After The Elections

Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice Active Citizenship/Voter Education Programme
After The Elections

This booklet has been developed in response to requests for follow-up material for use in Post Election periods.

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After the Elections

Outline of Learning Tasks

Task 1: Getting to Know Constituency TDs

Task 2: Discovering “Who is Who” in Dail Eireann

Task 3: Identifying Issues Requiring the Attention of TDs

Task 4: Developing a Position on a Selected Issue

Task 5: Presenting the Issue

Task 6: Learning from a Success Story.
Continuing Democratic Engagement in  
The Political Process of Ireland

*After the Election*

**Note for Facilitators** - (in or out not in previous workbook eg Policy)

Real change in matters of social justice is often slow and arduous. Improvements are sometimes to be envisaged over years. A long term view in pursuing social goals is essential if change is to take place. Change rarely happens without the activity of ordinary citizens who are unhappy with a particular situation and are determined that it will not be allowed to continue. This workshop introduces the 3Ps – Prepare Present and Persist. It also seeks to focus attention beyond election time and on the need to keep the performance of elected representatives under review.

The material consists of a series of Learning Tasks, Worksheets and A4 copies of Learning Tasks which can be enlarged by facilitators. Information on TDs in your local constituencies can be obtained from the Oireachtas website [http://oireachtas.ie/members-hist](http://oireachtas.ie/members-hist). The following chart is enclosed – Election 2007 – TDs elected to Dail Eireann, courtesy of Irish Times, June 2007

**Introduction to Workshop**

**Facilitator**

1. Welcomes all the participants.

2. Explains the importance in the after election period of continuing to pursue knowledge, participation and action in the political process of Ireland.

3. Invites participants to introduce themselves.

4. Gives an outline of the topics dealt with in the workshop.  
   *(Outline of Learning Tasks – previous page)*
Learning Task 1

Getting to know Local Constituency TDs

1A Identify Local Constituency TDs

1B Listen to Presentation

We’ll hear all.

Notes for Facilitators:
The purpose of this task is to identify the names of local TDs, their party membership and other relevant information

"Let’s divide into groups of 4 for a Table Quiz when participants are seated continue. In a few moments I will give everybody a copy of the Quiz Sheet and you will be asked as a group and as individuals to pick out the names of the local constituency TDs. You will see 3 columns on your Quiz Sheet. Column 1 is for the TD’s name, Column 2 is for the political party to which the TD belongs and Column 3 is for any other information on the TD, e.g., his/her background – teacher, community worker etc. Groups get one point for each correct answer. The winning table gets a surprise!"

Worksheet 1A: Prepare Table Quiz (see page 9) and include names of local TDs along with names of well known people.

Learning Task 1A
- Distribute Table Quiz - check that participants understand the task
- Allow 10 mins for Table Quiz
- 5 mins for checking answers
- Acknowledge winning team – small prize (e.g. bar of chocolate) for each participant

Learning Task 1B
Our constituency TDs are part of the Dail. Those who are members of the Fianna Fail Party, or the Green Party or the Progressive Democrats belong to the parties in Government. Those who are members of the other political parties are known as the Opposition. TDs who are not members of any party are known as Independents. We will now have a look at who is who in the Dail.

Materials:
1. Worksheet 1A: Table Quiz (page 9)
2. Pens
Learning Task 2

Dáil Éireann

2A Identify key figures in the Dáil Chamber

2B Listen to Presentation

2C Identify Government Departments

We’ll hear all.

Note for facilitators:
The purpose of this task is to explore the identities, position and responsibilities of TDs in the Dáil.

Learning Task 2A

• Distribute Worksheet 2A: The Dail Chamber. Invite participants, in pairs, to identify any roles from the 10 marked out. For example, No. 4 = Leader of Opposition.
• Remind the group that the Dáil proceedings are on TV and their memory of seeing these will help them complete the task.
• Allow 5 minutes for completion. Affirm the work done.
• Compare responses with Learning Task 2A - Dáil Chamber (below)

Learning Task 2A: The Dáil Chamber

1. Taoiseach - Bertie Ahern
2. Tánaiste - Brian Cowen
3. Minister for Finance - Brian Cowen
4. Leader of the Opposition - Enda Kenny - Fine Gael

5. Deputy Leader of the Opposition - Eamon Gilmore - Labour
6. Céann Comhairle - John O'Donoghue
7. and 8. Clerk and Assistant
9. Stenographers
10. VIP Gallery
• Remind the group that when 2 parties form Government, it is known as a Coalition Government.

Learning Task 2B
The aim of this task is to clarify the group’s understanding of the Government in power

Introduce:
• There are 166 TDs in the Dáil.
• Warm up: If a party needs a majority to form the Government in Parliament (50% +1), how many TDs must a party have elected to go into Government?
• The Government in power is made up of the Cabinet, Ministers and Backbenchers. The Cabinet must have at least 7 and not more than 15 members. It must include the Tánaiste and the Taoiseach and the Minister for Finance.
• The Taoiseach is leader of the Government. S/he chairs the Cabinet meetings. S/he decides the time for a General Election, meets with leaders from other countries and selects 11 of the 60 Senators in the Seanad.
• The Tánaiste is like the vice captain of the team. S/he takes the place of the Taoiseach when s/he is absent.
• The Ministers are the leaders of the Government Departments.
• The Main Business of Government:
  ➢ Care/Management of Public Finances
  ➢ Administration of Departments
  ➢ Legislation in economic, financial and social areas.
• Invite the participants to ask any questions arising – allow approx 10 minutes

Learning Task 2C: Identifying Government Departments
• The aim of this task is to aid the group’s knowledge of the Departments in Government.
• Distribute Worksheet 2B: Minister/Government Departments and Worksheet 2C: Match Up Sheet. Invite participants to match the pictures with the Departments, (see example A). Review work done
• Conclude with the Questions “Which Department do you consider most important in your community?”
• Allow 5 – 7 minutes for task. Hear all and affirm the work done.

Target time: Approx. 20 minutes from start to finish.

Materials:
1. Copies of Worksheet 2A: The Dail Chamber (page 10)
   Worksheet 2B: Minister/Government Departments (page 11) and
   Worksheet 2C: Match Up Sheet (page 12)
2. Pens
Learning Task 3

Identify an Issue for the Attention of TDs

3A Identify a key issue for action

3B Prepare and record a short statement which describes the issue

We’ll hear all.

Notes for Facilitators:
The purpose of this task is to identify an issue for the attention of TDs and to obtain clarity on the issue by developing a precise statement.

Learning Task 3A
- Remind participants that TDs are responsible for matters of national importance – Health, Education – and those referred to in Learning Task 2
- When time allows construct a Wall of Issues – national issues which are of particular concern at local level (Page 27, 28 in Active Citizenship/Voter Education Manual)
- When time is limited invite participants in pairs to brainstorm and identify one national issue which is of concern at local level
- Record responses on Flip Chart
- Seek consensus on Issues to be addressed by participants at this point in time
- In order to achieve a shared understanding and clarity on the issue develop an agreed brief statement on the issue, e.g. “Our Issue is the need to provide 2 childcare services in Cherryvalley.”

Allow 25 minutes when Wall of Issues is used, otherwise allow 15 minutes.

Learning Task 3B
Record agreed statement on Flip Chart for reference during the following Learning Tasks.

Target time: Approx. 25 minutes from start to finish (constructing Wall of Issue)
Approx. 15 minutes from start to finish (not constructing Wall of Issues)

Materials:
1. To construct Wall of Issues (page 27, 28 of The Active Citizenship/Voter Education Manual)
2. Flip Chart
3. Markers
Learning Task 4

Develop Position on the Selected Issue

4A  Listen to Position Paper on Pedestrian Safety
4B  Prepare a Position Paper on the Selected Issue

We’ll hear all.

Notes for Facilitators:
The purpose of this task is to develop a position on the Selected Issue

Facilitator

• Remind participants of the agreed statement (on Flip Chart)
• Distribute Worksheet 4A: Position Paper on Pedestrian Safety
• Invite participants to read (aloud) the different sections of Worksheet 4A
• Invite participants to make comments and raise questions (allow 15 mins)
• Distribute Worksheet 4B: Guidelines for a Position Paper on The Selected Issue
• Draw attention to the agreed statement on the Flip Chart as the context for completing Worksheet 4B
• In groups of 3 or 4 invite participants to complete Worksheet 4B together (allow 20 mins)
• In large group listen to responses for each section of Worksheet 4B, noting similarities and differences
• Complete an A3 version of Worksheet 4B by arriving at a consensus on each step (Step 1-Step 2-Step 3 etc) and record the consensus
• Review the Worksheet 4B and make amendments (allow 25 mins)
• Arrange for the Worksheet 4B to be printed and copied

Reminder- omit title - Guidelines for a Position Paper on Selected Issue when forwarding points to electoral representative.

Target time: Approx. 60 minutes from start to finish

Materials:
2. A3 Version of Worksheet 4B (page 14)
3. Flip Chart
4. Markers and Pens.
Learning Task 5

Presenting Position on The Selected Issue

5A Discover the 3Ps – Prepare, Present and Persist

5B Present position on the selected issue

5C Identify ways of persisting with the issue

We’ll hear all.

Notes for Facilitators:
The purpose of this task is to develop a process to present the issue and to persist with the issue

5A Facilitator
Introduces and explains the 3Ps of effective advocacy
❖ Prepare
❖ Present
❖ Persist

Each element is important. The Final P – Persist - presents the biggest challenge.

5B Presentation of Issue

• Participants compose a short covering letter for the position paper which will be sent to the Government Minister’s with responsibility for the issue and to locally based TDs. See Chart 5: Brief Letter, and distribute Worksheet 5A: Model Letter
• Prepare letters for signing by each participant
• Attach letter to position paper and post!

Chart 5 - Brief Letter (see worksheet 5A for model)

❖ Name of Group
❖ Purpose of letter
❖ Action required e.g. meeting with TDs/Minister, increased funding, consultation.
❖ Request response within a specified time.

5C Persistence on Issue
Participants decide on 2 to 3 participants who on behalf of the group will
❖ Acknowledge response and deal with correspondence
❖ Plan meetings with TDs/Minister etc
❖ Plan meetings with participants should further action be necessary
❖ Keep participants informed on progress of issue.

Materials:
1. Copies of Position Paper
2. Flip Chart
3. Markers
4. Paper (for writing letter)
5. Copies Worksheet 5A: Model Letter (page 15)
Learning Task 6

A success story using the 3Ps

6A  Listen to story
6B  Identify each of the 3Ps
6C  Identify reasons for success

We’ll hear all.

Notes for Facilitators:
The purpose of this task is to identify the process used by a group which was successful in achieving its goal.

“As we come to the end of this workshop let us learn from the work of a group which was successful in achieving its goal by using the 3Ps process”.

- Distribute Worksheet 6A: Continuing to be Active Citizens and listen to story
- Invite participants to identify each of the 3 stages
  - Prepare
  - Present
  - Persist
- Record the responses on Flip Chart
- Brainstorm – What did this group do in order to be successful?
- Invite participants to illustrate each of the 3 stages by drawings, poem or mime.

Conclusion of Workshop
Invite each participant to share a reflection on the 6 Learning Tasks e.g. “Having completed this workshop, what one point has stood out most for you?”

Target time: Approx. 20 minutes from start to finish

Materials:
1. Copies of Worksheet 6A: Continuing to be Active Citizens – Using The 3Ps (page 16)
2. Flip Chart
3. Markers
**Worksheet 1A: Table Quiz**

From the following list pick out the names of the TDs for your Constituency.

Write the names of the TDs in Column 1.

Fill in the other Columns - 2. Party and 3. Other information e.g. address of clinic, employment etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Other Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pat Kenny</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bet Lynch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy Keane</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Duffy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bella Doyle</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mel Gibson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Mirren</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pamela Flood</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gerry Ryan</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Other Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marian Finucane</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bet Lynch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy Keane</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Joe Duffy</td>
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<td>Mel Gibson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pamela Flood</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerry Ryan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice* Active Citizenship/Voter Education
Learning Task 2A: The Dail Chamber

1.  
2.  
3.  
4. Leader of the Opposition
   5.  
6.  
7. and 8.  
9.  
10.  

Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice: Active Citizenship/Voter Education

10
Worksheet 2B: Minister/Government Departments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources</th>
<th>Minister for Defence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eamon Ryan TD</td>
<td>Willie O’Dea TD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minister for Transport</th>
<th>Minister for Agriculture and Food</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noel Dempsey TD</td>
<td>Mary Coughlan TD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minister for Social and Family Affairs</th>
<th>Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Martin Cullen TD</td>
<td>Seamus Beasan TD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minister for Foreign Affairs</th>
<th>Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Dermot Ahern TD                                          | Eamon O’Cui

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government</th>
<th>Minister for Education and Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Gormley TD</td>
<td>Mary Hanafin TD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minister for Health and Children</th>
<th>Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary Barnes TD</td>
<td>Brian Lenihan TD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minister for Finance</th>
<th>Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brian Cowen TD</td>
<td>Micheal Martin TD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning Task 2C: Match Up Sheet
Match the pictures to the Ministerial/Departments in Worksheet

A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J
K
L
M
N

Cherryvale
Job Centre
Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice
Active Citizenship/Voter Education
Worksheet 4A: Position Paper on Pedestrian Safety

The Cherryvale Family Resource Centre Ltd.

**Issue:** Pedestrian Safety

i. Continuation of ramps from Cherryvale Church to Mountain Road.

ii. Pedestrian Crossing at Vivo Shop.

The people who are affected:
The people who are affected by this issue are the residents, especially children and elderly people as well as:
- Bus users
- People who cannot move quickly because of injury
- People in wheelchairs
- Mothers with buggies.

People are affected in the following ways:
- Two children injured – 1 killed
- In danger of being knocked down
- Anxious – have to run across road in order to arrive safely.

Why this is happening:
- Planners did not consult local people or give sufficient time to plan properly
- People are not listened to
- Safety of people is not a value
- Financial resources not made available

Winners in the present situation:
- Lorry drivers who use the road as a short cut when main roads are busy
- Joyriders.

Losers in the present situation:
- Pedestrians
- Bus users.

Our Position:
All areas should be properly equipped with signs, pedestrian crossings, ramps, etc to ensure pedestrian safety.

Steps we want to be taken:
1. Continuation of ramps from Cherryvale Church to Mountain Road.
2. Pedestrian crossing at Vivo Shop.
3. Traffic calming measures.
4. Larger speed notices.
5. Notices prohibiting access of heavy vehicles.
6. Consultation and preparation for additional traffic which will result when the road from Riverside is opened.
Worksheet 4B: Guidelines for a Position Paper on Selected Issue

Issue – Statement

1. People who are affected by this issue:
   ➤
   ➤
   ➤

2. People are affected in the following ways:
   ➤
   ➤
   ➤

3. The reasons why there is a problem:
   ➤
   ➤

3A. Winners in the present situation:
   ➤
   ➤

3B. Losers in the present situation:
   ➤
   ➤

4. Our position on this issue:
   ➤
   ➤

5. Steps we want taken on this issue
   ➤
   ➤
Worksheet 5A: Model Letter

Your Address

Date

Their Address

Dear

We are members of ............ which consists of ------- members.

We urge you to take the necessary action to ensure that the members of the Travelling Community, living on the outskirts of our town be provided immediately with such basic facilities as electricity, clean water and refuse containers.

They have been living in shameful conditions.

We the members ------------------------ are very disturbed by this neglect of the Travelling Community and request a meeting with you to learn your response.

We look forward to hearing from you within the next 10 working days.

Yours sincerely,

Members' names _____________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

…………………………………………………………………………………………

Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice Active Citizenship/Voter Education
Worksheet 6A: Continuing to be Active Citizens – Using The 3Ps

A Success Story - An Issue Resolved

After the 2002 EU and Local Elections a group of women based in The Killinarden Family Resource Centre came together and formed the Killinarden Active Citizens Group with a view to getting action on an urgent need – ‘Greater Access for Wheelchair Users’.

They used the 3 Ps process: Prepare - Present - Persist

Prepare
They began by preparing their position on the Issue – The following is an account of their position

The Killinarden Family Resource Centre Ltd.

Issue: Greater Footpath access for wheelchair users.
The people who are affected: Wheelchair users and family members/carers who accompany them.
In particular wheelchair users who do not have motorised chairs.

They are affected in the following ways:
Because of inadequate access people are housebound, disempowered, stressed, isolated and have a poor quality of life.
Sometimes wheelchair users are obliged to use the roads and so break the law.

Why this is happening:
The needs of people with wheelchairs are not taken into consideration.
They are not consulted and their equality as citizens is not recognised. Their safety is not sufficiently valued.

Winners in the present situation:
Drivers and able bodied people.

Losers in the present situation:
Wheelchair users and family members/carers.

Our Position:
Wheelchair users, as citizens, have a right to be able to move freely and safely.

Steps we want to be taken:

1. Footpaths to be made wheelchair accessible: e.g.
   - improve ‘dip’ in road at Killinarden Park to Bridge
   - ensure that dips on both sides of road correspond (directly opposite each other)
   - create yellow box at exit to Killinarden Way to Blessington Road (Knockmore end)

2. Road signs for main routes to indicate wheelchair access points, so that access points are not blocked by drivers.
Present
The Group prepared a letter which was signed by each of the members and sent to the TDs for the area and local Government representatives. The position paper was enclosed and a request was made to the County Manager to attend a meeting in the Family Resource Centre. At the request of the TDs two County Council staff met with the group and discussed the problem. An undertaking was given to pursue the matter within an agreed time frame.

Persist
After the meeting the group sent a second letter, thanking the TDs for arranging the meeting. They also wrote to the County Council Staff giving a record of what was agreed. As the deadline for action approached they telephoned the County Council staff to obtain a progress report. Before the deadline all the work on the Wheelchair Access (signs and dishes) was completed and within another month the Road Ramps were in place.

While the issue concerned Local Government the same process can be used on for a national issue. **Prepare – Present - Persist**

To quote one of the participants:

“**We are voters – We have the responsibility of keeping our elected representatives informed about what they need to do about problems. This means we cannot sit back between elections. We have to make sure they keep their promise. We believe in the importance of the 3Ps: Prepare – Present – Persist.**"
Learning Task 1

Getting to know Your Local Constituency TDs

1A Identify Local Constituency TDs

1B Listen to Presentation

We’ll hear all.
Learning Task 2

Dáil Eireann

2A Identify key figures in the Dáil Chamber

2B Listen to Presentation

2C Identify Government Departments

We’ll hear all.
Learning Task 3

Identify an Issue for the Attention of TDs

3A Identify a key issue for action

3B Prepare and record a short statement which describes the issue

We’ll hear all.
Learning Task 4

Develop Position on the Selected Issue

4A **Listen** to Position Paper on Pedestrian Safety

4B **Prepare** a Position Paper on the Selected Issue

We’ll hear all.
Learning Task 5

Presenting Position on The Selected Issue

5A Discover the 3Ps

5B Present position on the selected issue

5C Identify ways of persisting with the issue

We’ll hear all.
Learning Task 6

A success story using the 3Ps

6A Listen to story

6B Identify each of the 3Ps

6C Identify reasons for success

We’ll hear all.
Chart 5B

Brief Letter

• Name of Group

• Purpose of letter

• Action required e.g. meeting with TDs/Minister, increased funding, consultation.

• Request response within a specified time.
Notes