



INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

Fund news

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The Newsletter of the
International Fund for Ireland
www.internationalfundforireland.com

International Fund for Ireland announces £4.6m / €5.5m support for peace building, reconciliation and community relations projects

In June 2011, the Board of the International Fund for Ireland approved a further investment of £4.6m / €5.5m for reconciliation and community relations projects. Commenting on the announcement, Dr Denis Rooney CBE, said: "The recent street disturbances in East Belfast have highlighted that the peace process remains fragile and that within many communities there are those who are vulnerable to being exploited for violent ends, particularly in interface areas. The events in East Belfast also underlined the important role that community leaders play in defusing tensions."

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Fund Chairman, Dr Denis Rooney CBE, front centre, with attendees at the June 2011 meeting of the Board, at The Clinton Centre, Enniskillen, County Fermanagh.



Skainos Project in East Belfast welcomes President McAleese

Dr Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, recently welcomed the President of Ireland, Mrs Mary McAleese and her husband Dr Martin McAleese to the Skainos Project in East Belfast. Skainos is an urban regeneration development in inner East Belfast, which will provide shared space for community transformation and renewal. The Fund has contributed nearly £3 million towards the Project.

Donors to the Fund are:



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Foreword

Despite the enormous progress that has been made in recent years, the tensions that remain between communities in Northern Ireland have the potential to erupt into violence. Regrettably that was demonstrated in East Belfast in June, and in other areas where there were contentious parades.

What is particularly concerning is that some elements are intent on inciting violence and radicalising a new generation of young people.

The dangers were summed up recently by Northern Ireland's First and Deputy First Ministers when they said that people must not become complacent about what has been achieved in the peace process.

The International Fund for Ireland has been acutely aware for some time that, despite the remarkable work that continues, many communities have had limited engagement with the wider peace process - and some of them are vulnerable to paramilitary influence.

That's why the Fund has devised a strategy specifically tailored to support peace building and reconciliation in those communities which have not received the full benefit of the peace process.

We are now actively seeking further international funding to take this essential work forward. We believe that with a 25-year track record of success as a neutral, independent body working with grass-roots community organisations the Fund is well placed to address this issue.

A recent financial assistance package of £4.6m (€5.5m) approved by the Board of the International Fund for Ireland for initiatives to improve cross-community and cross-border relations (reported in this edition of Fund News) demonstrates that the work of building community relations is a long-term task.

The Fund is working in some of our most marginalised communities to promote mutual understanding and respect so that we can meet our objective of establishing a peaceful society free from fear, isolation, mistrust and the threat of violence.

However, virtually all the international donations currently pledged to the Fund have been committed to programmes and projects, and all will be paid out by 31 December 2013.

Communities working in interface areas have made it clear to us and to elected representatives that without continuing support from the Fund there is a high risk that the progress made in recent years could be undone and result in destabilising the peace process. The British and Irish governments, and the Northern Ireland Executive, agree that the Fund is well positioned to deal with these challenges.

Discussions with representatives for the US and European Union, the primary donor countries, have led us to believe that there is strong support for our proposal and we now await the outcome of their deliberations.

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International Fund for Ireland announces £4.6m / €5.5m support for peace building, reconciliation and community relations projects

Dr Rooney continued: "The Fund is committed to breaking down traditional barriers in order to help build positive relations between the two main communities on the island of Ireland.

"The funding will go towards a number of projects which will break new ground in our unstinting efforts to overcome the legacy of the Troubles and to establish cross-community cooperation and reconciliation as the norm in our society."

The International Fund for Ireland's funding includes:

- The Fund's Community Based Economic and Social Regeneration Programme will provide £2.7m / €3.2m to several projects to promote cross-community and cross-border contact in recognised areas of disadvantage and social isolation. The projects will help to bring about lasting community development and positive change. Among the beneficiaries will be Inishowen Women's Information Network & Mid Ulster Women's Network. Their project, Exploring New Directions, will receive £214,895 / €257,874 for a 2-year programme of activities aimed at encouraging women in rural communities to engage in civic activity in their community and to share this with women in other communities on a cross-border and cross-community basis.
- The Fund's Community Bridges Programme will provide £1.5m / €1.8m to six projects to continue community relations and reconciliation work. The Shankill Parish Caring Association in Lurgan will receive £286,286 / €343,543 to extend their successful Youth Reach Project to involve more young people in the town, to reach out to adults and to recruit and train local volunteers to help strengthen community cohesion across Lurgan.
- £309,800 / €371,760 allocated under the Fund's Sharing in Education Programme towards the Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, Together Through Culture (TTC) Project. Reconciliation is a central theme of TTC and it is hoped that the project will help to break down barriers by creating links between school communities. TTC is aimed at primary and post-primary schools.

Full details of this latest funding package are available at the International Fund for Ireland's website: www.internationalfundforireland.com



Volunteering in the Community Programme Launch

A programme promoting volunteering in the community, devised by Donegal Local Development Company Ltd, was officially launched in Donegal in May by Phil Hogan TD, Minister for Environment, Community & Local Government.

The Fund committed €236,750 to the Programme under its Community Based Economic and Social Regeneration Programme. It will target unemployed and socially excluded young persons from disadvantaged areas in the Donegal border area with a particular focus on equipping participants with the skills and motivation to pursue volunteering opportunities in the region and to explore life/career paths alternative to mainstream employment.

The Programme will integrate with the President's Gaisce Awards Scheme and will be delivered in seven courses of 12 weeks duration over a two and a half-year period. Each course will have a participant rate of 10 persons which will cover such topics as volunteering, reconciliation at both the personal and community level and personal skills training.

Donegal Local Development Company Ltd has a strong track record in delivering local development programmes addressing

the social, economic, cultural and environmental development of its catchment region, which primarily covers the towns/villages in that region of Donegal outside the Gaeltacht and Inishowen.



At the launch of the Volunteering in the Community Programme in the Lakeside Centre, Ballyshannon, from left: Molly Reynolds, Donegal Local Development Company Ltd; Paddy Harte, Senior Development Officer, International Fund for Ireland; Phil Hogan, TD, Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government; John Starrett, Donegal Local Development Company Ltd; Winston Patterson, Board Member, International Fund for Ireland; and Dr. Caoimhin MacAoidh, CEO, Donegal Local Development Company Ltd.

Forum for Cities in Transition Conference



Pictured at the conference are from left: Junior Minister Jonathan Bell MLA; Deputy First Minister Mr Martin McGuinness MP MLA; Chairperson of the Derry/Londonderry Forum for Cities in Transition Angela Askin; Director, Forum for Cities in Transition Pdraig O'Malley; Junior Minister Martina Anderson MLA; Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, Dr Denis Rooney CBE; Mayor of Derry Mr Maurice Devenney; and Gregory Campbell MP MLA.

The International Fund for Ireland played a key role at the Forum for Cities in Transition second annual conference held in the Guildhall, Derry/Londonderry from 23-26 May 2011.

The Forum works on the principle that cities that are in conflict or have emerged from conflict are in the best position to help other cities in similar situations.

This year's conference brought together international delegates from 12 cities to share information, discuss models of best practice, examine ways of improving community relations, and identify programmes and projects that delegates developed and declared on the final day of the conference to implement in their home cities or as joint projects within their sister cities.

Dr Denis Rooney CBE said: "The conference has provided the Fund with the perfect opportunity to showcase its work to an interested, knowledgeable and very influential national and international audience. With 25 years' experience of developing and funding initiatives that tackle segregation and support reconciliation between Unionists and Nationalists we are committed to sharing our experiences and expertise with other countries and regions who want to move beyond conflict to create more stable civic societies."

174 Trust unveils plans for new Centre for Culture, Arts and Heritage in North Belfast

174 Trust – a cross-community, faith-based, community development organisation based in North Belfast recently celebrated the unveiling of plans for their new Centre for Culture, Arts and Heritage.

The £2.5 million development situated at the Duncairn Complex, Antrim Road, will see the former Presbyterian church restored and transformed. The new building will provide additional shared space and opportunities for people from all traditions and communities to come together to enjoy a variety of programmes and services.

The new facilities have been funded primarily by the International Fund for Ireland's Leaving a Legacy Programme and the Heritage Lottery Fund. It is hoped that the building will be completed by December 2013.



Pictured at the launch are Heather Carey, Chair of 174 Trust; Anne Henderson, International Fund for Ireland; and Jane Williams, Heritage Lottery Fund, with the plans which will see the former Duncairn Presbyterian Church restored and reformed into a centre for culture, arts and heritage.

Tánaiste visits the Greater Whitewell Community Surgery

Pictured is Dr Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland as he accompanies Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore TD on a recent visit to the Greater Whitewell Community Surgery on the Shore Road in North Belfast. An extensive cross-interface community relations project was launched at the venue in January 2011.

From left to right: Joe Hinds, Community Relations Council; Dr Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland; Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore TD; Geraldine O'Kane, Chairperson Greater Whitewell Community Surgery; Cathy Rourke, Vice Chair of Greater Whitewell Community Surgery; and Derek Poole, Director of LINC – Local Initiative for Needy Communities.





Glentoran launches its Our Club, Our Community Programme

Glentoran Football Club officially launched its Our Club, Our Community Programme in July of this year.

The three-year programme – funded by the International Fund for Ireland’s Community Bridges Programme and Belfast City Council’s Good Relations Partnership – aims to make a positive cultural, social and educational contribution through all facets of football.

Working in partnership with the local community, the Programme will deliver a wide range of initiatives to help address issues such as intercommunity prejudice, social inclusion, education and training as well as health and crime prevention.

The Programme will also work towards enhancing Glentoran’s long-standing affiliation with the local community and will help create an inclusive, family orientated atmosphere thereby promoting good relations in East Belfast.

Speaking at the launch, Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, said: “Glentoran Football



Podraig Slane (aged 11) of Glentoran Academy and Pierce Hanna (aged 10) from Cromac Sporting help Glentoran Football Club launch its new Our Club, Our Community Programme. Also pictured from left, Councillor Niall Ó Donnghaile, Lord Mayor of Belfast; Terence Brannigan, Chairman of Glentoran Football Club; Carát Ní Chuilín MLA, Minister for Sport; Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland; Jonathan Bell, Junior Minister; and Councillor Maire Hendron, Belfast City Council Good Relations Partnership.

Club can play a vital role in building positive community relations through its Our Club, Our Community Programme for which the International Fund for Ireland was happy to provide funding from our Community Bridges Programme. The Our Club, Our Community Programme will reach out to all sections of the community and create a club which is inclusive of everyone irrespective of age, gender, race and religion.”



Pictured at the graduation from left to right: (front row) Dr Anita MacNabb, University of Ulster; Bernie Sweeney, Dunfanaghy Family Resource Centre; Jean McLaughlin, Dunfanaghy Family Resource Centre; (back row) Nigel Duke, Edgarstown Residents Association; Gordon Blevins, Corcraun and Redmanville Community Association; and Richard Mealey, Corcraun and Redmanville Community Association. The ceremony was held at the Waterfront Hall.

Hats off to community leaders

Hats off to a number of community leaders who recently graduated from the University of Ulster with a Certificate in Management Practice, which was funded by the International Fund for Ireland’s Community Leadership Programme and managed by the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action.

The Community Leadership Programme is a year long training programme for community groups, in which they receive free leadership training, a bursary of £2,500 and the opportunity to gain a Certificate in Management Practice from the University of Ulster.



Bringing HOPE to older people in Donegal

The Hearing Other People Experiences (HOPE) Project was officially launched on 17 June at the Balor Arts Centre in Ballybofey by Dinny McGinley TD, Minister of State, Department of Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht Affairs.

The two-year HOPE Project, which the Fund is supporting with €165,300 under its Community Based Economic and Social Regeneration Programme has been developed to help address the underlying issue of 'silent' sectarianism.

Devised and promoted by The Voice of Older People in Donegal, the HOPE Project is essentially about strengthening and consolidating the disparate and fragmented voices of older people from all traditions throughout Donegal and challenging the prevailing undercurrent of subtle and silent sectarianism.

At the launch of the HOPE Project in the Balor Theatre, Ballybofey were, from left: Barbara Barnett, Voice of Older People; Dinny McGinley, TD, Minister of State, Arts Heritage and Gaeltacht Affairs; Paddy Harte, International Fund for Ireland; John Gallagher, Voice of Older People; Mary Devlin, International Fund for Ireland; and John McGlinchey, board member, Voice of Older People.



The International Fund for Ireland is an independent international organisation, established by the British and Irish Governments in 1986. The objectives of the Fund are: to promote economic and social advance; and to encourage contact, dialogue and reconciliation between Unionists and Nationalists throughout Ireland. Donors to the Fund are the United States of America, the European Union, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. PO Box 2000 Belfast BT4 1WD / PO Box 2000 Dublin 2 www.internationalfundforireland.com