

FUND Focus



INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

The newsletter of the
International Fund for Ireland
www.internationalfundforireland.com
@FundforIreland

Communities taking risk

CONTENTS

- » Chairman's Introduction p2
- » Schools are seizing chance to take bold steps together – Prof Tony Gallagher p3
- » Case study Donegal Youth Service p4
- » International Fund for Ireland commits €2.2m/£1.57m to 23 community projects p2
- » Case study Inter Estate Project p4
- » Project updates p5- 6

DONORS TO THE FUND ARE:



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



EUROPEAN UNION



CANADA



AUSTRALIA



NEW ZEALAND



CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

By all accounts, the journey towards peace has been remarkable and characterised by the bravery and ambition of those who have been willing to take risks to end conflict and secure compromise at political and grassroots level.

Challenging and encouraging communities to take these, often difficult, steps has been a hallmark of the Fund from its earliest days and 30 years later risk is still in the DNA of our work. It is something that has defined how we operate and, as a result, our interventions have consistently broken new ground in areas where other organisations have not been able or willing to go.

This edition of Fund Focus looks at 'Communities taking Risk' and we are grateful for the insightful contributions from Professor Tony Gallagher, Queens University Belfast, who highlights the creativity and ambition that schools have brought to bridge divisions in education.

Many of those who are bringing the greatest degree of change have accepted the hazards that come with putting themselves on the line. The commitment of these individuals and community groups is inspiring and they, particularly young people, can take great credit from the fact

that their actions are helping to stabilise communities, give women a stronger role in peacebuilding and reduce the threat of sectarian violence. The risks they are taking, with our support, are paying dividends at a challenging time for communities and the Peace Process.

In recent months, series of protracted multi-party talks have concluded with the 'Fresh Start' agreement. It signals movement on a range of complicated issues that the Northern Ireland Assembly has yet to address fully, including how we deal with our past. We commend the efforts to reach this agreement but recognise that there is an urgent need for the political parties to ensure that the commitments to resolve deep-rooted community issues are appropriately implemented.

As new funding streams come on line, it is vital that they respond to the evolving landscapes with the ambition, imagination and a flexibility that communities deserve. The Fund has never shied

away from sharing the learning of its programmes and our door remains open. Since the last edition of Fund Focus, we launched our new 'Community Consolidation – Peace Consolidation 2016-2020' Strategy. It concentrates the resources and uniqueness of the Fund towards the areas where it can make the most significant and pressing contribution. The strategy commits the Fund to an essential scope of work that will pave the way for communities to resolve difficult issues of division.

We can only do this because individuals and communities are willing to take the risks with us. The projects we have supported, and continue to support, should be commended for their bravery in providing strong leadership and stepping up to make a difference.

Dr Adrian Johnston,
CHAIRMAN

International Fund for Ireland commits €2.2m/£1.57m towards 23 community projects

In November, the International Fund for Ireland confirmed €2.2m/£1.57m of financial assistance to support 23 community projects in Northern Ireland and the southern border counties of Ireland.

The funding, approved at the recent Board Meeting in Cavan, will see €2m/£1.44m shared among 16 projects that are working to address difficult issues linked to the legacy of conflict and will engage with young people who are at risk of becoming involved in sectarian or anti-social activity.

A further €179,200/£128,000 will be shared among seven Peace Walls initiatives based in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry that are building confidence within communities and opening new conversations on potential changes to physical divisions.

Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman of the Fund, said: "This allocation of funding is timely and supports urgent action at a community level. The groups receiving support are engaging with those who have

been left behind by the Peace Process and in some cases will work to reduce the influence of those who violently oppose the political settlement. In recent weeks, we've welcomed political progress in a number of important areas.

"In the last three years, we've challenged and encouraged communities to develop brave solutions to difficult issues like parading, paramilitary violence and issues related to the legacy of the conflict. We know there are risks that still need to be taken for peace and the Fund is both prepared and qualified to undertake the heavy lifting in critical areas where others remain unwilling or unable to go."

Further information about all the beneficiaries from the International Fund for Ireland's latest funding package and the Fund's new 2016-2020 strategy

are available at
www.internationalfundforireland.com



ABOVE: Pictured at the International Fund for Ireland Board Meeting in County Cavan are Board Members: (back row) Paddy Harte; Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman; Allen McAdam; Billy Gamble; (front row) Dorothy Clarke; Hilary Singleton and Siobhan Fitzpatrick.

Schools are seizing the chance to take bold steps together



A teacher assists a young student during a lesson delivered as part of the Shared Education Programme.

Today, more than 17 years since the signing of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement, education in Northern Ireland remains heavily divided with 90 per cent of children in Northern Ireland attending single-community schools. Bridging separation in education delivery can be a difficult challenge, but the risks taken in schools are paying dividends says Tony Gallagher, Professor of Education at Queen's University Belfast.

When I attended school we had permission to have our school badge on popper fastenings so that it could be removed when we left the premises. Back in the 1970s in Belfast, school uniforms marked you as Protestant or Catholic, and that could be dangerous.

Schools are important social institutions, so it is no surprise that many looked to them to provide some healing balm in a society wracked by violence. And many educators responded: curriculum initiatives, contact programmes and new integrated schools provided a basis for new learning as many tried to build a peaceful world. And the people who did this showed inspiration, courage, resilience, imagination, bravery and creativity.

But by the time of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement in 1998 any reasonable review of the impact of schools had to acknowledge that, for all the amazing things that had been achieved, there was little evidence of significant systemic change. Preparing young people to live and work in a divided society was an acknowledged priority of schools, but there were many more important priorities and work in this area remained peripheral.

The International Fund for Ireland and Atlantic Philanthropies took an imaginative

step by supporting shared education, a new form of school collaboration to transform the relationships between students, teachers, parents and communities, potentially across every part of Northern Ireland. This was an initiative that combined the efforts of many, but at its heart lay the commitment of teachers to the children in their care, and to children everywhere.

The Sharing Education Programme provided an opportunity that teachers grasped with alacrity: if overcoming a barrier, or solving a problem, or thinking the previously unthinkable enhanced the possibility of a better world for their students, then they would do it: even when it didn't work they learned from the experience.

This was, and is, an approach to change with which government is distinctly uncomfortable: tackling novel problems requires innovation, but innovation requires some tolerance of failure, and that is anathema in the audit-driven culture we inhabit.

Shared education was created by the imagination, creativity and energy of our teachers, but it required that we freed them from the constraints of received wisdom and the suffocation of rules. They have demonstrated the boundless

possibilities that can be realised if we trust professionals, and give them the chance to transform their world, as in so doing they lay the foundations for transforming ours.

And now, if you walk through the corridors of schools involved in shared education, you will see a plethora of school uniforms. What was once a sign of division has become the living sign of a newly developing comfort with difference. And not one of the badges is on poppers.



Tony Gallagher
Professor of Education, Queen's University Belfast
Email: am.gallagher@qub.ac.uk
Twitter: [tgeducation](https://twitter.com/tgeducation)

CASE STUDY:

Inter Estate Project

The Inter Estate Partnership (IEP) works closely with five Unionist housing estates in Antrim town. It offers a range of practical employment-related training courses and aims to help tackle big social issues such as anti-social behaviour, drug abuse and inter-community tensions.

Supported by the International Fund for Ireland through the Peace Impact Programme, the project has assisted more than 40 people over the last year to gain full time employment and continues to offer a lifeline to those living in areas affected by difficult and sensitive issues.

Much of the project area is situated close to an interface and various paramilitary factions still have a significant influence on the estates.

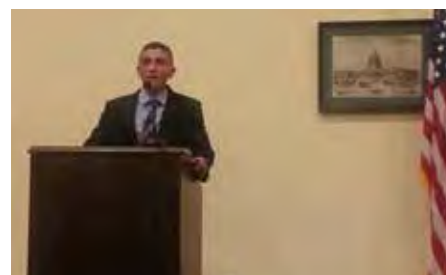
Local participant Samuel Chestnutt turned his life around after learning about the IEP through the Steeple Defenders Flute Band of which he was a member. "I was born and reared in the Ballycraigie

estate in Antrim. Over the years, most of us were involved in rioting and it was normal to see families fleeing from the area. It came to the point where I was on the verge of getting heavily involved with paramilitaries as it seemed to be the norm.

"I decided to give the IEP programme a go because I lost my job as a joiner due to the downturn in the construction industry. I took part in various training courses such as first aid, food hygiene and child protection. Through the security license qualifications I've been lucky enough to work at some of the UK and Ireland's headline music gigs including Electric Picnic, Glastonbury and T in the Park.

"IEP is a great success and works very hard with people and organisations within these areas even though there still is a degree of ongoing conflict. Other communities could use the work that IEP is doing within their own areas to try and help young people."

Raymond Thompson, the Project Officer for



Samuel Chestnutt tells his story at a recent Fund event in Washington DC.

IEP believes that although there is still much work to be done here, young people now have support and are encouraged to be open to possibility and long-term opportunities.

"The programme tackles complex issues such as drugs, alcohol and involvement in criminal activities. We work quite closely with the PSNI who tell us that the level of anti-social behaviour has dropped since the programme began, which is very encouraging.

"This work is critical to address tensions within the community and offer young people a real chance for their future. We hope that the project will continue to shape a positive future for the town."

CASE STUDY:

Donegal Youth Service

Donegal Youth Service operates a unique outreach initiative in the bordering counties of Donegal and Tyrone. It was awarded €87,258 for its ACTIV8 project through the Fund's PIP programme.

Areas in Donegal and Tyrone have had a difficult past and many feel that they have not experienced the benefits of the ceasefire. Issues remain today and young people especially in the 16-24 age bracket are more likely to be at risk of becoming further alienated and targeted by those opposed to the Peace Process.

Strabane in Co. Tyrone is one town in particular that has experienced the troubles from the past. It was known as the most bombed town during this turbulent

period and remains an area that has levels of paramilitary influence.

Donegal Youth Service is working hard to build trust and offer a positive outlook. Charlene Logue, Youth Outreach Manager with Donegal Youth Service and Line Manager of the ACTIV8 Project, believes that taking risks with community engagement is paying off.

"Areas both North and South of the border have strong political divides so there is a real need to improve trust and acceptance in each of the areas we work in.

"The ACTIV8 Project deals with young people who feel left behind by the Peace Process. Issues we encounter include lack of employment opportunities coupled with a deep sense of disaffection with the political parties in the areas. Young people at times often feel intimidation and suppression by various factions operating in local communities too.

"Through the project we have been able to offer a number of courses such as Community Development, Youth Work and Youth Leadership Training. There were 76 young people involved in the project and to date 44 have achieved qualifications. This is really encouraging in areas that traditionally have low educational attainment."

Ongoing projects with four of the groups have played an important role in creating trust and acceptance within local communities. Through the IFI's support, a number of activities like improving the aesthetic appearance of the Resource Centre, visiting patients in hospital and family fun days demonstrate how small steps can make a big difference.

Charlene adds;

"This project has encouraged people to get involved in community life, to learn and accept history, culture and tradition as well as receive training in and facilitate community engagement activity.

"We have worked with all involved to understand the past and used the project as a stepping stone to make people aware of a wider sense of community and how we must share experiences and space in order to move forwards."



LEFT: Pictured are guests at the ACTIV8 presentation- seated, Lorraine Thompson, Regional Director, DYS, Mary Moy, Development Officer, IFI, Dr. Adrian Johnston, Chairman, IFI and Charlene Logue, DYS. Standing, Sheena Lavery and Boris Lisov, youth workers.



Blackmountain Shared Space Project (BMSSP) - Peace Impact Programme

In December, four young people who enrolled on a special apprenticeship-type initiative were honoured for bringing new community leadership and positive change to the Highfield and Springmartin areas of West Belfast. Delivered by Blackmountain Shared Space Project (BMSSP) and Blackmountain Action Group (BMAG) the Community Peer Leadership Programme enabled the participants to complete accredited training and engage in mentoring and peer youth work within their communities. Pictured are Billy Gamble, International Fund for Ireland Board Member (back left) and Joanna Felo, BMSSP (back right); pictured with Blackmountain Shared Space Project peer mentors Dylan McMurray, Chloe O'Boyle, Ryan Moorhead, Alexander McCaw, and youth worker Donna McCracken.

Leafair/Carson/Ultoniae – Peace Impact Programme

In November, an ambitious six-month partnership aimed at addressing common issues in Unionist and Nationalist communities was hailed for its impact across Londonderry/Derry, Ballymena and North Antrim. The three-way partnership brings together experiences from ground-breaking work that has been pioneered by Leafair Community Association in Londonderry/Derry, Ballymena-based Carson Project and Ultoniae Cultural & Heritage Society (UCHS) in North Antrim. The cross-community partnership has opened new and challenging discussions between previously opposed sections of society and develop new ways to tackle common issues linked to isolation and the legacy of conflict.

Pictured at a celebration event for the partnership are (L-R) Lizzie Lindsay, Ultoniae Cultural & Heritage Society; Jim McIlroy, Carson Project; Claire Wilson and Catherine Whoriskey, Leafair Community Association; and Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland.



'Between the Jigs and the Marches' – Peace Impact Programme

Musicians and community representatives from both traditions came together in Sligo in August for the launch of 'Between the Jigs and the Marches' – a cross-border musical celebration in association with Fleadh Cheoil 2015. It formed a distinct element of this year's Fleadh which was opened by Irish President Michael D Higgins. The project aimed to enhance peace and reconciliation by exploring the connections between Ulster Scots and traditional Irish musical traditions as well as their influences on culture and identity. The peace initiative uses free performances, sessions, lectures and exhibitions to stimulate new conversations and connect people through their love of music.

Pictured at the launch are: Michael Hurley, Musical Director and Composer, 'Between the Jigs and the Marches'; Senator Labhrás Ó Murchú; Councillor Thomas Healy, Mayor of Sligo; Dorothy Clarke, Board Member, International Fund for Ireland; Bartley Gavin, Chair of the Fleadh Cheoil Executive Committee.





Ulidia Training – Peace Impact Programme

In August, a County Antrim Peace Impact Project (PIP) celebrated its role in revitalising traditional skills and crafts while reducing tensions and turning around young lives in Ballymoney and surrounding areas. The Ulidia Training Peace Impact Project (PIP) has engaged more than 100 young people in culturally relevant activities that encourage learning and community development through a range of traditional crafts including banner and drum head painting, embroidery and leatherwork. The project also delivers other learning opportunities and offers a chance for wider community dialogue on issues linked to conflict and division. Pictured with Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland (centre left); are Ulidia Training PIP participants Jason Anderson and Richard McConaghie; and project coordinator Kenny Blair (right).

'Reaching Out, Looking Forward' – Peace Impact Programme

In August, Leitrim residents and community representatives came together at St Georges Heritage Centre in Carrick-on-Shannon to mark the completion of the eight-month 'Reaching Out, Looking Forward' project. County Leitrim Grand Orange Lodge delivered the project which incorporated a series of events and initiatives aimed at helping to address some of the negative local attitudes to the Orange Order that exist within both communities. The initial phase of the project incorporated a World War 1 research project as a central theme, offering a unifying cross-community platform to bring both traditions together. It resulted in the publication of 'Leitrim, a County at War', which details the impact of the war years on Leitrim and its people from both traditions. Pictured at the event are (l-r) Catherine Ryan, International Fund for Ireland; Alan Madill, Project Committee Chair; David Morton, Leitrim Orange Lodge; Quincey Dougan, Author; John Bredin, Carrick on Shannon Heritage Group; Dorothy Clarke, International Fund for Ireland Board Member; and Joe Morton, County Grand Master, Leitrim Grand Orange Lodge.



Blackmountain Shared Spaces Project – Peace Walls Programme

A new survey launched in October indicated that the majority of residents living near a cluster of interface sites in West Belfast would back plans to develop a shared community facility on a derelict factory site. The Shared Community Survey, developed by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive for the Black Mountain Shared Space Project (BMSSP), sought the views of 341 people based in the Springmartin/Highfield, Springfield/Moyard and Slibh Dubh areas. The project has been working in close partnership with NI Housing Executive, Belfast City Council and the International Fund for Ireland to explore new options to transform the sites. BMSSP has used assistance from the Fund to build community confidence and support for the transformation of a number of interface sites in the area.

Pictured at the launch of the survey are (L-R) Guy Spence, Belfast Deputy Lord Mayor; Seamus Corr, BMSSP Coordinator; Billy Gamble, International Fund for Ireland Board Member; and Arder Carson, Belfast Lord Mayor.



FUND Focus



INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

The newsletter of the
International Fund for Ireland
www.internationalfundforireland.com
@FundforIreland



Difficult conversations

CONTENTS

- » Chairman's Introduction p2
- » International Fund for Ireland commits £1.9m/€2.7m to 20 peace projects p2
- » Remembering the Future: Using History to Embed Reconciliation – Dr Éamon Phoenix p3
- » Case study Twaddell Woodvale Residents Association p5
- » Case study TDDA p5
- » Project Updates p6

DONORS TO THE FUND ARE:



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



EUROPEAN UNION



CANADA



AUSTRALIA



NEW ZEALAND



CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

For many in the British and Irish Isles, 2016 is a centenary year for important events that continue to shape modern aspects of cultural and national identity.

The impact and legacy of historical events like the 1916 Easter Rising and the Battle of the Somme continue to reverberate strongly within communities. While much focus has been on commemoration, the opportunity to bring communities together in new dialogue on our shared history has not been lost.

This edition of Fund Focus looks at the issue of creating and facilitating difficult conversations between divided communities. This is an area where the Fund has made significant and ground-breaking progress and our new Community Consolidation – Peace Consolidation 2016-2020 Strategy will advance our work within many constituencies that remain deeply divided.

In this year of commemorations, we are grateful for the insightful contribution

from historian Dr Éamon Phoenix, Stranmillis University College, who outlines his perspective on how views of the past can be a powerful tool for reconciliation. His article is compelling and I'd encourage all readers to reflect on how history can be used creatively to break down ancient barriers.

In March, I made my fifth visit to Washington DC as Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland and many conversations touched on how the Fund was facilitating fresh debate with younger generations in interface areas. I was proud to report our successes in areas where communities are equipping young people to become leaders, remove the blight of sectarianism and contribute to conversations on the future of Peace Walls.

This edition features examples of this work including the work of

Twaddell / Woodvale Residents Association, which operates in one of the most complex areas of Northern Ireland, and the Unheard Voices Project, which has enabled many women affected by violence to break the harmful cycle of silence.

This milestone year also marks our 30th year of operation – a remarkable achievement. These three decades of essential work would not have been possible without our international donors and we remain grateful for their enduring support and encouragement.

Dr Adrian Johnston,
CHAIRMAN

International Fund for Ireland commits £1.9m/€2.7m towards 20 peace projects

In February, Peace and Reconciliation projects in Northern Ireland and the southern border counties received a welcome boost as the International Fund for Ireland committed £1.9m/€2.7m towards 20 initiatives.

The funding, approved at the organisation's Board Meeting in Limavady, includes £381,000/€536,000 for four new Personal Youth Development projects (PYDP) that will support vulnerable young people who are unable to access or remain in traditional education and training provision.

More than £760,000/€1m was allocated across nine PIP projects working to transform marginalised communities; and a further £756,000/€1m was allocated to seven initiatives that are developing new dialogue on the future of Peace Walls. Since 2012, the Fund has committed more than £4m/€5.6m towards Peace Walls projects and played a key role in the recent removal of a division on the Crumlin Road in Belfast.

Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland said: "This is a timely commitment that

concentrates much-needed funding towards 20 projects that are stabilising communities and giving young people new positive options. Today's announcement is our largest in the last four years and strengthens our reach in some areas that have been opposed to the political settlement.

"With our assistance, many communities that are vulnerable to violence have become more resilient and remained with the Peace Process. We are supporting groups who are taking measured risks and developing new ideas to transform their communities. The achievements of this approach in recent years are significant and set us apart from other funders."

In November 2015, the Fund unveiled plans to allocate up to £45m towards a range of peace and reconciliation programmes over a five-year period through its 'Community Consolidation –

Peace Consolidation 2016-2020' Strategy. Further information about all the beneficiaries from the International Fund for Ireland's latest funding package is available at www.internationalfundforireland.com



ABOVE: Pictured at the International Fund for Ireland Board Meeting in Limavady are Board Members: Siobhan Fitzpatrick, Allen McAdam, Dr Adrian Johnston (Chairman of the Fund), Hilary Singleton and Billy Gamble.

Remembering the Future: Using History to Embed Reconciliation

Dr Éamon Phoenix



‘In Ireland we have a common history but not a common memory.’

This comment is particularly relevant as the island celebrates the centenary of the 1916 Rising. While Irish Nationalists and Republicans view the Easter Rebellion as the pivotal event in the emergence of the modern Republic, Unionists and Loyalists in Northern Ireland are focussed on a different ‘blood sacrifice’ – that of thousands of Ulster Protestants in the 36th Ulster Division at the Battle of the Somme in July 1916.

Since 2012, Northern Ireland – already in the throes of a fragile Peace Process – has been challenged by the unrolling of a decade of historical anniversaries connected with the Irish Revolution of 1912-22. These include the signing of the Ulster Covenant in 1912, the rise of the opposing political armies – the Ulster Volunteers and Irish Volunteers – (1913), the Great War (1914), the 1916 Rising and

Partition (1920-22). Unsurprisingly, these controversial events still evoke vastly different reactions from the polarised communities that the International Fund for Ireland has been engaging with.

While the ‘Troubles’ have ended and a corner has been turned, feelings remain raw with no agreement in sight on how to deal with the recent past, let alone the events of a century ago. It was perhaps inevitable that political and cultural organisations would celebrate those historic events to which they felt an affinity. But it seemed clear from the outset that government, local councils, museums and heritage bodies had a responsibility to approach this ‘Decade of Anniversaries’ in a pro-active, sensitive and inclusive manner which would build on the progress made by the politicians since 1998.

This would seek to place centennial events in context while promoting constructive dialogue and mutual respect. In a landmark series of public talks on the history of Ireland from 1912-22 in 2012, the organisers – the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council and Heritage Lottery Fund – stressed that we in Ireland must take care ‘to remember the future’ as well as the past.

In particular, any funded initiatives dealing with 1912 or 1916 must follow certain guiding principles: they must be based on the historical facts; seek to explode myths and propagandistic distortions and acknowledge differing narratives. Not only should the 1912 Ulster Covenant be seen in the context of the Home Rule crisis of 1912-14, but it should be pointed out that there were two opposing Covenants: the

In a whole range of imaginative ways individuals and interface communities have been enabled through Fund-supported initiatives to explore events outside their historical comfort zones.

iconic document signed by Carson and 218,000 Ulster Protestants, and a pro-Home Rule Protestant Covenant calling for 'friendship and reconciliation' in Ireland. It is also essential in any public debate to explore the links between Ulster Protestant resistance to Home Rule and Irish Nationalist reactions.

As the historian, Michael Laffan has noted, in rejecting the right of the British Parliament to impose an all-Ireland Home Rule on the Protestant North and launching an illegal army (the UVF), the Unionist leader, Sir Edward Carson 'rekindled the Fenian flame' of revolutionary nationalism - until then in abeyance. The secret Irish Republican Brotherhood praised the UVF which had (unwittingly) provided the necessary 'spark' for the launch of the Irish Volunteers and the subsequent Rising. Without the martial tramp of 'Carson's Army' in the North in 1913-14, the 1916 Rising could not have happened.

Despite the challenges and, indeed, dangers of 'remembering' such events in a divided society, one of the most positive and uplifting aspects of the 'Decade of Centenaries' in Northern Ireland has been the willingness of marginalised communities - on both sides of the politico-sectarian divide - to engage in shared activities and dialogue. Many of these events - talks, dramas, cultural workshops and expert historical tours - have been supported by the International Fund for Ireland.

This funding has, for example, enabled young people from Loyalist and Republican areas, including the Inter Estate Project in Antrim, to visit sites associated with '1916' in Dublin.



In Mid-Ulster the Sperrin Cultural Awareness Association has used support from the Fund to deliver an educational roadshow that examines both the Somme and Easter Rising Centenaries.

A collaboration between three Fund projects, Leafair/Carson/Ultoniae, will take people of both traditions to remembrance events with the aim of using historical events to deepen mutual understanding of the communities today.

In isolated border areas events highlighting the local impact of the Rising and the Great War have helped to ease tensions and promote vibrant cross-border and cross-community engagement. One of the Fund's Peace Impact projects led by Leitrim Orange Order has produced a book that uses World War I as a way to identify shared heritage and common narratives between communities in the county.

In a whole range of imaginative ways individuals and interface communities have been enabled through Fund-supported initiatives to explore events outside their historical comfort zones. A great Irish historian once wrote: 'To understand the past in Ireland is to cease to live in it'.

Thus, the centenary of 1916 affords an opportunity as well as a challenge: an opportunity to cut away the cobwebs of myth and misunderstanding and promote a more informed and balanced view of the past. History - long a source of division - is helping to break down ancient barriers and promote reconciliation.

Dr Éamon Phoenix is Principal Lecturer in History and Head of Lifelong Learning



at Stranmillis University College, Queen's University Belfast. He chaired the successful public lecture series in the Ulster Museum on Centenaries, Remembering the Future. He is a member of the Taoiseach's Expert Advisory Group on Centenaries and an historical consultant on community historical engagement.

TOP: Sperrin Cultural Awareness Association (SCAA) is using support from the Fund to deliver a roadshow examining both the Somme and Easter Rising Centenaries. Pictured is Darren Richardson, SCAA Development Officer

BOTTOM: The County Leitrim Orange Order Peace Impact Project published a book, 'Leitrim, A County At War', which used World War I to identify shared heritage and common narratives in the county.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Young People involved in the TRIAX Peace Walls Project pictured at a study visit to Dublin.

CASE STUDY:

Twaddell Woodvale Residents Association

The North Belfast interface between Twaddell Avenue and the Crumlin Road is one of the most complex and contentious areas of Northern Ireland.

In 2013, the area became the site of a Loyalist protest camp following a decision by the Parades Commission to restrict an Orange Order parade from marching past the largely Nationalist Ardoyne neighbourhood.

The protest, which is still ongoing, has had a detrimental impact on the residents living in Twaddell Avenue. Access to and from the area is restricted on a nightly basis, all meaningful cross-community work has ceased and, as the neighbourhood became stigmatised, some statutory agencies were disengaging.

Last year, the Twaddell Woodvale Residents Association gained £68,749 of support from the International Fund for Ireland for a Peace Impact Project that has operated adjacent to, but is not aligned with, the Twaddell protest camp. The project has established new links with statutory authorities and rebuilt confidence and capacity among residents with the aim of stimulating

positive transformation in the area. Colin Anderson Chairman of Twaddell Woodvale Residents Association acknowledges the difficulties of delivering a peace project along the interface. "There are unique challenges in this area that will take time to unlock, but it's important that the community has opportunities to develop and transform", he said. "This project is supporting residents to take part in honest and open conversations about difficult community issues and giving people access to skills that can change lives for the better."

In just 10-months residents have been driving a resurgence and secured positive and sustainable changes in their area. The project has also enrolled more than 300 people on a wide range of training and learning programmes. Its success has encouraged the Fund to recommit additional resources to extend and expand the work of the project for a further 12 months.

Colin says: "many of the courses delivered in our first phase were oversubscribed and we expect interest to be high again in the year ahead. This is a proud community that has been unfairly labelled because of circumstances beyond our control. Projects like ours are assisting residents to



address negative perceptions and reconnect with statutory authorities. Confidence is returning and there is a sense that we are beginning to collectively turn a corner."

Twaddell Woodvale Residents Association is a registered charity established in 1992 and works to promote all residents of the Twaddell and Upper Woodvale area and its environs by co-operating with the statutory authorities, voluntary and community organisations and residents.

ABOVE: International Fund for Ireland Chairman Dr Adrian Johnston Pictured with participants from the Twaddell Woodvale Residents Association Project Jonathan Kinner (left) and Kevin Hu.

CASE STUDY:

Tyrone, Derry and Donegal Action

The partition of Ireland and the recent conflict have had, and continue to have, a profound impact on the Protestant communities in Ireland's minority border counties.



Over several decades, a decline in the Protestant population and sense of vulnerability and isolation reinforced the belief that the community should keep their heads down and keep to themselves. The closure of cross-border roads during the Troubles led to further isolation with many cut off from their friends, neighbours and in some cases they would have to take a considerable journey to attend their regular church as the direct route may have been closed.

Albert Allen, Programmes Director for Tyrone, Derry and Donegal Action (TDDA) based in Raphoe, says Fund support is helping to break decades of self-imposed silence.

"When we designed this project we were conscious that there was a certain amount of 'silent sectarianism' in the county. Evidenced not by direct discrimination, but rather that the majority community can sometimes seem oblivious to the needs of the minority. This, together with pressures felt by Protestants in Donegal

during upsurges of violence in the North has led to a certain amount of "keeping their heads down".

TDDA recognises the difficulty in getting people to open up about the challenges facing the community. But, with Fund support, it has organised a number of workshops on such themes as Protestants and the Irish Language, men's health, parading, victims and survivors, the role of churches and cultural organisations in peace building and the attitudes of Protestants in the Republic. Ex-combatants also got involved in the process.

Albert says: "The story telling sessions, where victims and survivors related their experiences during the Troubles, were very powerful and quite dramatic. They showed what some people had come through and how terrible the community divisions were."

LEFT: A Tyrone, Derry and Donegal Action study visit in 2015.



Unheard Voices - Peace Impact Project

A ground-breaking anthology that captures 28 lost stories from women directly or indirectly affected by the Troubles was launched in Derry-Londonderry in March. Developed by the Unheard Voices Project with support from the International Fund for Ireland and Creggan Enterprises, 'Beyond the Silence' is the first publication to focus exclusively on the experiences of women who have suffered through the conflict but have been forgotten in the Peace Process. Since 2013, Unheard Voices has engaged with more than 1,500 women in the Derry-Londonderry area. Pictured (L-R) are Sharon Austin and Marie Newton, two of 28 women to recall their 'lost' stories, with the Unheard Voices Project Coordinator Carol Cunningham and International Fund for Ireland Chairman, Dr Adrian Johnston.

Sligo Young Enterprises – Peace Impact Programme

Residents and community representatives in Sligo recently came together in February to launch the third year of the 2016 Football in the Community programme. The innovative youth training project, administered by the Sligo Young Enterprises and supported by the International Fund for Ireland, has already successfully engaged with 60 young people aged between 16-25 years. The youth development project gives young people the chance to gain accreditation qualifications and become leaders in their communities. Pictured at the launch event are Garda David Clarke; Steve Feeney, Ballinamallard FC; Catherine Ryan, International Fund for Ireland; Ciaran Kelly, Football in the Community Sligo; and Sergeant Padraig Cunnane.



AMBIT

In March, community leaders from Northern Ireland and the southern border counties teamed up with US community groups to share exemplars of good practice as part of the annual AMBIT programme. Organised by the International Fund for Ireland and the U.S. Consulate in Belfast, the study visit selected 16 participants from projects supported through the Fund's Peace Impact Programme (PIP) and Peace Walls Programme (PWP) and engaged with community, voluntary and public sector organisations in Boston and Washington DC. The 2016 AMBIT group is pictured with guests at the Irish Embassy in Washington DC.



FUND Focus



INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

The newsletter of the
International Fund for Ireland
www.internationalfundforireland.com
@FundforIreland



Building Peace

CONTENTS

- » Chairman's Introduction p2
- » Global Peace: Dr Arun Gandhi p3
- » Case Study: Inter Estates Partnership p5
- » €1.17m/£980,000 towards 13 community projects p2
- » Case Study: Donegal Youth Service p5
- » Project Updates p6

DONORS TO THE FUND ARE:



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



EUROPEAN UNION



CANADA



AUSTRALIA



NEW ZEALAND



CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Peace building does not and cannot take place in a vacuum. Today we live in a world that is better connected, but where the polarisation of vulnerable people and promotion of extremist agendas has become more prevalent.

As the threat of violent polarisation has become a critical global issue, so too have the lessons from long-term conflict transformation. This year we mark the 30th Anniversary since we started our work to create the conditions for sustainable peace and prosperity on the island of Ireland. Though our mission is not yet complete, our experiences to date can act as a model for intervention efforts in other regions that are seeking to move beyond division and create more stable societies.

It is only right that we recognise the distance we have travelled and adequately signpost the way for others dealing with the blight of sectarianism and violence. This edition of Fund

Focus looks at the broad theme of sharing and learning in peace building and how experiences should be examined for the benefit of others. In recent weeks, I had the privilege of meeting with Dr Arun Gandhi, an internationally respected peace builder and a grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, at the launch of the John Hume and Thomas P O'Neill Chair in Peace.

Dr Gandhi, who modestly refers to his job as a 'peace farmer', offers powerful reflections on the causes of violence and steps for reconciliation are thought provoking for all. The Fund is grateful that Dr Gandhi has offered to share his compelling views in this edition of Fund Focus and I strongly recommend his article.

We must always be seeking new ways to improve, adapt and develop our experiences, but should be mindful that learning is of course a two-way process. We have an obligation to share the models that have helped advance us towards a lasting peace and to encourage others to emerge from and avoid conflict.

The Fund's three decades of essential work would not have been possible without our international donors and we remain grateful for their enduring support and encouragement.

Dr Adrian Johnston,
CHAIRMAN

International Fund for Ireland commits €1.17m/£980,000 towards 13 community projects

In June, 13 projects including eight in Northern Ireland and five in the Southern border counties were awarded €1.17m/£980,000 by the Fund.

The allocation, approved at the Fund's Board Meeting in County Sligo, includes more than half a million Euro (€600,000/£500,000) for six projects that will support vulnerable young people to enrol in good relations activities that enhance their education and employment prospects. These yearlong projects are supported through the Fund's Personal Youth Development Programme, which assists young people to make positive choices in their lives and build resilience so they can excel in difficult environments.

A similar amount (€579,000/£480,000) will also be shared among seven projects under the Peace Impact Programme. This aims to address difficult issues linked to the legacy of conflict and engage with people who are at risk of becoming involved in sectarian or anti-social activity.

Commenting on the announcement Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman of the

International Fund for Ireland, said: "The Fund is focused on equipping communities, and young people in particular, with the means to resist and disrupt the dangerous spiral of division and disaffection. This allocation of financial support is a timely investment and will support vulnerable people who are at risk of being exploited by criminal or armed groups. The projects receiving financial support have set out bold and innovative plans to build confidence, resilience and leadership within their communities.

"We cannot and do not seek to control the external factors that impact on communities, but we can help foster the resilience needed to overcome existing and emerging challenges. We know there are risks that still need to be taken for a lasting peace and the quality of our interventions has never been more evident."

More information on the latest funding package is available at www.internationalfundforireland.com



ABOVE: Pictured at the Board Meeting in Sligo are Board Members: (back row) Allen McAdam; Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman; Billy Gamble; Paddy Harte; (front row) Siobhan Fitzpatrick CBE; Dorothy Clarke and Hilary Singleton.



GLOBAL PEACE

I very recently had the honour of delivering the inaugural address at the University of Ulster's John Hume and Thomas P O'Neill Chair in Peace Studies event. The Ulster University in Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland, is not only beautiful at this time of year but is among the few Universities in the world willing to look at World Peace a little differently.

This is substantially due to the fresh, open-minded approach of the first Chair, Dr Brandon Hamber, and his close association with the peace process in South Africa. It is also creditable that progressive organisations like the International Fund for Ireland, ably led by Dr Adrian Johnston, deem it necessary to fund a Peace Studies Chair to educate future generations in the art of building peace. Building is the only way to describe the work of peace because peace cannot be wished for nor can it come simply by ending wars and fighting.

While humanity has progressed in many ways we haven't made much change

in resolving conflicts. We still have the cavemen attitude towards anger and resorting to violence to resolve a dispute. What has changed is the weapons we use. They have become more and more potent. The gist of my talk was that if we want peace in this world it is important to understand and appreciate the two key ingredients. First, what does peace look like? Nine out of ten people will say no wars, no fighting means peace. Yet, this is only a fraction of the problem. Second, what does "violence" look like?

We are obsessively focused on "physical" violence manifest in the hurtful and bloody acts that lead to injury and death. What

we are unaware of is that we have learned to practice "passive" (non-physical) violence in the form of exploitation, verbal insults, psychological abuse, prejudices, hating, wasting resources, over consumption and so on. All we need to do, individually and collectively, is self-examination to determine how we are indulging in passive violence every day.

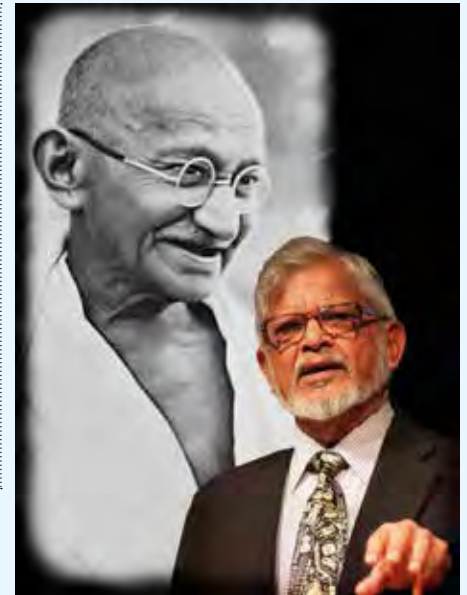
The result of the introspection can be shocking. Selfishness and greed have been ingrained in us and is reflected in our relationships with each other as individuals as well as nations. To personally benefit we are willing to go to any extent within legal limits but

not within moral limits. Nations of the world have based their foreign policies on what is good for that nation. The result is that the economically powerful nations can and do exploit the natural and other resources of the poor nations for their own benefit. No one gives much thought to the harmful results of such exploitation on the rest of the world.

The objective always is to serve and protect "our citizens" and "our country" at the expense of the rest of the world. We have lost sight of the important fact that as individuals and as nations we are interconnected, interrelated and interdependent and that exploitation

and destruction anywhere is ultimately going to lead to exploitation and destruction everywhere. Non-physical passive violence that individuals and nations practice rampantly fuels the fire of physical violence or wars. No country, however powerful and rich, can ensure its safety and stability if the rest of the world is being destroyed.

Therefore, the only way we can live in peace is if we transform our harmful habits and become more conscious of the needs of others that then results in promoting harmony. I call on each one of us to be the change you wish to see in the world.



ABOVE: Dr Arun Gandhi is Founder and President of the Gandhi Worldwide Education Institute and refers modestly to himself as a Peace Farmer.

“The only way we can live in peace is if we transform our harmful habits and become more conscious of the needs of others that then results in promoting harmony.”

—DR ARUN GANDHI



IFI funded groups attend the guest lecture given by Dr Gandhi at Ulster University's Magee campus. Also pictured are Chair in Peace, Professor Brandon Hamber, Dr Gandhi and Chairman of IFI, Dr Adrian Johnston.

CASE STUDY:

Donegal Youth Service

ACTIV8 is a unique youth outreach project run by Donegal Youth Service that works across the bordering counties of Donegal and Tyrone.

Areas targeted by this project are often affected by deprivation, social issues and paramilitary behaviour.

“Our ACTIV8 Project deals with young people from Nationalist and Unionist backgrounds who feel left behind by the Peace Process” says Charlene Logue, a Youth Outreach Manager.

“We’ve been able to offer a number of community development, youth work and leadership training opportunities to help them make positive changes in their lives.

“Participants are continuing to build on their qualifications and are currently working towards certificates in Youth Training. There are also 24 young people who are now mentors for new recruits to the project, which is really encouraging.”

Charlene recently took part in the Fund’s annual ‘AMBIT’ study programme in the USA where participants share experiences of community engagement and models

of peace building. For her the experience offered invaluable access to other youth projects across Ireland and a chance to learn from innovative models and good practice in the United States.

“The areas we work in can at times be sensitive and it was great to share these experiences with other groups. There is a common thread amongst peace building here – difficult conversations are a part of what we do but they are a necessity to build trust with participants.

“Engaging in discussions with others who work in this field also demonstrated that despite background, history and culture everyone experiences similar issues at a grassroots level.”

The Fund supports a wide range of initiatives that promote dialogue and reconciliation throughout Ireland. Charlene understands the importance of applying lessons from various projects to help build a more successful future for youth within the Donegal and Tyrone areas.

“The ongoing work of ACTIV8 has given a lifeline to local youths enabling them to play an active role within their community.



This project is playing a key part in creating opportunities within marginalised areas. The project acts as a stepping stone to make people aware of a wider sense of community and how we must share experiences and space in order to evolve.”

“Areas like Strabane and Lifford are a testament to the success and impact of the programme. Participants have not only fully engaged with the project but have also rejuvenated the local community centre and there is a real sense of positivity and people moving forward together.”

ABOVE: Pictured are guests at the ACTIV8 celebration event in 2015 at Fir Trees hotel, Strabane; (seated) Lorraine Thompson, Regional Director, DYS; Mary Moy, Development Officer, IFI; Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman, IFI; and Charlene Logue, DYS; (Standing), Sheena Laverty and Boris Lisov, youth workers.

CASE STUDY:

Inter Estates Partnership

Based in Antrim town, the Inter Estates Partnership (IEP) is supported from the Fund’s Peace Impact Programme (PIP) to motivate, inspire and build confidence within and between five Loyalist housing estates in the town.

It offers a range of practical employment-related training courses and aims to help tackle big social issues such as anti-social behaviour, drug abuse and inter-



Some of the young people from the IEP at an event in Antrim.

community tensions. To date, more than 350 people have completed accredited training courses through the project and some 70 participants have secured part-time/full-time employment and many others have felt able to return to education.

Raymond Thompson, Project Officer for IEP, says that the support and encouragement have helped rekindle an interest and commitment to personal development among young people who previously believed they had limited prospects. He has been active in promoting the success of his project with other community groups and hopes the model can help build positive future options for more young people in different areas.

Raymond was also one of the participants who took part in the Fund’s AMBIT study trip to the USA where groups were able to share similar peace building experiences and look to new ways to approach youth engagement.

“On the recent AMBIT trip, I was able to share as well as learn about progressive methods of youth intervention including re-entry into society after imprisonment.”

Many projects that are supported through the Fund work in disadvantaged areas and the AMBIT experience opened up new conversations about how to address shared and emerging issues.

“It is evident that many communities face similar problems but there is one thing that unites every project regardless of race or religion – we want the best for the young people within every community.

“Even though IEP has experienced considerable success there is always room to build upon this and shape better communities. It is encouraging to see that our young people view one another as equals with no religious barriers and in terms of peace building here that can only be a good thing.”



SLIG- Suffolk and Lenadoon Interface Group Peace Walls Programme

SLIG and Lower Oldpark Community Association (LOCA) recently ran a 16-week scheme, which brought together almost 30 people in west and north Belfast to identify how changes to Peace Walls could improve their everyday lives. Supported by the Fund's Peace Walls Programme and Belfast City Council, the scheme gave participants the chance to undertake technical mapping and re-visioning exercises, visit other Peace Walls projects and complete practical training courses. The project equipped young people with knowledge and skills as well as begin conversations around sensitive issues such as sectarianism and physical division. Pictured are Chloe Pritchard and Aaron Stewart who were among almost 30 young people to give their views on Peace Walls.

Chair in Peace Event Ulster University, Magee Campus

Dr Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mohandas K. "Mahatma" Gandhi, delivered a keynote speech on peace and non-violence at the University of Ulster's Magee Campus in Derry/Londonderry. This was the first headline event to be hosted by the new John Hume and Thomas P O'Neill Chair in Peace, Professor Brandon Hamber. Dr Gandhi met with students and staff and talked about the importance of learning for future generations to build and capture a culture of peace. The role of the Chair is to build upon the work of INCORE and apply lessons from the Northern Ireland Peace Process to other conflict zones as well as train the next generation of peace builders. Pictured at the event: Dr Arun Gandhi; Brandon Hamber, Chair in Peace; and Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman, International Fund for Ireland.



Twaddell Woodvale Resident's Association Peace Impact Programme

Based near a contentious interface in north Belfast, Twaddell Woodvale Residents Association has been working with local authorities to rebuild confidence within the local community. At a recent showcase event, the project highlighted its success and progress particularly with young people who were more at risk in getting caught up in interface violence. In 10 months, over 300 people in the area have been able to access a wide range of training and learning programmes. Pictured with Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman, International Fund for Ireland, are project participants Jonathan Kinner (left) and Kevin Hu.



FUND Focus



INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

The newsletter of the
International Fund for Ireland
www.internationalfundforireland.com
@FundforIreland

Building Resilience

CONTENTS

- » Chairman's Introduction p2
- » International Fund for Ireland Commits £3.6m/€4.3m to 32 Community Projects p2
- » Northern Ireland: The Mental Health Legacy: Prof Peter McBride p3
- » Case Study – Black Mountain Shared Space p5
- » Case study – Teach O'scail p5
- » Project Updates p6

DONORS TO THE FUND ARE:



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



EUROPEAN UNION



CANADA



AUSTRALIA



NEW ZEALAND



CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Supporting young people to develop positively despite growing up in challenging and difficult environments, has been a longstanding priority for the International Fund for Ireland.

Resilience is not something that people either have or do not have – it can be learned and taught. Capacity exists within all of us to adapt and employ new ideas and approaches that enable progression when things get tough.

However, support is not always open or accessible to those who need it most. Often the Fund's remit brings us close to vulnerable people who have suffered or continue to suffer as a result of the conflict. Our programmes, particularly those delivered in the last five years, have been successful in engaging groups and individuals who face a multitude of complex risks to change their circumstances.

Suicide rates in Northern Ireland have been the highest of the UK regions for the last two years. Shockingly more people have taken their lives in this region in the 18 years that followed the Troubles than were killed during the 30 years of conflict. Though mental wellbeing is not within the scope of the Fund, building resilience against a range of difficult influences is a core part of our delivery – as the following pages demonstrate.

We're particularly grateful to Professor Peter McBride, the Group Chief Executive of NIAMH who has penned an expert article on the residual effect of conflict-related trauma on young

lives. His views are thought-provoking and indicate that resilience is not just about those considered vulnerable, but is a wider societal concern.

With the backing of all our donors, the Fund has long been at the forefront of supporting people to raise their aspirations and make positive choices that can rebuild their lives and their communities. The achievements of our approach are significant and continue to set us apart from other funders.

Dr Adrian Johnston
CHAIRMAN

International Fund for Ireland Commits £3.6m/€4.3m towards 32 Community Projects

The latest package brings total funding to more than £6.5m/€8m funding in 2016

The allocation, approved at the organisation's recent Board Meeting in Newcastle, County Down, will see £2.1m/€2.6m shared among 17 projects that are working to address difficult issues linked to the legacy of conflict and will engage with young people who are at risk of becoming involved in sectarian or anti-social activity.

More than £804,000/€966,000 will be shared among 10 new projects that will support vulnerable young people who are unable to access or remain in traditional education. It will encourage young people to take part in good relations activities and transform their lives by providing alternatives to violence, crime and addiction. A further £612,000/€735,000 has been allocated to five initiatives that are developing new dialogue on the future of Peace Walls.

Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "Since our Community Consolidation – Peace Consolidation Strategy 2016- 2020 launched last year, we've invested with confidence in bold projects that have



enabled communities to reverse the severe effects of division and divert young people away from the influence of armed gangs.

"However, community appetite for these initiatives is much greater than the resources we alone can assign to it. The time is right for others to adopt and support Fund interventions and deliver on the promise of a shared society that is free from sectarianism and the shadow

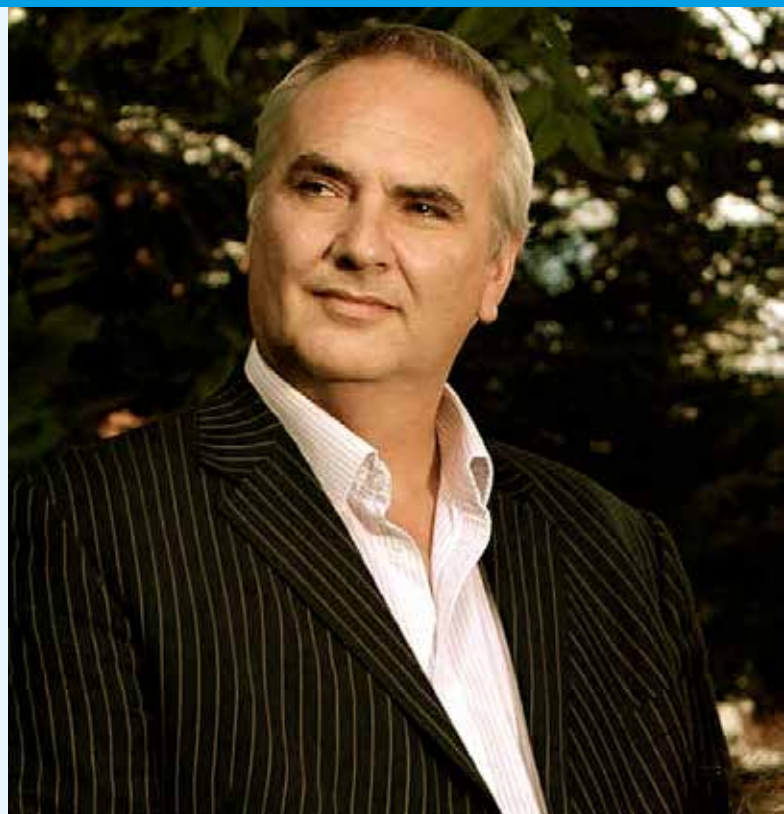
of paramilitaries." More information on the latest funding package is available at www.internationalfundforireland.com

ABOVE: Pictured at the Board Meeting in Newcastle are Board Members: (L-R) Billy Gamble; Paddy Harte; Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman; Allen McAdam; and Hilary Singleton.

Prof Peter McBride

NORTHERN IRELAND: THE MENTAL HEALTH LEGACY...

'In Ireland we have a common history but not a common memory.' With the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, Northern Ireland began a transition to the next stage of its journey towards peace.



Over the period from 1969 to 1998 it is well documented that over 3,500 people lost their lives as a direct result of the conflict. However, it has been much more difficult to measure the legacy impact of the Troubles. Those who are left with physical injuries make present in society a very tangible reminder of the terrible consequences of violence, however those with psychological injuries carry much less visible scars.

The struggle that we have had as a society to agree how we deal with these psychological legacy issues reflects both a lack of consensus on how we define "victimhood", alongside an anxiety about how we manage the scale of the impact, were we to acknowledge that it was extensive. There is the need to develop a framework to describe the psychological impact of Northern Ireland's violent past, not only to account for those directly affected, but also to include the broad societal effects, which, when left unacknowledged, compromise time and time again our efforts to make a sustainable peace.

Such a framework might structure those in society within three groups.

Firstly those psychologically affected directly by the conflict. For these individuals, their symptoms are directly attributable to violent experiences, and within this group there are high levels of clinically diagnosed PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).

Research carried out by the Bamford Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing, which is based at the Magee campus of Ulster University, and the Northern Ireland Centre for Trauma and Transformation (NICTT), presented findings in 2011 indicating that Northern Ireland had the highest rates of PTSD in the world.

This research estimated that violence had been a distinctive cause of mental health problems for over 18,000 people in NI, and that nearly 40% of the population have had a conflict related traumatic incident. There have been a number of research initiatives like this one that have sought to quantify this direct impact, however what is much more difficult to quantify is the indirect impact, and for this we must consider other data.

The second group a framework might identify are those who are living with serious mental illness, but who do not necessarily personally link their illness to conflict, i.e. they don't identify themselves as victims or survivors. According to a World Health Organisation (WHO) study in 2012, the lifetime prevalence of mental health problems among the general population in NI is 48.6%, this is higher than any other part of the UK.

It does not seem unreasonable that at least part of the reason for this is that the experience of living through violence subsequently compromises a

population's psychological resilience, leading to the possibility of increased levels of mental health problems. There would be significant value in further research to explore these links.

The third, and most problematic, categorisation in a new framework, is based on the assertion that living through years of violent conflict results in a residual impact on all members of a population. If this is true, the psychological legacy of the Troubles resides not only in those directly affected and those struggling with a diagnosed mental illness, but also with the rest of us, who do not fall within either of these categories.

While this is extremely difficult to evidence in the same scientific models as the prevalence of disease, it can be better understood as a sociological phenomenon.

Individuals and societies that live with ongoing violence, and the threat of violence, over extended periods – 30 years in NI, develop coping mechanisms, defence mechanisms, to manage the threat. These societal psychological defences become normalised over time, and do not disappear when peace arrives. A society that has adapted to cope with war, does not necessarily easily adapt to peace when it comes.

Further, the very characteristics that are required by a society to

consolidate peace are the ones most often compromised by years of conflict. The qualities of trust, forgiveness, compromise, generosity, empathy, understanding and friendliness are all required to construct a meaningful peace, but are extremely difficult to exhibit when psychologically we have been conditioned to expect conflict and threat.

If there is merit in this model, it leads to conclusions about how services might be constructed. Based on the evidence, there is clearly and obvious rationale for the provision of trauma informed psychological services for victims and survivors.

However, the debate about the provision of psychological services to victims and survivors has been complicated and compromised by the politicisation of the issue, and the conflation of psychological needs with the needs for truth recovery, justice and restitution.

If the above framework has merit, it is that it extends the scope of the psychological legacy of the conflict both in terms of its definition and its scale. It moves it away from being an

exclusively clinical issue (i.e. PTSD), to having a broader social impact. It moves it from being located exclusively within a defined group of victims and survivors, to the whole of society.

Using this framework as a template, we should provide quality trauma services to the first group of those directly affected; we should provide trauma informed clinical services to the second group of those living with mental illness, and we should make psychological resilience services easily available to the rest of the population.

Because of the heightened political and social sensitivities, it is important that these services are not identified as “victim and survivor services”, and they should certainly not all come under the banner of trauma services. These are probably best characterised as “Community Resilience Services”.

Destigmatising mental health issues, and encouraging positive help seeking behaviour are key to the effective uptake and delivery of such services.

Considering carefully the use of different language that de-pathologises and

de-stigmatises mental health issues is critically important. Whatever the source of their distress, people will be much more likely to access services that improve their wellbeing, build their resilience, and give them hope.

If those services are appropriately constructed, taking account of the psychological impact of the conflict directly and indirectly on each one of us, then the struggle of dealing with the past can be transformed into the challenge of building the future.

Peter McBride is Group Chief Executive of NIAMH. NIAMH is one of the largest social enterprises on the island of Ireland, providing services North and South, as well as in Great Britain.

NIAMH provides a range of mental health and learning disability services delivered in the community and the workplace and in a variety of specialist settings. Peter is Visiting Professor at the University of Ulster Bamford Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing.

BELOW: Riot police divide a North Belfast interface.



CASE STUDY:

Black Mountain Shared Space Project

Black Mountain Shared Space Project (BMSSP) has been working in West Belfast for several years and is supported through the Fund's Peace Wall and Peace Impact Programmes.

The areas involved with this project in Belfast continue to deal with legacy issues stemming from the Troubles. Typically, both the Catholic and Protestant communities are susceptible to high levels of social deprivation including low incomes, low educational attainment, a lack of employability, mental health issues and disability.

The project focuses on interface barriers, good relations and shared space and in an effort to build resilience further within the area, the team have developed a programme to complement the existing peace walls project providing opportunities for the most marginalised adults and young people.

Seamus Corr, from BMSSP says, "Residents

face the legacy of conflict in a number of ways on a daily basis be it through intergenerational trauma, long-term disability or the effects of institutionalisation. These issues are all prevalent against the backdrop of the Million Brick Wall, against the backdrop of the Million Brick Wall, the largest Peace Wall in Belfast.

"Marginalisation and a lack of investment in these inner city communities mean that they literally have been left behind. Our role is to tackle these challenges head on and provide a mix of training and mentoring to the most at risk residents. We believe that this allows individuals to begin a personal journey that could result in both greater economic and community engagement and participation."

The project works with a mix of individuals and groups to link into any support services that they may need such as mental health teams, youth teams, community centres, and job and benefits offices.

Seamus believes that the positivity of the project has had a knock on effect and other marginalised young people are now considering training and opportunities too: "We've had some great success stories on both sides of the interface through our work including a young man who had been let down by many local services. He has now got his confidence back through an NVQ and has a job offer in the wings when he completes the course.

Seamus adds; "Reducing and overcoming these barriers will in time improve emotional wellbeing for participants. We strongly believe that attitudes towards education, social inclusion and other limiting factors will change too. We are hopeful that this programme will increase resilience within the community and begin to build relationships and opportunities for all."

ABOVE: Participants from the BMSSP youth project.



CASE STUDY:

Teach Osaill

Teach Osaill is based in Tullacmongan on the outskirts of Cavan town. It received support from the Fund in November 2015 for a yearlong project that targets at risk youth from housing estates in the area.

The project operates against a challenging backdrop of poor housing and high unemployment rates and many of the young people are vulnerable and often suffer from mental health issues. Bernie Brady, project co-ordinator has experienced the challenges within the area. She works alongside other partners to teach young people how to feel valued and helps them build a fuller and more meaningful life.

"This year has been particularly tough for the area. High levels of drug use are the

norm here and since the beginning of the year we've had three suicides.

"Our role is to tackle ongoing challenges and present supportive, positive programmes aimed to unlock potential and also deal with personal issues. We also provide a counselling service so participants have the opportunity to build their confidence and get back on the right track in life."

The project offers a wide variety of training programmes to engage young people including: computer training, horticulture, first aid, physical fitness, parenting classes and addiction awareness programmes. The courses encourage people to overcome diversity by embracing the positives in their lives.

Bernie believes that motivation and building self-esteem are the building blocks to a brighter future for participants.

"We encourage kids to firstly become Youth leaders within the community giving them ownership of tasks as well as responsibility for outcomes. Many of the courses help to improve low self-esteem

and we also aim to involve them with community decisions. This enables them to feel they are contributing to the issues facing the town.

"Through our support, participants have been able to complete a number of courses and we are particularly proud of two of the guys this year. One youth has had a troubled past including a spell in prison but he is now actively engaged in a course and attends class every day.

"Another success story is a young mum who has overcome alcohol issues. She is currently enrolled in a number of courses and aiming to build a solid future for her whole family."

Thanks to the unique approach and support network at Tullacmongan, Bernie and her team are continuing to offer the opportunities to build resilience within the local community and above all young people now have a real sense of pride and optimism for their future.

LEFT: Young people from Teach Osaill engaged in a media project.



Triax – Peace Walls Programme

‘Trust must be built and residents encouraged to build new relationships.’ That was the message at a major seminar in Londonderry/Derry that asked how communities could begin to consider a future without physical barriers. Organised by the Triax Peace Walls Project the event enabled local residents to hear how communities in north Belfast have worked together to unlock a range of social benefits and build trust so a contentious Peace Wall could be removed. Pictured at the event is Johnny Byrne, Ulster University; Rab McCallum of TASCIT; Donna McCloskey, TRIAX Peace Walls Project Coordinator; and Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland.



Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium – Peace Walls Programme

In October, Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium launched a new research report that provides referencing tools for individuals and groups that assist communities to discuss and remove Peace Walls. The International Fund for Ireland addressed the event on its Peace Walls Programme model and offered reflections on the Consortium’s principles for interface barrier removal and transformation. Pictured at the launch are Barbara McAtamney, Department of Justice; Jessica Blomkvist, author of the report and Billy Gamble, Board Member, International Fund for Ireland.



Football in the Community – Peace Impact Programme

Local residents and community representatives came together in October to cheer on teams from Sligo FC, Ballinamallard FC, Donegal Youth Services and Tubbercurry FITC at a special soccer tournament held in Ballinamallard football grounds. The occasion marked the latest participants’ success in the 2016 Football in the Community Programme, a cross-community and cross-border relations project. Managed by Sligo Young Enterprises the three-year innovative youth training project uses football as a medium to engage young people and has trained more than 60 young people between the ages of 16-25 years in its duration. Pictured are (back row) Tom Elliott MP; Catherine Ryan, IFI Programme Manager; Hilary Singleton, Board Member, International Fund for Ireland and Ciaran Kelly, Project Manager with project coaches and participants.



– 6 –



Find us on Twitter @FundforIreland

The International Fund for Ireland is an independent international organisation established by the British and Irish Governments in 1986 with the objectives of promoting economic and social advance and of encouraging 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. International Fund for Ireland, Seatern House, 28-32 Alfred Street, Belfast, BT2 8EN / PO Box 2000 Dublin 2. www.internationalfundforireland.com