

FOOD AND/OR BASIC MATERIAL ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

1. IDENTIFICATION

Member State	Ireland
CCI	2014IE05FMOP001
Title	Food and/or basic material assistance operational programme (Clár oibríochtúil um bia nó/agus um chúnaimh ábhartha bunúsach)
Version	1.2
First year	2014
Last year	2020
Eligible from	01-Dec-2013
Eligible until	31-Dec-2023
EC decision number	
EC decision date	

2. PROGRAMME FORMULATION

2.1 Situation

An identification and a justification of the material deprivation(s) to be addressed.

The current anti-poverty strategy is the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016 (NAPinclusion) which places the individual at the centre of policy development, emphasising the need to protect the most vulnerable people and groups across all stages of the lifecycle. Risk groups under the NAPinclusion include: lone parent families and families with large numbers of children; low work intensity households with children, the ill and persons with disabilities; the elderly; Travellers; migrants and members of ethnic minorities; homeless persons; the unemployed, ex-offenders, addicts and persons living in areas of urban or rural disadvantage.

The identification process for the operational programme focussed on ascertaining those most deprived groups who would benefit from the support provided from the Fund in a manner which would not duplicate existing national measures. The identification process had particular regard to gender issues in identifying the most deprived groups.

Published survey or other data have two weaknesses in identifying those most in need and at risk of poverty in that 1) they do not necessarily report on cumulative disadvantage for a population (for example, they do not report on groups that are experiencing low educational attainment *and* poor health *and* deprivation); 2) those most severely disadvantaged may be living in institutional settings or are otherwise difficult to capture in existing surveys.[1] Capturing data on ethnic minorities is also a common issue in many Irish and European surveys.

The identification and the justification for this operational programme has, in addition to a review of available studies, drawn on consultation with key policy makers and NGOs (see Section 4). A special report on the homeless population based on Census 2011 results[2] provides some indication of the severity of deprivation experienced by this group, in that many experience markers of disadvantage (e.g. low educational attainment, joblessness, poor health). Other surveys (especially Census data) or reviews of data and literature[3] likewise demonstrate that certain members of the Traveller and Roma communities, and some ethnic minorities also experience greater disadvantage as compared to the general population. There is evidence that those transitioning from care or other institutional settings are also at risk, although it is extremely difficult to get robust information on deprivation for these groups. Vulnerable groups in temporary or sub-standard accommodation (such as victims of domestic violence in shelters) are also likely to be at risk. The operational programme takes account of the country specific recommendation to Ireland made in the context of the 2014 European Semester[4] to tackle low work intensity of households and address the poverty risk of children and low income families.

The approach adopted for the operational programme is based on the requirements of Article 7 of the regulation. The operational programme will support the provision of food and basic material assistance.

[1] The key source of data on income and living conditions in Ireland is the Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) collected as an annual household panel survey. As

such it cannot capture those who are living in institutional settings, e.g. homeless persons.

[2] CSO (2012) Homeless persons in Ireland: a special Census report. CSO: Cork. This indicates that homeless persons are primarily men, although one-third were women.

[3] Daly, M, (2011) Ireland – Promoting the Social Inclusion of Travellers – A Review of National Policies, Peer Review Social Inclusion, Brussels, European Commission.

[4] Council Recommendation of 8 July 2014 on the national reform programme 2014 for Ireland.

Indication of the type of material deprivation(s) retained for the OP.

Food - Food deprivation

Material - Basic material assistance

2.2 Material deprivation addressed

Material deprivation type: Food - Food deprivation

2.2.1 Description

The managing authority will support the distribution of aid under the operational programme through two channels. Support for the most deprived persons relies heavily on the engagement of non-for-profit voluntary organisations organised by volunteers with support from State agencies and programmes.

The managing authority will agree contracts for the provision of funding from the operational programme to allow not-for-profit organisations to purchase the food. These organisations will then organise the distribution of food directly or transfer the food products to other not-for-profit organisations working with the target groups selected by the managing authority to distribute food to the end recipient. Food will be distributed to the end recipient in the form of food items, food packages and/or meals by the partner organisations at their premises and/or on the street and/or at the homes of the end recipient.

Accompanying measures

A key requirement of the operational programme will be the implementation of a range of accompanying measures that contribute to the improvements in the health and social inclusion outcomes for the persons supported. The accompanying measures are to include support and advisory services to improve the clients' access to all mainstream public services for housing, social welfare, health, education and employment needs. The suite of accompanying measures will be designed and delivered locally by partner organisations which deliver food directly to the recipient. This will be done in partnership with statutory and non-governmental organisations to meet national standards expressed within service level agreements.

The delivery of accompanying measures will form part of the contractual arrangement with the partner organisations for participation in the operational programme.

2.2.2 National schemes

Other than the EU supported Programme for the Most Deprived Persons (MDP), Ireland does not have a national scheme for the distribution of food to deprived persons. Alleviation of poverty is structured through the social protection system and statutory programme for the provision of emergency provision (Supplementary Welfare Acts).

Where State funding is provided, it is structured through grants to:

- “meals-on-wheels” services where the Health Services Executive subsidises the provision of meals to older people by not-for-profit organisations where the material is mainly provided by fundraising, fees for meals provided and philanthropic agencies (including distribution of the surplus of the National Lottery)
- “school meals services” mainly in primary schools and subsidised by direct grant support by the Department of Social Protection
- provision of grants to non-governmental organisations to provide food for homeless persons accompanied by fundraising
- supports in the form of employment grants to not-for-profit organisations providing services to person who are deprived (often in the form of activation work placement programmes).

The provision of aid from the operational programme has been guided by existing national strategies.

Sixty-five per cent (65%) of available resources, taking account of technical assistance, will be applied to the provision of food. The level of resources to be applied to accompanying measures where these need to be supported in partner organisations will not exceed five per cent (5%) of the value of the food purchased.

Material deprivation type: Material - Basic material assistance

2.2.1 Description

Basic material assistance

The managing authority will support the distribution of aid under the operational programme through two channels. Support for the most deprived persons relies heavily on the engagement of non-for-profit voluntary organisations organised by volunteers with support from State agencies and programmes.

The managing authority will agree contracts for the provision of funding from the operational programme to allow not-for-profit organisations to purchase basic material assistance. These organisations will then organise the distribution of basic material assistance directly or transfer the products to other not-for-profit organisations working with the target groups selected by the managing authority to distribute basic material assistance to the end recipient. Basic material assistance will be distributed to the end recipient by the partner organisations at their premises and/or on the street and/or at the homes of the end recipient.

Accompanying measures

A key requirement of the operational programme will be the implementation of a range of accompanying measures that contribute to the improvements in the health and social inclusion outcomes for the persons supported. The accompanying measures are to include support and advisory services to improve the clients' access to all mainstream public services for housing, social welfare, health, education and employment needs. The suite of accompanying measures will be designed and delivered locally by partner organisations which deliver basic material assistance directly to the recipient. This will be done in partnership with statutory and non-governmental organisations to meet national standards expressed within service level agreements.

The delivery of accompanying measures will form part of the contractual arrangement with the partner organisations for participation in the operational programme.

2.2.2 National schemes

Other than the EU supported Programme for the Most Deprived Persons (MDP), Ireland does not have a national scheme for the distribution of basic material assistance to deprived persons. Alleviation of poverty is structured through the social protection system and statutory programme for the provision of emergency provision (Supplementary Welfare Acts).

Where State funding is provided, it is structured through grants to:

- provision of grants to non-governmental organisations to provide food and/or basic material assistance for homeless persons accompanied by fundraising
- supports in the form of employment grants to not-for-profit organisations providing services to person who are deprived (often in the form of activation work placement programmes).

The provision of aid from the operational programme has been guided by existing national strategies.

Thirty-five per cent (35%) of available resources, taking account of technical assistance, will be applied to the provision of basic material assistance. The level of resources to be applied to accompanying measures where these need to be supported in partner organisations will not exceed five per cent (5%) of the value of the basic material assistance purchased.

2.3 Other

3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Identification of most deprived persons

The managing authority will set out eligibility criteria for the selection of the most deprived persons to be supported by partner organisations informed by consultations with stakeholders.

Assessment of the eligibility of a person requesting support will be undertaken by partner organisations only by reference to the criteria set by the managing authority. In cases of distribution of aid in the street this will be sufficient to satisfy the eligibility criteria in order to respect the dignity of the person.

3.2 Selection of operations

There are four types of operations:

1. Purchases of food and/or basic material assistance
2. Distribution of the food and/or basic material assistance
3. Purchase and distribution of food and/or basic material assistance, and
4. Technical assistance

All operations will fulfil the criteria relating to Article 5 (11), (12), (13), (14); Article 22, Article 23, Article 26 and Article 32 (3).

The specific selection criteria for the first three types of operations are:

- The beneficiary of the operation selected by the criteria set out in section 3.3
- Within the limits of the available budget, the funding or the value of the assistance corresponds to the needs of the end recipients identified by the partners organisation in line with the criteria set by the managing authority.

The specific selection criteria for technical assistance are:

- Contribution to the efficiency of the operational programme
- Contributes to the reduction of administrative burden.

3.3 Selection of partner organisations

The managing authority will select partner organisations on the basis of an open process that is fair, equitable, transparent and conducted in an impartial manner. The criteria will consist of the following elements:

- organisations status, governance structures and legal/recognisable form
- expertise in the provision of food and/or basic material assistance
- capacity to target, deliver services to and support persons who are most severely deprived
- track record in the provision of services to persons who are most deprived

- organisational policies in respect of equality, non-discrimination, care of vulnerable people, accessibility, and inclusion
- ability to record and provide necessary data for monitoring/evaluation
- administrative, operational and management capacity
- financial standing and ability to manage public funds
- integration with other publicly funded programmes (to avoid duplication of support from other publicly funded programmes)
- geographical coverage.

In respect of partner organisations that will be purchasing food and/or basic material assistance, capacity to undertake procurement processes. For partner organisations that will be distributing food and/or basic material assistance, capacity to undertake and the quality of delivery of accompanying measures.

3.4 Complementarity with ESF

The primary target groups for person to be supported under this programme tend not be supported under ESF operations save when they progress into activation and labour market related interventions.

The managing authority will take such actions with the ESF managing authority as are considered necessary to ensure that the actions financed under this operational programme are complementary. To this end, the managing authority will agree protocols with the ESF managing authority to ensure complementarity of operations and to avoid the potential of duplicate funding in the selection of operations to be funded.

The managing authority will ensure in its selection of partner organisations that each applicant is required to detail the level of assistance that may be forthcoming from the ESF. This operational programme will complement the ESF OP in its objectives of promoting measures that tackle social exclusion, poverty and discrimination. The actions to be supported under this operational programme will be fully consistent with the ESF objectives of investing in active inclusion, including with a view to promoting equal opportunities and active participation, and improving employability. These objectives will be achieved by selecting and supporting partner organisations capable of delivering accompanying measures that lead a person to a full engagement with education, training and labour market activation measures.

In particular, this operational programme will complement the actions set out in the ESF OP which seek to support measures that target jobless households, migrants, ex-offenders and seek the integration of those distanced from the labour market in meaningful interventions.

3.5 Institutional set-up

The **managing authority** is the Department of Social Protection.

The **certifying authority** is the EU Funding Compliance Unit, Department of Social Protection.

The role of **audit authority** will be fulfilled by the Internal Audit Unit of the Department of Social Protection.

Payments by the European Commission will be made to the Department of Social Protection.

3.6 Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring system will be fully operational before commencement of the operations. All necessary data for monitoring and evaluation of the programme will be collected by partner organisations and collated by the Managing Authority at least annually in electronic form. The data will enable the obligations defined in Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 532/2014 and for the preparation of the annual and final implementation reports. Partner organisations will be required to maintain data in respect of the persons supported and the form of the assistance provided. The requirements of Article 17(4) and with respect to the survey of end recipients shall be undertaken in 2017 and 2022.

3.7 Technical assistance

Subject to the ceiling of 5 per cent of the Fund allocation, the managing authority will use technical assistance pursuant to Article 27(4) to support the implementation and monitoring of the programme to good practice standards.

The managing authority, certifying authority and audit authority will use technical assistance to cover certain costs in relation to the management, preparation, promotion, and selection of operations and activities of the operational programme authorities with respect to establishment of verifications, audit, monitoring, reporting systems, including as necessary the costs of any intermediate body selected by the managing authority. Evaluation of the operations over the course of the programming period will also be funded using technical assistance in line with Article 27(4).

Technical assistance may support the presentation of the operational programme via seminars and the networking of partner organisations to support the continued development of services to the most deprived persons. The staffing costs and related expenses of the Department of Social Protection, acting as the managing authority, certifying authority and audit authority and expenditure incurred in the delivering the functions related to the operational programme, including travel costs, may be co-funded by technical assistance.

Funding may be provided under technical assistance for partner organisations to build appropriate capabilities to enable them to support the delivery of the operational programme.

4. INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

There were two forms of stakeholder consultation. The first involved government departments and public agencies with a relevant policy remit. The second involved a wider group of stakeholders in a three-part consultative process: a public stakeholder meeting; a web-based survey and a dedicated mailbox for written submissions. Stakeholders included former participants of the EU Food Distribution programme for the Most Deprived Persons (MDP); social policy analysts and researchers; local development companies, government departments and agencies.

The preliminary public consultation was held in May 2014. A group of key stakeholders, a selection of the above, attended this preliminary scoping discussion. The purpose was to raise awareness of the objectives of the FEAD, to explain the expansion in focus of aid and support and to encourage future input to the development of the programme.

Over 1,000 stakeholders (listed above), were invited to participate in a general survey and to make submissions to the dedicated FEAD mailbox. There were 36 responses over the six week period. Half of the emails were expressions of interest, mostly from former participants in the MDP; 25% were more detailed submissions on the focus or content of the programme, and the remainder were queries about implementation.

The web-based survey, using a structured questionnaire, was circulated to 650 stakeholders by email in July. There was a 15% response rate. The results were analysed and reported.

Summary of key points:

- Need to focus on homeless, poorer households with children, with less emphasis on older people
- Nature of deprivation required both food and non-food material support (mainly clothing)
- Deprivation is multi-dimensional and transmitted inter-generationally
- Organisations supporting the homeless spend 75% of income on providing food
- Local units of national charities spend 50% on food and 25% each on personal care and home care items.

5. FINANCIAL PLAN

5.1 Financing plan of the operational programme giving the annual commitment of the Fund and corresponding national co-financing in the operational programme (in €).

Year	Fund (a)	National co-financing (b)	Public expenditure (c)=(a)+(b)	Co-financing rate (d)=(a)/(c)
2014	3,062,343.00	540,413.00	3,602,756.00	
2015	3,123,590.00	551,222.00	3,674,812.00	
2016	3,186,061.00	562,246.00	3,748,307.00	
2017	3,249,783.00	573,491.00	3,823,274.00	
2018	3,314,778.00	584,961.00	3,899,739.00	
2019	3,381,074.00	596,660.00	3,977,734.00	
2020	3,448,698.00	608,595.00	4,057,293.00	
Total	22,766,327.00	4,017,588.00	26,783,915.00	85.00

5.2 Financing plan giving the amount of the total financial appropriations of the support from the operational programme for each type of material deprivation addressed as well as the corresponding accompanying measures (in €).

Type of material assistance	Public expenditure
Technical assistance	1,339,196.00
Food - Food deprivation	16,539,067.00
of which, accompanying measures	700,000.00
Material - Basic material assistance	8,905,652.00
of which, accompanying measures	300,000.00
Total	26,783,915.00

Documents

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
Evaluation of the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived IRELAND 2014-2020	Report of the ex-ante evaluation	16-Sep-2014	MCexAnteFE AD	Ares(2014)40725 24	ExAnte Evaluation FEAD IRELAND 2014-2020	04-Dec-2014	nflethom