Demonstration of Work: SICAP 2018 -2023
Case Study Guidelines 2022

1. Introduction

The Case Study Working Group met in April 2022 and agreed that based on the experience of the case study process in the past three years that the same approach should be taken in 2022 with case studies to be submitted by LDCs to LCDCs and Pobal by **Friday 7th October 2022.**

- The three core themes for the SICAP Case Studies 2022 remain unchanged.
  - Engagement Strategies with SICAP Target Groups/Communities
  - Collaboration
  - Goal 1 or Goal 2 Projects
- Further detail on the 2022 themes is outlined in Section 4 below. Each LCDC and LDC should mutually agree which theme to select for a specific Lot. A case study should clearly fit under one of the three themes listed.
  Inspired by positive feedback to date, stronger emphasis will be given to encouraging video format of the case studies. Video case studies should be accompanied by a narrative summary with the introductory title, rationale for video, challenges and learning from the project, target audience and potential future use.

Mid Programme Priorities
Following the announcement in July 2021 of the one-year extension to the SICAP Programme until 2023, LCDCs and LDCs were asked to undertake a Mid Programme Review, reflecting on the delivery of the Programme to-date at Lot level as well as the focus of the Programme going forward. As part of this process, LDCs and LCDCs were asked to consider the five Programme Priorities identified by the Minister and the Department, as well as their own local priorities, and where the Programme could support these. The national priorities being:

- New Communities with particular focus on those living in Direct Provision
- Mental Health (including Youth)
- Long Term Unemployed
- Travellers / Roma
- Older People and Isolation

While the three core themes for the SICAP Case Studies remain unchanged, consideration could be given to one of the Programme priorities or the agreed local priority when agreeing the focus of the 2022 Case Study.

2. Definition and Purpose

Case study is a research methodology that provides a comprehensive picture or story of individuals, groups, projects, organisations or events. It provides qualitative information and context about a particular project, way of working, or individual client/group story.

The purpose of the SICAP case studies is to showcase specific projects, practices and approaches to:
- Enhance the programme's performance by analysing and illustrating what has worked well and why, what has been achieved and what have the issues or challenges been.

- Support key programme stakeholders (e.g., DRCD, LCDC, LDCs, Pobal) in identifying and sharing best practice and cross-organisational learning.
- Support key programme stakeholders in decision making by contribution to the evidence base on the programme's performance.
- Enhance learning within the wider social inclusion sector.
- Promote the benefit of the SICAP programme to:
  - participants at local level.
  - partner organisations at local, regional and national level; or
  - key decision-makers at local, regional and national level where relevant.

The case study is one of the elements of the wider monitoring and evaluation system of the SICAP programme. It is important to ensure the case studies complement, build on and are aligned with other pieces of evidence to tell a comprehensive story about the programme successes and challenges. As an example, SICAP tracks quantitative data on the progress of each LCG on the development matrix. An LCG may only move one stage along the matrix and may never need to move to the next stage or may not move further for a long time. The case study would provide an additional understanding of the development process and its challenges and help to identify the types of supports required.

3. How the case studies will be used?

The case studies in 2022 will be utilised as follows:

- Inclusion in the SICAP annual report/learning products, Pobal and DCRD Publications and websites.
- Inclusion in relevant EU publications and research by the ESF Management Authority.
- To present at SICAP support events with other LDCs and LCDCs as learning and good practice tools in the implementation of SICAP.
- To support DRCD in demonstrating the work of SICAP 2018-23 and in showing value for money at central government and EU level.
- To support LDCs in profiling their work and supports delivered through SICAP with local stakeholders.
- To present where appropriate at local LCDC Meetings to help inform members of the impact of SICAP supports.
- Short extracts from video case studies (approx. 90 seconds) will be used in social media campaigns to show the impact of the SCIAP programme and help share that message across Government Departments and relevant agencies. (See Section 7 for more details).

4. Thematic Focus

The Working Group recommended that the specific themes for the Case Studies 2022 remain unchanged and that the focus should be on deepening the analysis under each of the themes as outlined below. As outlined, the case study chosen should clearly fit under one of the three themes listed below. Additional information on each theme has been included in Appendix 1.

Primary Themes:

1. **Engagement Strategies with SICAP Target Groups/Communities**. Organisations are encouraged to share approaches and practices in how they reach the most disadvantaged members of the community. The Working Group identified this as a particular topic of interest and a clear gap in the evidence base. An increased consideration should be given to specific target groups (i.e., Travellers, Roma, People with a Disability, Lone Parents, members of New Communities and those identified locally as an Emerging Need) to present a broader perspective of SICAP.

2. **Collaboration.** One of the core principles of SICAP is collaboration and the ability of the programme to work with other stakeholders. In a lot of instances LDCs take the lead in shaping and delivering an interagency response in addressing social exclusion or gaps in services for a particular community or target group. Organisations are encouraged to explore this theme in more depth to demonstrate specific successes and challenges on collaborative work at different levels and across stakeholders. The Working Group strongly believes that further exploration of this theme would make an important contribution to understanding of the social inclusion sector.

3. **Goal One or Two Projects.** LDCs can complete a case study on a specific named action/activity under Goal 1 or 2. The project should clearly align to a specific programme goal, thematic area and target outcomes as per the SICAP Monitoring Framework (See Programme Requirements, here).

In addition, the Working Group has emphasised the importance of the following:

- **The role and contribution of SICAP** should be made explicit in the case study; the role of the Development Officer and other SICAP funded staff should be specified and analysed. See Case Study Format (Section 6) of this guide for more details.

- The recognition of the **long-term nature of community work** - the case study should relate to the work undertaken in 2021-2022 but can demonstrate the longer period of engagement with SICAP before this period when relevant.

5. Methodology Note

This section outlines steps that you should consider in your case study design and implementation.

1. **Selecting a Case Study topic.**

   Case studies are useful when there is a unique story to be told that can add to the existing pool of knowledge. The planning stage involves identifying an individual, project or a process that stands out as unique, innovative or of particular interest and that would have significant learning for other LDCs and for SICAP in general The LDC and LCDC need to agree on the focus of the case study. You should consider the following:

   a. What type of information, evidence, and learning will the case study provide that would be beneficial for your organisation and the wider sector?

b. Does the case provide important insight and significant learning for the SICAP Programme or the wider social inclusion sector?

c. What resources are required? - When deciding on the topic and content for the case study you need to carefully consider timelines, as well as human and financial implications of the process. To ensure you can deliver a quality product you need to be realistic about what is feasible for you and your organisation.

d. Who is the primary audience of the study? The reader may be unfamiliar with the work of SICAP or with a specific project within SICAP - when designing the case study think carefully about your audience's expectations and programme knowledge. Each LDC should be clear on their key target audience e.g., local community, Pobal, LCDC, for their case study and develop the case study accordingly.

e. Consider how you intend to reach your audience with the case study e.g., social media, public events, before beginning the case study process.

2. **Case study focus and data collection methods**. The case study can focus on individuals/group of individuals, programmes/projects, approaches. As an example, you may decide to explore a journey of change for a SICAP participant to capture the process and factors that influenced it.

In addition, to allow for in-depth analysis you are encouraged to use multiple data collection methods. It can include project/programme/policy documents, interviews with individuals (participants, workers, local and national stakeholders); focus groups, as well as direct observation of activities/interventions.

Your choice should be determined by the purpose and topic of the case study. As an example, if you wish to analyse and illustrate how you managed to engage a difficult-to-reach group of participants your main units of analysis will be the participants, staff, and documentation. Your primary data collection method will be in-depth interviews and reviews of the project documentation.

3. **Data collection.** This stage includes the following:

a. Development of data collection tools (e.g., interview questions; surveys) and protocols or video scripts (if doing a video case study) that will be used consistently within your study.

b. Collecting and documenting data. You should develop a data collection plan outlining who, when and how relevant data will be collected for your study. Furthermore, all evidence needs to be documented including:

- Recording interviews and focus groups in writing or through other means (video, audio recording).

- Extracting and recording key pieces of information from the documents under review.

- Making notes to document the process and recording observations.

4. **Data analysis**. You should regularly analyse the data (interview notes, document notes, survey results etc.) to assist you to gather information in response to your key questions (See Appendix 1). You could develop a simple tool/spreadsheet where you track keywords, responses, quotes. This will help you to ensure you can capture key findings or make necessary follow-ups in a timely manner.

5. **Case study output/product.** Case studies can be presented in different formats including written documents, visual and audio media. (Please see section 7 for guidelines on video/audio case studies)

- Using quotes and testimonials**.** The impact of a case study is much stronger when the voice of the participant is included. Quotes can be gathered at the beginning of the process and some at the end, as a way of demonstrating the journey and personal development for participants. Another method of providing the perspective of participants is by including the results of any client satisfaction surveys or feedback surveys carried out as part of the initiative. Furthermore, quotes from other stakeholders such as, Local Community Groups, trainers and other service providers could be included.
- Using photographs to support the story you are telling draws the reader's interest and makes the case study feel more real and impactful. It is recommended that photos capture people in action to better engage the reader e.g., individuals cooking at a healthy eating course. Where possible photographs and images should be saved as jpeg files with a high-resolution version suitable for print reproduction. Ensure you include details about the photograph i.e., where it was taken, what was happening at the time, names of individuals and/or group, in the photo; see Ethical Considerations (Section 9) for more details.

6. Written Case Study Format

Case studies submitted should be editable to adapt to the type of audience and dissemination medium (website, social media platforms) by various stakeholders (e.g., LDC, Pobal). It is also recommended that a one-page summary of the case study is included, particularly for more lengthy documents.
Cover Page to include:
- LDC Name:
- Lot Number
- Title of Case Study
- Thematic Area (Engagement Strategies with SICAP Target Groups/Communities, Collaboration/, Goal 1/Goal 2 Project)
- Target Group

Your case study should effectively tell a story and consist of the following, irrespective of whether it is presented as a document, video or audio recording:

a. A beginning - background to an initiative/project, what is **the initial need/issue/challenge** that the project/engagement strategy/collaboration is trying to address? Engagement with an individual/ individuals, who was involved and why?

b. A middle - descriptions of actions, interventions, supports provided; the **role of SICAP**; change at individual /group level and the factors that contributed to/inhibited the change within SICAP.

c. An end - **lessons learned** and conclusions; what is next?

The following are core elements that should be looked at for each of the three agreed themes in 2022:

- **Highlight what worked and what did not work.** One of the benefits of case studies is that they can be used to share learning and good practice. Case studies are not only an opportunity for LDCs to demonstrate and showcase their work, they should also highlight where things did not go so well, so that others may avoid these pitfalls.

- **Be as specific as possible.** Case studies should be free of jargon and generic sentences. You should describe in detail what actions and activities were undertaken, including who the target client group were as well as the nature, frequency, duration and intensity of initiatives. Try to avoid lengthy descriptions and keep the case study as concise as possible to hold the readers interest and to clearly demonstrate the activities/actions of the initiative.

- **Clear SICAP contribution.** The subject of the case study should be an action directly supported by SICAP. Please note that some case studies have referred to the work of the LDC, this is not sufficient in identifying the SICAP contribution as LDCs are funded under a number of funding streams. If other funding or organisations have been part of it, these contributions should be specified. It should be evident from the case study, what the role of SICAP was in the work that was undertaken, e.g., if the action was supported/delivered by a Development Officer, other staff or if SICAP funded the tutors on a particular training programme; what is the financial contribution of SICAP. In cases where the project has multiple funding streams, the added value of the SICAP contribution should be evident/ it should also be clear which SICAP goal the action falls under.

- **Outputs and outcomes** – It is useful to show the impact of a programme or project where possible, i.e., how many people participated in an initiative or completed a course?

  How their situation improved as a result of the action?

  Is there evidence of progression from an initiative? For example, people moving into further education or employment, this can be a used to demonstrate the impact of the project.

  The case study should describe how the project/initiative is contributing to named SICAP target outcomes/themes.

An example of a good narrative case study is provided on this link: Narrative Example

Wexford Local Development: An exploration of the relationship and synergies between SICAP and the Primary Health Care for Travellers Programme in Co. Wexford.

Please see Appendix II for a summary Guidance checklist for SICAP 2022 Case Studies

7. Video Case Studies

Based on the positive feedback from the LDCs and experience of the 2021 case studies, the Working Group encourages organisations to use videos and other creative means of presenting the findings of the studies.

Video Case studies are an effective way to tell a story and have proven to be very impactful. When choosing the video format, projects need to consider the following:

- Be clear on your audience and how the video will be used afterwards.
- There are additional time and cost factors involved so allow for this in planning.
- Be clear what story you want to tell, potential locations and who should be involved before engaging a videographer. Re-shoots are expensive and editing large amounts of footage will also increase costs.
- Spend time planning the video with all stakeholders but set realistic expectations in terms of how many interviewees can be included in the final video.
- Videos must be compatible for upload to YouTube and submitted as an MP4 File. They should not exceed 20GB.
- Based on feedback from the pilot case study scheme, videos should be from 4-8 minutes long.
- It is acceptable for an edited version of a longer film that the LDC have produced to be submitted as a case study.
- We would encourage LDCs include (where possible and if resources allow) a 45-90 second segment with interviews / footage of beneficiaries that sum up the impact of SICAP that could be easily extracted and used in programme publicity campaigns.
- It is advised to retain the original sources of video and sound which will aid editing these extracts later if desired.
- LDCs must include an introductory title with the LDC name, Lot No. Goal, Thematic focus, and target group. If it is not possible to include it in the video, the LDC need to submit an accompanying narrative summary with the introductory title, rationale for video, target audience and potential future use.
- It is recommended that the challenges and learning which may not fit well into a short video be included in the accompanying narrative summary.
- Pay particular attention to ethical considerations and consent requirements.
- Videos must comply with ESF publicity requirements.
- The video and accompanying narrative must comply with the Case Study Guidance.
- LDCs may use monitoring and evaluation costs directly related to an action towards the cost of producing the video case study.
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An example of a good video case study is provided on this link [Video example](#)

Monaghan Integrated Development: Linking Irelands New Communities

Those who took part in the pilot scheme in 2019 reported added benefit to the work and the participants due to a deeper level of engagement, ownership, and achievement as a result of their involvement in the video case study process. This made the added cost and time implications worthwhile.

We would also **strongly** recommend that a short narrative (one page) should be submitted to accompany the video to supplement the content. This could include additional information such as outcomes, challenges and key learning not already captured in the video.

Using audio presentations: Audio presentations should be accompanied by appropriate introductory or background music. They should include associated sounds or sound effects related to the activities

and actions profiled. The audio can be combined with a visual slide show or some strong images relevant to the audio commentary.

An example of a good audio case study is provided on this link [Audio example](#)

Ballyhoura Development- Our Story: Mitchelstown Social Hub

8. Submission process and Timelines:

- LCDCs and LDCs will discuss and agree locally the purpose, thematic area, and target group of case studies at local level.

- Narrative case studies and link to video / audio case studies sent by email to LCDC contact and to **sicap@pobal.ie by Friday 7th October 2022.**

- Note. Monitoring and evaluation costs, including the costs of case studies that directly relate to a programme action, can be covered within the direct programme costs. See Programme Requirements for details.

9. Ethical Considerations

In all research with individuals, ethical considerations need to be given appropriate attention. This is particularly important when vulnerable individuals are involved. To ensure all participants of the case study process are treated with respect and dignity the following conditions need to be met irrespective of the nature of the case study (written/visual/audio):

- Written **consent** to participate in the case study and to process personal data needs to be obtained. This is particularly important when visual material is being produced e.g., videos, photos. It is vital that any participant referred to in a case study, or where quotes or photographs are used, informed consent to use their information has been received.

- In order to obtain **informed** consent, the participant must be advised about the purpose of the case study and explained how the information she/he provides is going to be used and by whom. Each participant may have different levels of comfort in relation to how the information is used; it is crucial that the level of usage of the information shared reflects this.

- In addition, an **assurance of confidentiality** and the voluntary nature of the process is provided. The organisation needs to establish whether an individual wishes to be named/identified as an example if the case study uses testimonials/quotes the names can be anonymised/changed if required by the participant. At the same time, it is important that **appropriate acknowledgment** is given to participants. As an example, relevant credits need to be given in video or photo materials.

- Finally, when developing case studies please be conscious of avoiding any messages or language that can stereotype or discriminate against individuals or groups.

Appendix 1: Thematic Areas

Below are some of the specific elements to be included in the case studies under each of the three Primary Themes for 2022.

1. **Engagement Strategies with SICAP Target Groups/Communities**

   - Setting the context on how the need was identified for the engagement.

   - A clear description of what was done to achieve inclusion of the target group.

   - Distinctive strategies, principles and approaches used to reach the most disadvantaged members of the community (e.g., Travellers, Roma, People with a Disability, Lone Parents, members of New Communities and those identified locally as an Emerging Need).

   - Analysis of obstacles, challenges and failures.

   - Role of SICAP funded staff and the skillset required for this work.

   - The involvement of the other stakeholders. I.e., advocacy groups, networking with other organisations and learning from their experiences.

   - An analysis of how this work contributed to the horizontal principles of community development and equality.

   - Identifying the things that went well and what you would do differently next time.

2. **Collaboration**

To ensure learning for SICAP and other LDCs, we would recommend you incorporate the following into your case study:

   - A clear description of the need/issue/gap in service that was identified and by whom, that required a collaborative project.

   - A clear focus on the collaborative work that has taken place and the level and depth of collaboration that has taken place.

   - The role of SICAP and the LDC and the rationale for this i.e., if the LDC were the main delivery agent, why was this and not one of the mainstream service providers? What was the nature of the collaboration? Who was involved; how did you work together?

   - What was the added value that SICAP brought to this collaboration that was not available from other stakeholders? For example, the relationships that the LDC has with communities or the ability to undertake outreach work to engage with a priority group of individuals.

   - What was the nature of SICAP's contribution to this work? Was it staff time and resources or financial resources?

   - Was there any learning for the LDC and other stakeholders that affected their internal practices in addressing needs of target groups and social inclusion issues? Did any of the mainstream agencies identify any learning for their work going forward and mainstream any elements of the collaborative project.

3. Goal One or Two Projects

For a case study under <u>Goal 1</u> you could consider:

- The supports provided by SICAP that enabled the LCG organisation to develop and become more active in the community/ identify local needs/plan activities that address local exclusion issues.

- The supports provided to increase the organisation's engagement with various stakeholders resulting in positive outcomes for the local community. It is important that the local context in which the community group is working in is outlined, the starting point for the group and the level of progress made in moving along the community development matrix.

For a case study under <u>Goal 2</u> you could consider:

- An analysis of an education or training programme based on local needs designed by the LDC, targeting individuals from SICAP communities and target groups. The key is to capture and document the different outcomes for individuals, such as increased confidence and self-esteem, participation in their local communities, as well as progression into further education opportunities or employment. Your aim is to capture change at individual level, factors that contributed to/inhibited the change within SICAP, as well as the external context.

- If you used the My Journey Distance Travelled Tool to support the services provided/actions agreed with a client, please use the opportunity to share the experience for you/the client and outline the added value of this in your narrative or video case study.

- An analysis of a non-caseload youth/children project or a non-caseload outreach project. In the case of the latter, it is essential to show how the project is contributing to supporting individuals or groups to progress towards caseload or more intensive engagement with SICAP.

Appendix II   Summary Guidance for SICAP 2022 Case Studies

For LDC use only - please use the below as a guide for your case study	
- Was informed consent received? - Have names been anonymised when appropriate? - Has appropriate acknowledgement been given to participants in the study? - Have stereotypes or messages that discriminate against individuals / groups been avoided?	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Have multiple data collection methods been used? For example, project/programme/policy documents, IRIS, interviews with individuals (beneficiaries, LDC workers, stakeholders), focus groups, direct observation of activities/interventions	☐ 1 data collection method ☐ 2 data collection methods ☐ ≥3 data collection methods
Is the language used free of jargon and generic sentences?	☐

▪ Does the case study specify the number and characteristics of participants (age, gender etc.), organisations involved etc.?	☐
▪ Is it clear and concise?	☐

Does the case study describe the entire process?
This description should include the following:
    Beginning
    a. background to an initiative,
    b. what the identified need/issue/challenge was,
    c. who was involved and why
    Middle
    d. description of actions, interventions, supports provided
    e. role of SICAP (i.e., LDC Development Officer's role)
    f. change at individual /group level presented, alongside the factors that contributed to/ inhibited the change.
    End
    g. clear description of challenges faced, lessons learned, next steps
	☐

Are the outcomes and outputs clearly identified and described?	☐
If the outcomes were/were not achieved, is there an explanation why?	☐

Does the case study clearly address one of the three themes?
 	
    ▪ Engagement strategies with SICAP TGs/ communities
    ▪ Collaboration
    ▪ Goal 1 or 2 Project
	☐
	☐
	☐

Does the case study include images, photographs and/or quotes to supplement the text? If not, is an explanation provided, for example a decision to protect personal and sensitive information?	☐ ☐ ☐
Does this case study focus on a project that was documented through a previous case study?	No Yes