



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

Smart Villages - An Irish Perspective

A vehicle for developing Rural Communities

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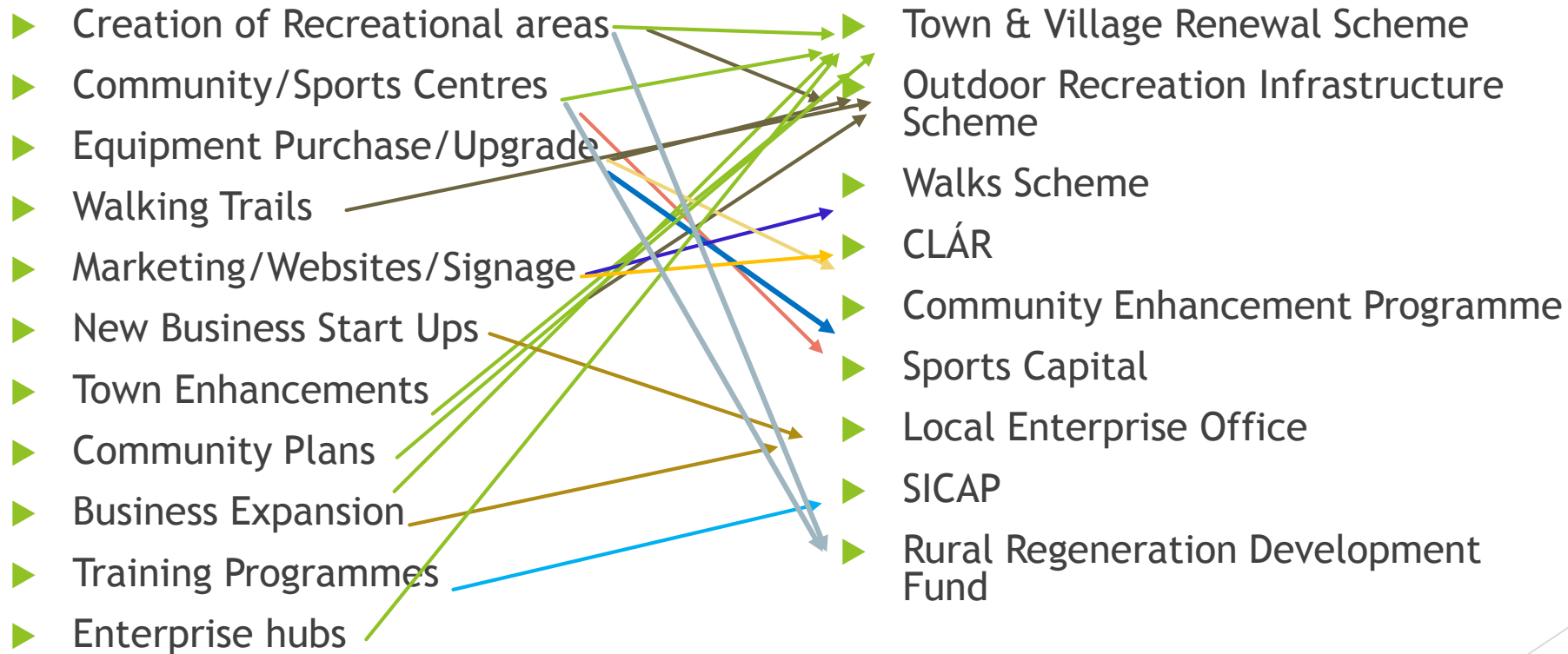


Rural Development in Ireland

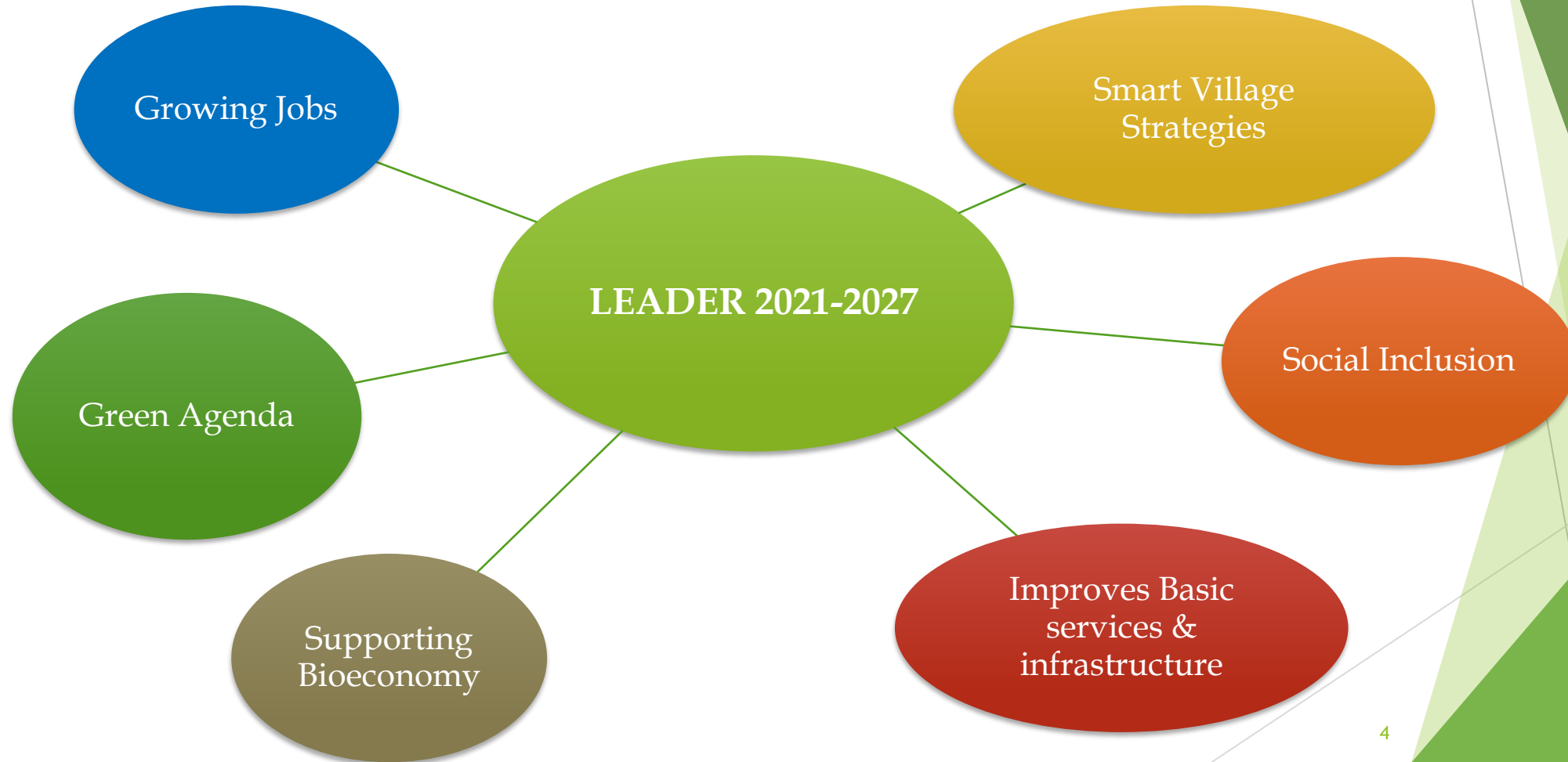
- Department of Rural & Community Development established July 2017
- Mission Statement “*to promote rural and community development and to support vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland.*”
- Managing Authority for LEADER implementation in Ireland
- Also delivers support through a number of Nationally funded programmes:-
 - Rural Regeneration & Development Fund
 - Town & Village Renewal Scheme
 - Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme
 - CLÁR
 - Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)



Activities Supported by LEADER which are also supported by multiple funding streams

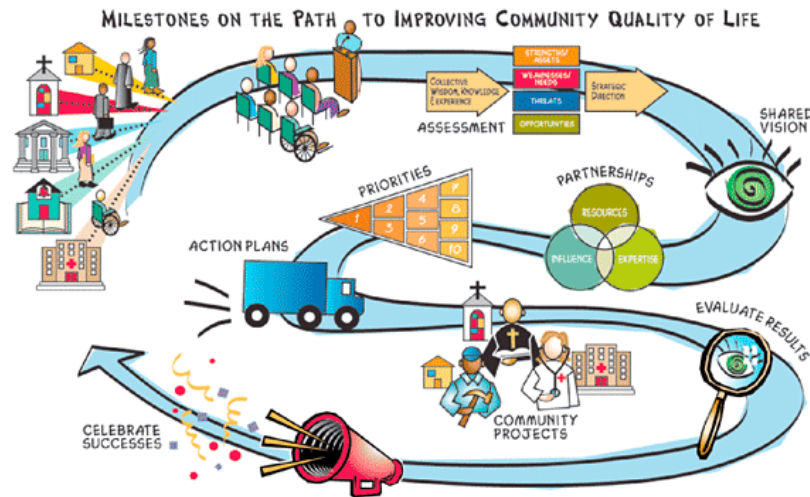


Future Areas of Focus



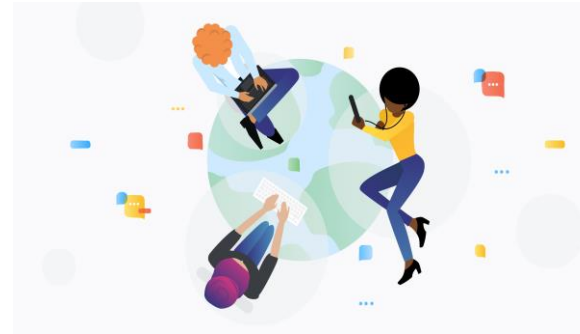
What is Smart Village Strategy

- *Smart* is much more than digital
- *Overall strategic plan* or view for a rural area
- *360 degree* view of the area, *Key* to long-term investment and development
- *Identifies ALL* assets of the area
 - *People & their skillsets*
 - *Natural assets - heritage sites, lakes, rivers, forest etc.*
 - *Existing facilities*
- *Acknowledges*
 - *the needs of the area*
 - *Aspirations of the people - all stakeholders*
- *Provides* a roadmap for future of the area



Smart Village Strategies

- How are these developed / created?
- Engagement with all stakeholders in the area
 - Community organisations
 - Business Community
 - Youth & Senior Citizen Groups
 - New arrivals to the area
- Organic - emerge from the needs identified and not by what grant funding is available
- Responsive to the needs identified - broad over arching principles on content of strategy but not prescriptive on activity
- Realistic to the capabilities of those involved



Smart Village Strategies

Benefits of implementing Smart Village Strategy

- Brings communities together to formulate agreed pathway for development and investment in their area
- Gives communities ownership of the development of their area
- Builds capacity of community to face challenges
- Start with small scale project - build up to larger more ambitious projects
- Focuses community to identify what is needed and not chase funding that is available



Smart Village Strategies

Benefits of implementing Smart Village Strategy contd.

- Greater coherence to rural Development activities
- Funding Departments/Agencies aware of proposed plans - can lead to more targeted funding streams being introduced
- Demonstrates commitment of community to development of the area - projects more likely to be delivered and maintained
- Funding application from Communities with agreed strategies could score higher in selection process
- Established communities can mentor new communities to develop capacity and foster linkages between areas

Smart Village Strategies



Areas for further discussion and consideration

- ▶ Smart Village Strategy as a means to leverage support from other funding streams
- ▶ LEADER practitioners funded by the EAFRD can play a leading role in this which may mean delivering national funding streams alongside those funded by the EAFRD

Smart Village Strategies

