



INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

Fund news

Summer 2009

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

Further £10.1m /€12.1m approved to promote reconciliation, community development and peace building



Pictured at the Fund's Board meeting in February 2009 are from left to right: Mr. Robert T. Waters, US Observer; Her Excellency Anne Plunkett, Australian Ambassador and Mr. Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland.

In February 2009, the Board of the International Fund for Ireland approved a further investment of £10.1m /€12.1m to promote reconciliation, community development and peace building throughout Northern Ireland and the southern border counties.

£3.9m /€4.7m will promote sharing in education, with £1.9m /€2.3m going towards Phase 2 of the existing Sharing Education Programme to increase the number of pupils taught in cross-community classes and to enable teachers, governors and parents from both communities to work collaboratively.

£1m /€1.2m will be granted to Fermanagh Trust's Sharing Education Programme. Both of these projects are co-funded by The Atlantic Philanthropies. The North Eastern Education & Library Board (NEELB) will receive £889,860 /€1m towards developing sharing in education for approximately 30 schools in its area.

Commenting on the Board's funding announcement, Mr. Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "The Fund is committed to reaching out to young people and our investment in sharing in education is testament to this. The next generation must view learning and living together as the norm if we are to take the monumental step towards our goal of a strong, sustainable and lasting peace for everyone across the island of Ireland.

Of the other funding, a total of £2.3m /€2.8m will go towards a number of projects under the Fund's Community Based Economic and Social Regeneration Programme; £1.3m /€1.6m has been allocated under the Fund's Community Bridges Programme; a total of £432,644 /€519,173 is being made available under the Fund's Integrating Community Organisations Programme; and £1.8m /€2.2m under the Fund's Leaving a Legacy Programme.

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Foreword

Reflecting on this edition of Fund News, I am struck by the Fund's focus on developing opportunities for young people and strong community leadership. While these have long been key areas of our work, they have taken on renewed importance in recent months.

As we prepared to announce our latest funding package in February 2009, we could not have anticipated the shocking and frightening return of terrorist violence to the streets of Northern Ireland. The deaths of two young soldiers and a policeman within days of each other were greeted with public outrage, dignified silent protests and unprecedented political condemnation from all sides. These murders, together with the murder in Coleraine - which has just taken place as I write this article - are very painful reminders of the terror which blighted our communities for decades. They act as a warning that we could very easily, despite the tremendous progress which has been achieved in recent years, be pulled back down into the dark days of civil unrest and violence.

Worryingly for those involved in peace-building, information suggests that it is young people who are participating in these activities. There is a generation of young people growing up who don't remember the worst of the Troubles and while that is to be celebrated, the willingness of some young people to embrace violence indicates that we have more to do to overcome sectarianism and segregation.

These recent events have strengthened the Fund's resolve to focus on young people - reaching out through education, community work and innovative schemes such as YouthAction's Community Leadership Apprenticeship Programme, and the Sharing Education Programme. We are determined to break new ground and create new, sustainable models which will help young people to learn, work and live together in mutual respect. We believe that this has never been so important.

We have always recognised that our efforts to underpin peace-building and promote reconciliation were going to be long-term processes. As we enter the last few years of the Fund's work, the Board will not be seeking any further international contributions after the end of 2010, we must not slow the pace of our work nor our commitment to our basic objectives.

While we can look back on many significant achievements, we must now focus on ensuring that we can deliver initiatives and interventions which will have a long-term positive and sustainable impact long after the Fund has ceased to be.

We remain grateful to our international donors for their support. Without their continuing assistance, it would be impossible for us to engage in such a wide variety of innovative activities, all of which make such a real difference to our communities.

£2.1 million funding for voluntary and community sector

The Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) and the International Fund for Ireland have launched the next phase of the Community Leadership Programme - a £2.1m investment by the Fund.

First established in 1993, the Programme, which is now in its fourth phase, offers exciting and innovative training and learning opportunities that strengthen the leadership capacity of community groups.

Speaking at the launch, Mr. Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "The Fund's investment of £2.1m in this Programme shows our

commitment to empowering communities to develop their leadership skills; to enable them to build more effective communities and improve community life throughout Northern Ireland and the southern border counties."

The Programme will be delivered to 30-35 groups per year in areas of weak community infrastructure and disadvantage. NICVA will recruit community-based organisations to participate in the Programme, using the following criteria: areas of greatest need, stage of development, potential to gain from the Programme and commitment to learning and development.



Pictured at the launch of the Community Leadership Programme are from left to right: Mr. Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland; Ms. Una McKernan, NICVA Director; and Mr. Seamus McAleavey, NICVA Chief Executive.



Praise for the Fund's work on Capitol Hill

Speaking at a reception on Capitol Hill to launch 'A Fund of Goodwill: The Story of the International Fund for Ireland', US Congressman Richard Neal praised the work and achievements of the International Fund for Ireland over the past 21 years. He said: "I know how essential the Fund has been in the efforts to bring peace and reconciliation to the island of Ireland. I have seen first-hand how its work has helped improve people's lives while working to build a shared future for all. I congratulate Chairman Rooney for his leadership, and I pledge my continued support in Congress for the very important work undertaken by the Fund."

To date the U.S. has pledged over \$514m to the International Fund for Ireland, with funding for 2008 amounting to \$14.865m.

The event on Capitol Hill followed a reception on Parliament Hill, Ottawa where Chairman of the Canada Ireland Parliamentary Friendship Group, Mr. James Rajotte MP, remarked: "Canada has always been a strong supporter of the Fund, and is proud to be associated with the remarkable impact the Fund has had in support of peace and reconciliation in Ireland and, ultimately, in the success of the peace process in Northern Ireland."

Since 1987, Canada has contributed CAN\$7.817m to the Fund, with its contributions targeted specifically at the training of young people.



President McAleese opens new state-of-the-art residential facilities for Corrymeela

President Mary McAleese officially opened a new £1.4m volunteer centre for Corrymeela in Ballycastle in April 2009.

Corrymeela works with groups and individuals from across all sectors of society from its two centres in Ballycastle and Belfast. It provides a 'safe space' where individuals, groups and communities can develop trust and respect and share experiences, offering a chance to build a shared commitment to transform the legacies of the conflict and to take the opportunities arising from peace.

The new centre, which offers both self-contained and shared living spaces, will be used by local and international volunteers to help Corrymeela deliver its wide range of community programmes.

Mr. Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "The Fund has been a long-term supporter of the Corrymeela Community and, as such, we were happy to provide a further £1.4m for the new residential centre which will provide state-of-the-art facilities for the many volunteers who help Corrymeela every year. The project forms an important part of one of the Fund's key areas of activity - Leaving a Legacy, and our hope is that this project will make a long-term, sustainable contribution to peace building and integration on the Island of Ireland."

Over the next 30 years, the new energy efficient volunteer centre called "Coventry" will be home to more than 7,500 long-term and short-term international volunteers who come to work for the Corrymeela Community.

Pictured at the opening event are from left to right: Ms. Tiffany Rendall, a volunteer at Corrymeela; President Mary McAleese; Dr. Martin McAleese; Mr. Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland; and Ms. Kate Pettis, Chairperson of Corrymeela Council.



New board members appointed

On 1 March 2009, the British and Irish Governments appointed board members to the eighth Board of the International Fund for Ireland.

Mr. Denis Rooney CBE was reappointed as Chairman of the Board, while Mrs. Anne Henderson and Ms. Mary Southwell were reappointed as board members. Mr. Rooney said that he was very pleased to continue to serve as Chairman, and he was very happy that Anne and Mary had agreed to continue to serve as board members.

Mr. Denis Rooney also welcomed new board members: Ms. Rose-Mary Farrell, Dr. Adrian Johnston, Mr. Winston Patterson, and Mr. David Graham OBE.

Mr. Denis Rooney said: "Our new board members join the International Fund for Ireland at a time when we are working harder than ever to develop and support initiatives which will make a long-term and sustainable difference to communities in Northern Ireland and the southern border counties. As the Fund continues to seek to break new ground

in promoting reconciliation and peace-building, the expertise and experience of all of our board members is increasingly important."

Mr. Denis Rooney also paid tribute to outgoing board members: Ms. Anne Bonner, Ms. Deirdre Ryan, Mr. Jackie Hewitt, and Mr. John McDaid for the very significant personal contributions which they made to the work of the International Fund for Ireland.

New building marks expansion for Glencree Centre

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Micheál Martin TD and Mr. Denis Rooney CBE Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, officially opened a new building at the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, Co. Wicklow in March 2009. The ceremony was attended by over 100 people with various links to the Glencree Centre.

The €5 million capital building project, which has been jointly funded by the International Fund for Ireland and the Office of Public Works, provides a state-of-the-art reception and office area for the Glencree Centre. The expansion forms part of a five-year strategic plan for the Centre, which will allow the peace-building work of the organisation to reach an ever greater number of people on the island of Ireland and beyond.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "We are delighted to have been able to provide financial assistance of some €2 million towards this development, as part of the Fund's Leaving a Legacy Programme. We very much share the aims of the Glencree Centre - to ensure

that the lessons of peace-making in Ireland are shared widely for the benefit of people in areas of conflict around the world who are seeking to resolve their differences and secure peace for future generations."

Pictured at the opening of the Glencree Centre's new building are from left to right: Mr. Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland; Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Micheál Martin TD; and Dr. David Bloomfield CEO of the Glencree Centre.



YouthAction Northern Ireland and the International Fund For Ireland invest in young apprentices



Pictured at the launch of the Community Leadership Apprenticeship Programme are from left to right: Mr. Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland; Northern Ireland Education Minister, Ms. Caitríona Ruane MLA; Mr. Rhys Dunlop and Ms. Mary McGurk who acted as hosts on the day.

A new £1.3 million Community Leadership Apprenticeship Programme was officially launched in April 2009 by the Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland and the Northern Ireland Education Minister, Caitríona Ruane MLA.

Primarily supported by the Fund, which provided £980,605, the new Community Leadership Apprenticeship Programme will, through YouthAction Northern Ireland, employ 43 young apprentices in Greater Belfast, the North West and Fermanagh/Monaghan.

As well as providing valuable work experience in the present economic climate, the Programme will allow young people to gain skills and qualifications to enhance their future job prospects in youth work and the growing performing arts industry.

Mr. Denis Rooney said: "This Programme will offer the opportunity for young people to work with their peers from across different communities, to motivate and lead other young people and become positive role models within their own communities.

"It is our hope that each apprentice will have a chance to share the leadership skills and personal qualities gained during the next 18 months to benefit their own communities now and in the future."

The young people will be employed for 35 hours a week in local community organisations, whilst undertaking a suite of recognised training two days a week. Through their work the young leaders will work with up to 900 young people aged 13-25, in residentials, summer programmes, drama workshops, performances and discussion groups.

Cross Border Digital Learning Network launched

In April 2009, Tyrone Donegal Partnership, a leading cross-border development company, launched an innovative video conferencing initiative called CORE Digital Network. The launch took place simultaneously in three locations - Belfast, Omagh and Kilcar, Co. Donegal, with each venue being linked by the video conferencing technology used in the project. The project is being supported jointly by the Fund, which has contributed €485,450, and Tyrone Donegal Partnership, which has contributed €48,545.

CORE Digital Network will involve the extension of the World Bank Global Development Learning Network, which is currently available on a cross-border basis in Omagh and five community learning centres in Donegal.

The Network will provide local access to a wide range of courses, covering subjects such as: conflict management/resolution; citizenship; personal development; diversity awareness; peace and reconciliation; and community development. The three-year project will help to overcome three of the main barriers to education and development in rural border areas - the border, travel distance and lack of critical mass to run and support programmes in rural areas.

Speaking at the launch in Belfast, Mr. Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "The Fund identifies strongly with this project as we recognise that reconciliation thrives when driven from the grass-roots, and that access to education is crucial for sustainable confidence and capacity-building in the community.



Pictured are some of the guests who witnessed the Belfast launch of the innovative video conferencing initiative CORE Digital Network. The launch took place simultaneously in three locations - Belfast, Omagh and Kilcar, Co. Donegal.

Education is not just an end in itself, it is also the foundation upon which a secure, more peaceful future can be built. The Fund has had a successful relationship with Tyrone Donegal Partnership for many years, particularly through the Fund's Wider Horizons Programme. The CORE Digital Network is one of many examples of the contribution this organisation has made to embedding good relations in Northern Ireland and the southern border counties."



Local achievements in 'sharing education' celebrated

The success of more than thirty schools and 1,700 students engaged in the Sharing Education Programme was celebrated in Londonderry in April 2009. The schools are working together to provide additional educational opportunities and promote reconciliation through five local partnerships.

To date, the Sharing Education Programme has invested almost €1m in the five North West partnerships formed by these schools, representing almost 50% of the Programme's total expenditure. A further seven partnerships are spread across the rest of Northern Ireland.

The Sharing Education Programme is a €3.6m initiative by the International Fund for Ireland and The Atlantic Philanthropies, which is managed by Queen's University Belfast.

The Programme encourages schools to find new models of 'sharing education' which offer additional educational and academic opportunities for students, and in doing so provide opportunities to build greater cross-community engagement and reconciliation.

The five North West partnerships are all anchored by 'specialist' schools with collaborations focusing on a range of curricular subjects, including: science, ICT, performing arts, learning for life and work, astronomy, and engineering.

Commenting on St Cecilia College's involvement in the Programme, Ms. Kathleen Gormley, Principal, said: "This is the essence of what education is about. It is about changing mindsets, changing how people think about the city we come from and the

country we live in. The legacy of the Sharing Education Programme is that this work will not be as difficult again - it is accepted by our students and teachers that sharing is now the done thing."

Speaking at the celebration, Professor Tony Gallagher from Queen's University Belfast, which manages the Sharing Education Programme said: "The thirty local schools, whose achievements are being celebrated this evening, deserve enormous credit for their success in breaking new ground in terms of how schools collaborate together, not just to provide a wider variety of choice and opportunity for students but also to bring together young people who otherwise might never meet in such safe and supportive circumstances."



Pictured at the Sharing Education Programme dinner are from left to right: Mr. Denis Rooney CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland; Mr. Will Haire, Permanent Secretary, Department of Education Northern Ireland; Professor Tony Gallagher, Head of School of Education, Queen's University Belfast; and Mr. Padraic Quirk, Programme Executive, The Atlantic Philanthropies.



Lumen Christi College shares its science specialism by hosting mixed Primary science classes with specialist teachers and providing a range of equipment many of the pupils and teachers would not otherwise have access to. Pictured are pupils from Nazareth House Primary School and The Model Primary School enjoying a science class with Miss Amanda King of Lumen Christi College.