



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

LEADER Capacity Building Workshop

Marie Duffy

27th November 2025

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LEADER

Forbairt á stiúradh ag pobail áitiúla
Development led by local communities

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1. Introduction to DRCDG

The Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG)



Office locations in Ballina, Dublin, Furbo and regional locations

- LEADER Policy and Operations Unit is based in Ballina
- Inspectorate based in Ballina and across regional offices

Our Ministers:



Dara Calleary, TD
Minister for Rural and Community Development
and the Gaeltacht



Jerry Buttimer, TD
Minister of State with responsibility
for Community Development
and Charities

2. 2014 – 2022 LEADER Programme: Projects by Promoter Location

Over 1600 Social Inclusion Projects



Over 3300 Rural Economic Development Projects



Over 700 Rural Environment Projects



2. 2014 – 2022 LEADER Programme (inclusive of transitional years):



Key Performance Indicators*



**Over 3800 Jobs Created
12000 jobs sustained**



**Over 1700 rural
enterprises supported**



**Over 46000 people
access training**

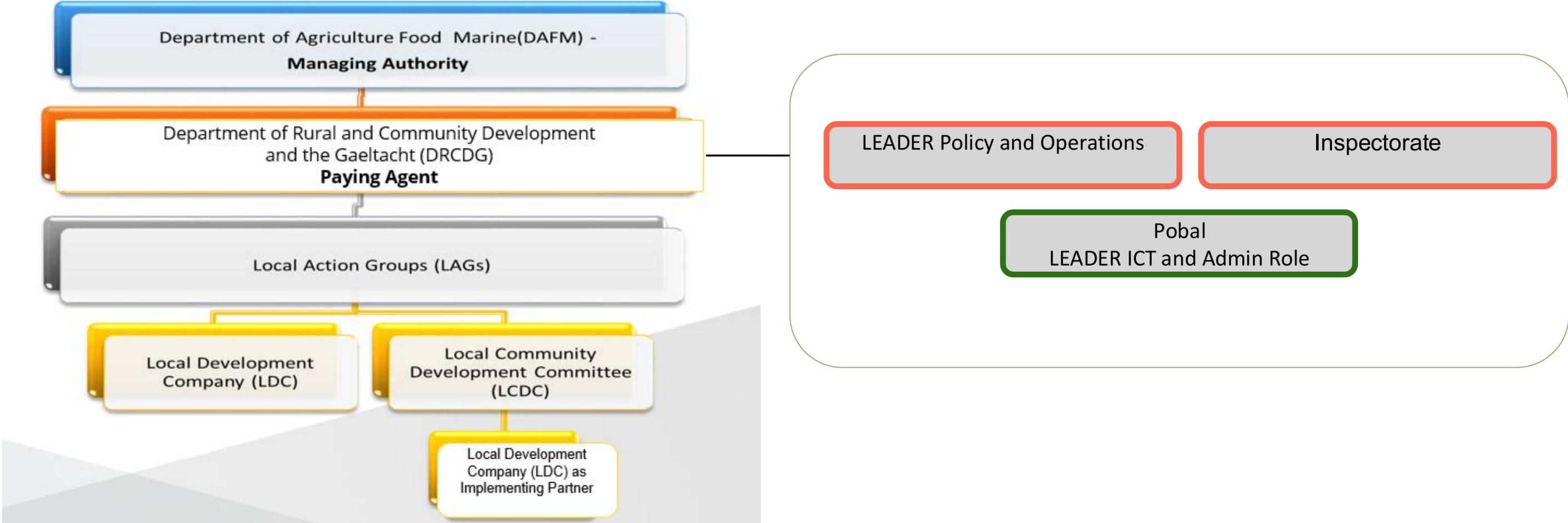


*(*subject to update as final Programme reconciliations are completed)*

3. 2023 – 2027 LEADER Programme: *Local Action Groups*



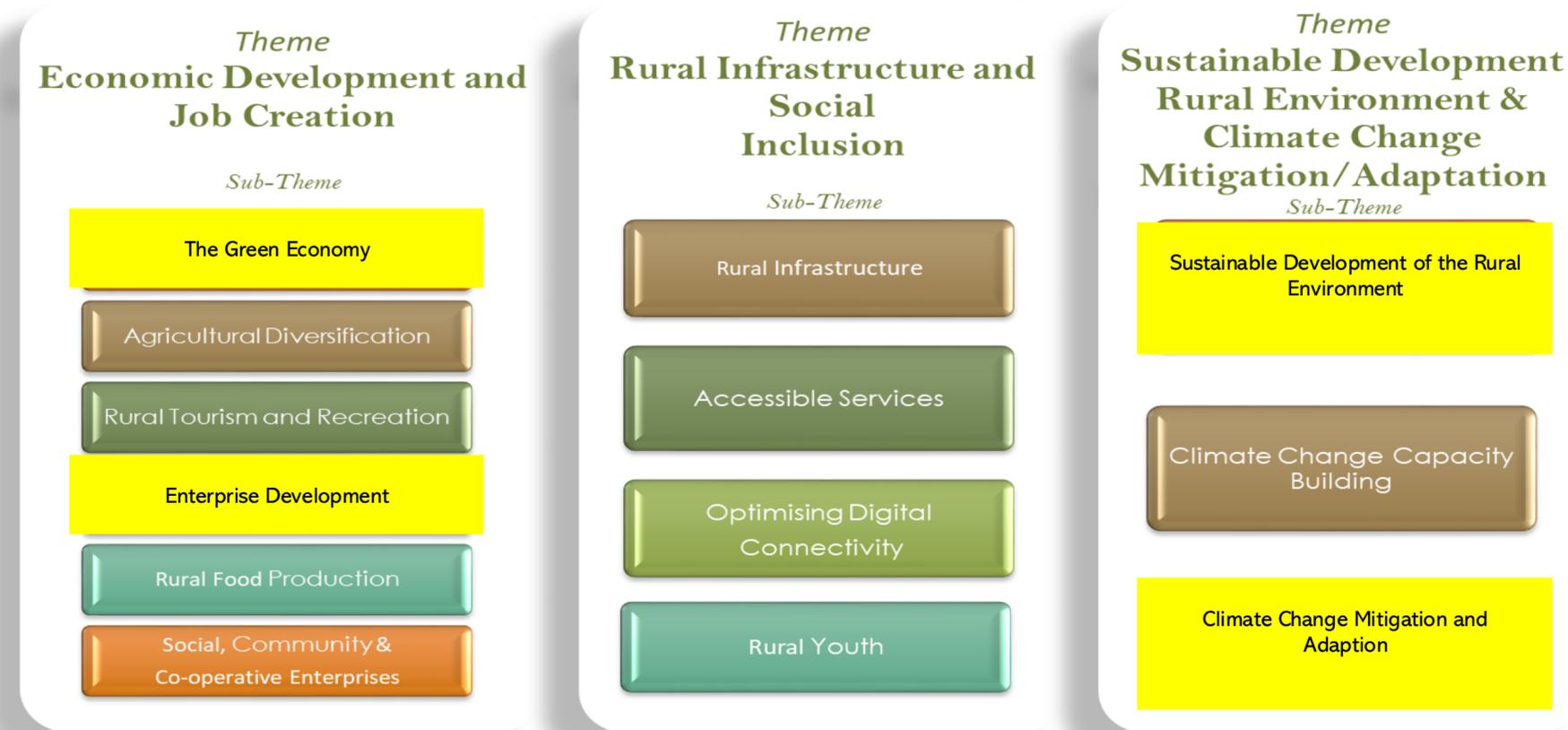
- The LEADER Programme is operational in all 28 sub-regional areas
- 33 Local Action Groups – 21 LCDC led and 12 LDC led
- Delivery Structure:



3. 2023 – 2027 LEADER Programme: *Objectives*



- The 2023-2027 LEADER Programme has an allocation of €180 million
- Programme to contribute to specific objective outlined in Article 6(1)(h) of CSP Regulation 2021/2115 –
‘to promote employment, growth, gender equality, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including bio-economy and sustainable forestry.’
- LEADER Themes and sub-themes

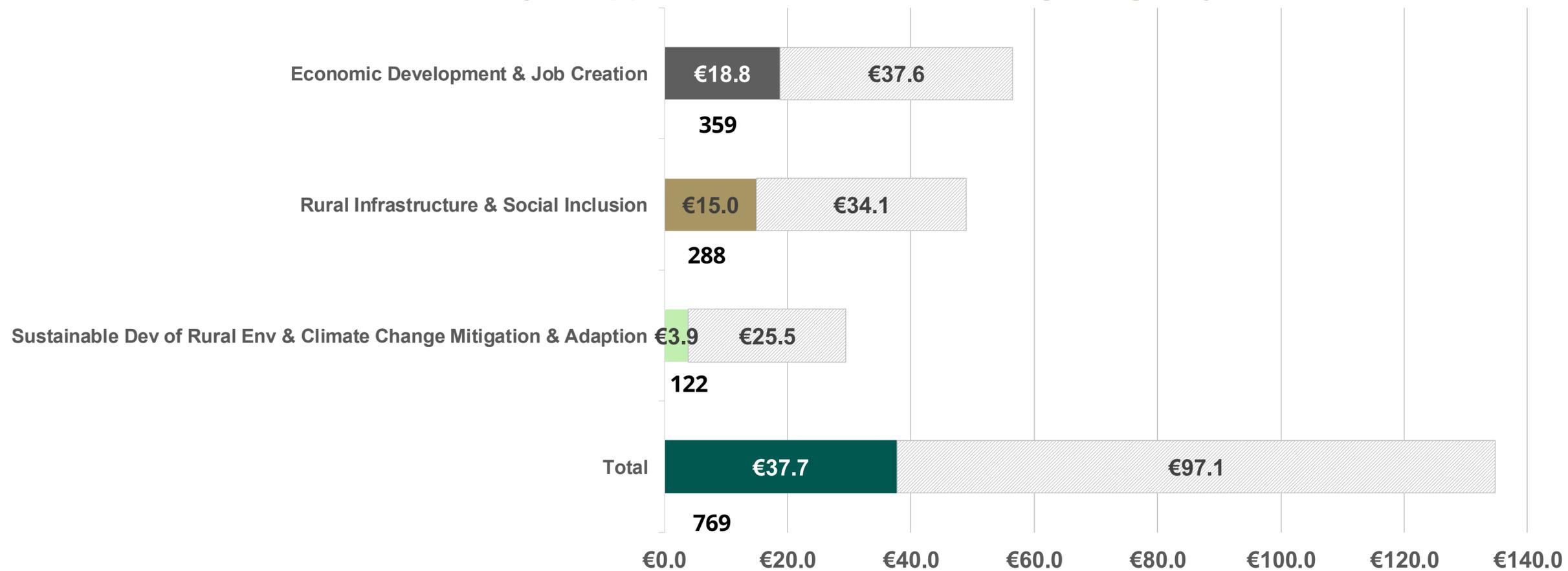


3. 2023 – 2027 LEADER Programme: *Projects as of 31/10/2025*



- **769 projects** with a value of c.€37.7 million have been approved by LAGs
- A further **159 projects** with a value of c. €8.8 million are within the application stages
- **1890 EOIs** recorded on the system

*2023-2027 Project Approval Value with Remaining Budget by Theme**



c.28%
allocated to
approved
projects

(*Based on LDSs and subject to change as Programme matures)

3. 2023 – 2027 LEADER Programme: *Payments as of 31/10/2025*



- 2023-2027 Programme allocation is €180 million
- Total Programme expenditure: €18.9 million to 31/10/2025
- The Department 2025 payment cut-off date is 3 December 2025 – important to send any outstanding claims in as soon as possible

Table 1: Programme Expenditure to date

	Exp to Date €'m	% overall allocation
Monthly admin costs	€11.1	24.64%
Project Claims	€7.8	5.78%
Total	€18.9	10.50%

4. Engagement with the Department - LEADER Programme



LEADER Forum

- Chaired by DRCDG
- Representatives from the LDCN (x4) and CCMA (x4)
- Quarterly Meeting to discuss matters relating to the delivery of the 2023-2027 Programme

LEADER Operating Rules Working Group

- Chaired by DRCDG
- Representatives from the LDCN (x3) and CCMA (x3)
- Quarterly Meeting to continuously review rules and implement appropriate change

Email Facility

- Three general mailboxes
- Refer to Q&A document for guide on mailboxes
- Email addresses have been updated due to the transfer of the Gaeltacht function:
 - LEADER2327@drcdg.gov.ie
 - OR2327@drcdg.gov.ie
 - LEADERadmincheck@drcdg.gov.ie

5. Post 2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and CAP



- **Draft Regulations published in July**
 1. National Regional Partnership Plan (NRPP) Regulation (COM (2025) 565)
 2. CAP Regulation (COM (2025) 560)
 3. Performance Framework Regulation (COM (2025) 545)
- **LEADER and Community-led Local Development under the new MFF**
 - LEADER is obligatory
 - Full LEADER/CLLD method is continued: bottom up, territorial, public-private partnership, strategic approach, innovation, cooperation and networking
 - Functions of local action group set out in NRPP Regulation.
 - Extended use of simplified cost options and simplified administration, particularly for smaller projects
 - The current regulations do not have a minimum funding allocation for LEADER
- **Stakeholder Engagement – EC, DAFM, CAP Consultation Committee**
- **Timeline for the MFF:**
 - July 2025: European Commission presented its MFF proposal on 16th July 2025*
 - 2025 – end 2027: Proposed MFF will be negotiated. It must be adopted unanimously by EU Member States and the European Parliament must also consent*
 - 2028 – 2034: Next cycle of MFF*

5. Areas to bring to your attention



- De minimis register:
 - Under the EU regulation 2023/2831 Member States are required to provide information on De Minimis Aid and State Aid awarded in a central register (eAid Register) from January 1, 2026.
 - DRCDG is awaiting further guidance from Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and will be in contact once there is clarity on reporting requirements, etc
- Usual communications via:
 - Circulars, with 10 circulars issued to date in 2025
 - Q&A document to complement the Operating Rules (v2 issued in May 2025)

6. Information on the LEADER Programme is available on www.gov.ie/LEADER



The Department has commenced publishing projects approved for the 2023-2027 Programme here →

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Thank You