



Fund news

Summer 2010

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

International Fund for Ireland recognises significant challenges ahead for consolidation of peace

Speaking as the International Fund for Ireland recently announced that it is to allocate a further £4.1m/€4.9m of funds to a variety of projects, Fund Chairman, Denis Rooney CBE, said: "The International Fund for Ireland recognises the significant challenges that still lie ahead for the consolidation of peace on this island, and today's funding announcement demonstrates our determination and commitment to support projects that break down barriers and create a more integrated society to support long-term peace."

This latest package of support was approved following a meeting of the Board of the Fund in Sligo on 24 June 2010, and includes:

Over £1.25m/€1.5m for the Fund's Community Based Economic and Social Regeneration Programme. This includes

nine projects based in the southern border counties, and covering the counties of Donegal (Voice of Older People Donegal, Tuath), Leitrim (Leitrim County Development Board), Louth (Drogheda Community Forum, Louth Leader Partnership, Drogheda Youth Development), and Monaghan (Farney Community Development Group, Clones Community Forum, Truagh Development Association). This will go some way towards supporting these most socially- and economically-disadvantaged communities through innovative cross-community and cross-border intervention activities.

More than £800k/€960k for four projects supported under the Fund's Community Bridges Programme, including funding for the Sliabh Beagh Cross-Border Partnership, a three-year cross-community and cross-border capacity-development project

operating in communities centred on the Sliabh Beagh mountain region, which straddles counties Monaghan, Tyrone and Fermanagh. All of the supported projects are designed to deliver ground-breaking community work that addresses difference and division in our society.

Over £1.45m/€1.75m allocated across the Fund's Sharing in Education, Integrating Community Organisations, Leaving a Legacy and Shared Neighbourhood Programmes, all aimed at delivering projects designed to promote and facilitate real integration and make significant progress towards securing lasting and sustainable peace. Part of this allocation will go towards the extension of the Respecting Difference Programme to 20 pre-school settings in counties Cavan and Monaghan over a three-year period.

US Congressional Delegation visit

In June, Congressman David Obey led a Congressional Delegation from the Appropriations Committee to Northern Ireland. The Delegation saw at first hand the positive impact the International Fund for Ireland has made in the most disadvantaged areas of Northern Ireland. Two Fund supported groups: InterAction Belfast and Local Initiative for Needy Communities (LINC) outlined their activities, achievements to date and the work that remained to be done. The

Chairman hosted a dinner for the Delegation to acknowledge the important contribution the United States of America has made to political development, economic growth and reconciliation in Ireland.

The United States of America has contributed to the Fund since it was established in 1986. To date, the US has pledged \$478m to the Fund to allow it to promote reconciliation and social advance in Northern Ireland and the southern border counties.



Denis Rooney is pictured welcoming Congressman David Obey to InterAction Belfast.

Donors to the Fund are:



United States of America



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Foreword

As representatives of the Irish and British Governments and political leaders in Northern Ireland condemned the sectarian rioting in Belfast which followed the Orange Order marches on 12th July, I was dismayed to read reports that children as young as 10 years old were involved in the violence. The disorder in Belfast and elsewhere in Northern Ireland demonstrates that sectarian divisions continue to run deep despite the significant progress that has been made within many communities. The younger generation's involvement in such acts confirms that not only do we continue to live with the repercussions and legacy of our past, but that the future of many communities is also under threat from ongoing violence and dissident activity.

The focus of the International Fund for Ireland's work has evolved since its inception in 1986 to support the areas of greatest need. Our current emphasis on innovative grass roots reconciliation initiatives has taken us closer to more communities throughout Northern Ireland and the southern border counties. It is becoming increasingly apparent that there continue to be communities and individuals, who for one reason or another, have not connected with the peace process.

We continue to look at new ways to ensure that more communities and individuals - particularly those living at an interface and suffering daily from economic disadvantage or social isolation - benefit from our funding support. To do this we are working to develop peace building strategies that achieve meaningful engagement and challenge sectarianism and segregation. We are working with a range of forward-thinking organisations on a series of pioneering initiatives that take a new approach to bringing their work directly to those communities and individuals most in need.

You will read more in this issue about the innovative Creating Space for Learning and Sharing Project, which provides communities with practical support to undertake peace building activities, and is now working to replicate its successes across an additional 18 communities over the next three years. Building Sustainable Interface Partnerships is an initiative run by InterAction Belfast, which focuses on working with communities along peace-lines to empower them to build a future without walls or barriers.

Recent discussions over the Fund's future have identified a continuing need for work that helps to promote lasting peace on the island of Ireland. It is clear that the consequences of long years of civil unrest need continued attention, particularly in the hardest to reach communities, if we are to avoid slipping back into the violence which could so easily spring once again from sectarian attitudes.

Recent events in Belfast have shown us the importance of not moving backward. The Fund's priority now, is on initiatives that continue to take us forward as a society and ensure that peace and reconciliation are a reality for all people and communities in Northern Ireland and the southern border counties.

President opens Tullyarvan Mill Project

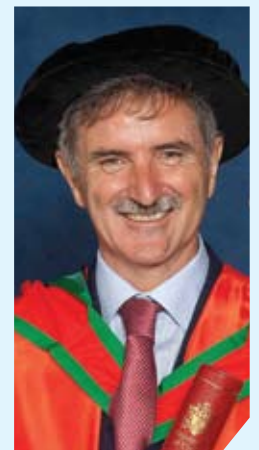
President Mary McAleese and Dr Martin McAleese are pictured with Paddy Harte, International Fund for Ireland, Winston Patterson, Board Member, International Fund for Ireland and Cllr. Peter McLaughlin, Deputy Mayor of Buncrana at the official opening of the Tullyarvan Mill Project, a community, cultural and hostel centre in Inishowen, County Donegal, which has been funded primarily by the International Fund for Ireland. The Mill provides a hub of activity for the local community with facilities for the arts and conferencing as well as an auditorium, a 52 bed hostel and a restaurant.



Fund Chairman honoured

At a recent University of Ulster graduation ceremony, Fund Chairman Denis Rooney CBE was awarded with the honorary degree of Doctor of Science (DSc) for his services to business and the community.

The Chairman was also recently presented with a special award from the Northern Ireland Institute of Business Consulting in association with IMCA, its sister organisation in the Republic of Ireland. The award was made in recognition of his significant contribution over the last 40 years through his involvement with the Institute of Directors, the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and the International Fund for Ireland.



Programme participants show true GRIT

An innovative new programme for addressing the needs of young people who face barriers to fulfilling their potential was recently recognised at an event to mark the completion of the inaugural Gerry Rogan Initiative Trust (GRIT) Residential Experience Programme. Fund Chairman, Denis Rooney CBE also took the opportunity to announce funding for the Programme for a further two years.

Supported by the International Fund for Ireland and the Department for Social Development, the Programme has peace building and reconciliation at its core. The Programme aims to help young people who are at risk of dropping out of training by giving them the capacity to make better life choices.

The cross-community nature of the Programme provided participants with an opportunity – for some, for the first time in their lives - to meet and mix with peers from different community backgrounds.

123 young people, 16-19 year olds, from throughout Northern Ireland participated in the two-year GRIT Programme. According to a post-programme evaluation: 89% have remained in training, 90% reported increased self-confidence, and 94% indicated that they had greater respect for others as a direct result of the Programme.

Denis Rooney said: “The resounding success of the GRIT Programme is testament to the importance of supporting work that ensures the

most marginalised of our young people are given opportunities to fulfil their potential and share their hopes for the future with young people from different cultural backgrounds.”



Young people celebrate their experiences on the GRIT Programme, with (L-R): Minister for Social Development Alex Attwood MLA; Denis Rooney, International Fund for Ireland Chairman; Lord Mayor of Belfast, Cllr Naomi Long MP; and Liam Parker, GRIT Chairman.

Tackling long-term segregation at interface areas

An innovative new project to address difference and division and promote reconciliation at interface areas was recently launched at Parliament Buildings in Belfast.

The International Fund for Ireland has contributed £250,000 toward the three-year cross-community project, which is called Building Sustainable Interface Partnerships. The Project has been developed by InterAction Belfast and will work alongside communities situated

along peace-lines. Its aim is to build trust, allay fear and ultimately create the conditions necessary to build dynamic, vibrant, diverse and empowered communities where the need for walls and barriers no longer exists.

Speaking at the launch, Fund Chairman, Denis Rooney CBE, said: “It is well known that communities living beside peace-lines and at other interface areas in Northern Ireland have suffered disproportionately during the decades of conflict and civil unrest. It is an undisputed fact that 84% of all deaths in Belfast during the troubles have occurred within 1km from an interface.”

InterAction Belfast will work at the heart of at least eight communities situated along the Falls, Shankill and Springfield interfaces. The organisation will use a number of ground-breaking approaches to encourage communities to engage with statutory agencies and policy makers to take the long-term action needed to address negative perceptions, tackle segregation and encourage cross-community interaction.



Pictured at the Launch (L-R): Jnr Minister Robin Newton MLA; Harry Maguire, InterAction Belfast; Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman, International Fund for Ireland; Roisin McGlone, InterAction Belfast; and Jnr Minister Gerry Kelly MLA.



INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

**STOP
PRESS!**

Recruitment now open for the third and final year of the Fund's **Community Leadership Programme** – FREE leadership training and a potential bursary of up to £2,500 (€2,750) for your community group. Go to www.communityleadershipprogramme.org

Kicking off peace and reconciliation in Belfast

As the World Cup brought nations from around the world together through football, almost 500 children and young people from throughout Belfast came together to launch a cross-community initiative that uses sport to deliver engagement between Nationalist and Unionist communities – the Belfast Old Firm Alliance Programme.

The Programme, which will impact nearly 3,000 children and young people across Belfast over three years, targets communities most affected during the period of civil unrest through two strands of work: a schools-based project and a community-based project. It is based on similar programmes, run in Belfast and Glasgow, which have proven highly successful in challenging

attitudes among children and young people. The Programme provides educational, social, health and reconciliation benefits through a range of activities: cross-community football coaching programmes; parent and community initiatives; and community leaders training courses for young people.

Speaking at the launch, Fund Chairman, Denis Rooney CBE, said: "The Belfast Old Firm Alliance Programme demonstrates how creative approaches to helping children and young people to engage on a cross-community basis can provide important learning experiences to change sectarian attitudes." The Programme is supported by the Fund's Sharing in Education Programme, which is administered by the Department of Education. It is delivered by the Belfast Community Sports Development Network in co-operation with Rangers Football Club and Celtic Football Club, via the Old Firm Alliance.

To date, ten Sharing in Education projects throughout Northern Ireland and the southern border counties are being taken forward at a value in excess of £10 million.



Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland shows off some fancy footwork with Hoopy the Hound, Broxi Bear and children who took part in the Belfast Old Firm Alliance Programme.

A new model for cross-community work

A cross-community peace building project launched in 2008 has proven so successful that it has been awarded funding for a further three years and the model is now being replicated in other communities in Northern Ireland and the southern border counties.

Funded by the International Fund for Ireland and the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI), the Creating Space for Learning and Sharing Project has been developed and delivered by CFNI.

The Project provides marginalised communities, where sectarianism and social deprivation are prevalent, with practical and technical support to enable them to undertake peace building and

cross-community activities. Initially piloted in 12 geographical areas in the greater North West Region, 18 new community groups will be taking part in phase two of the Project over the next three years.

Adrian Johnston, Board Member of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "I am particularly encouraged that a number of communities which have never before taken part in cross-community work have come forward to secure their place on the second phase of the Project. This initiative has the potential to make a lasting difference to the lives of people living in communities where sectarianism and segregation are still a reality of everyday life."

Pictured at the launch (L-R): Monina O'Prey, CFNI; Adrian Johnston, International Fund for Ireland; and Caroline Temple of the Irish Street Youth and Community Association, one of the community groups that has benefitted from the Project.



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