

Social Enterprise Research Report
Realising the Potential of Social Enterprise
Presentation to RaiSE Interregional Meeting
Westport, Co. Mayo, Ireland

29th January 2019



Informing Ireland's Social Enterprise Policy?

- Recognised policy gap – Ministerial commitment to address
- Partnership between Dept Rural and Community Development and Social Finance Foundation (on behalf of sector)
- Purpose of Research Report - to underpin a Policy and Implementation Plan
- The project launched in August 2017
- Steering Group was established – cross departments and sector
- 6 steering meetings from August 2017 to May 2018 held mostly in social enterprises
- The stakeholder engagement approach was reviewed by the Steering Group and discussed with Social Enterprise Task Force



Research Report Approach

Goal:

Creation of a partnership for the purpose of carrying out targeted research on the social enterprise sector, including thorough stakeholder engagement

Funding:

The Research Report project was co-funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and the Social Finance Foundation (SFF)

Output:

The Research Report outputs will inform the social enterprise policy development process and provide an evidence base for the policy. All research outputs will be published following the completion of the project



Research – Methodology

- Desk information sources including National reports, GECES, OECD, comparisons with other jurisdictions, EU (200+ initiatives and official documents recognising the importance and contribution of social enterprises); mapping exercise, Scotland, and many others...
- Ten stakeholder types were identified:
 - Social enterprises
 - Government Departments
 - social funding organisations
 - promoters
 - representative bodies
 - academic/educational bodies
 - public bodies
 - European Union
 - support bodies international peers



Research – Methodology

- Engagement Methods
 - ✓ Thematic workshops (Dublin, Cork, Athlone, average of 40 participants)
 - ✓ Bilateral meetings
 - ✓ Online consultation (376 responses)
 - ✓ 1-1 sector meetings
 - ✓ International peers (UK, NI, Scotland, Social Enterprise World Forum)
 - ✓ EU
 - ✓ Case studies
 - ✓ Site visits
 - ✓ Intergovernmental meetings
 - ✓ Stakeholder feedback
- Work modules were identified and explored e.g. finance, business supports, identity, networks, markets, data, impact, legal, education
- Specific support provided by Scotland



Research Report: Conclusions

The Research Report underpinning the National Social Enterprise Policy has:

- Demonstrated the importance of collaboration between DRCD and the Social Enterprise Sector
- Drawn conclusions across a range of areas. These conclusions relate to areas of work that were identified over the course of the research as important to realising the potential of the Social Enterprise Sector.
- The conclusions fall within 3 areas for implementation. These are:
 1. Developing Social Enterprise
 2. Enabling Social Enterprise
 3. Creating Market Opportunities



Research Report – Conclusions

Developing Social Enterprise

Policy Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Critical that national policies are aligned, in particular the Framework for the Community and Voluntary Sector
Business Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social enterprises need access to business supports similar to any commercial enterprise
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need to assess financing gaps for social enterprises (e.g. feasibility/start-up funding)
Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhanced networking (local, regional, national, international, sectoral) could benefit social enterprises and increase their capability
Social Enterprise Initiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consideration needs to be given to promoting the initiation of social enterprises. Greater inclusion of social enterprise in the education system would be valuable
EU	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity for Ireland to engage more fully at EU level and seek to avail of funding and support schemes



Research Report – Conclusions

Enabling Social Enterprise

Voice and Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sector needs to agree appropriate mechanism to represent and be the voice of social enterprise to facilitate on-going engagement with public sector; this needs to be inclusive (i.e. including social innovators and entrepreneurs)
Employment Support Schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Merit in reviewing state schemes available to social enterprises to ensure synergy and standardisation
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information needed on legal options and examination of difficulties experienced by social enterprises
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education system has a key role in understanding, communicating, promoting and researching social enterprise
Data and Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of data and impact analysis on the sector needs to be addressed



Research Report – Conclusions

Creating Market Opportunities

Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capacity building and guidance needed for social enterprises to better access public, business and consumer markets
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Research Report: Vision for the Sector

**Revitalising Local
Communities**

**Innovation, Drive and
Entrepreneurship**

Governance, Leadership Capability

**Democratic and
Inclusive**

Growth

Clear Identity

Improving Lives

Part of Education

Local Services

Partnership with Government



What Next?

