experiences, connect with local suppliers and businesses, and build cooperative relationships.
Financial supports	Feasibility Study Grants to the value of €15,000 can be awarded, and priming/expansion grants of up to €80,000 are available.
Evaluation	Local businesses can avail of valuable knowledge of local authority regulations, planning, accessibility, environment, procurement and other issues in their area.

Other community development organisations

LEADER programme	Assists rural communities in creating enterprises that suit their own local communities/areas: rural tourism, enterprise development, broadband, basic services targeted at hard-to-reach communities and rural youth
Pobal	Distributes EU and government funding to assist projects on community development; funds social initiatives, rather than commercial initiatives, so that quality of life is improved in communities
Area Partnership Companies (APCs)	Encourages and assists local enterprise and improves standard of living for local communities through training, volunteering opportunities and short-term employment in local projects