



INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND



# The Difference the Fund is Making

March 2020





# Current challenges

Since its inception in 1986 the International Fund for Ireland (Fund) has worked to develop strong relationships across communities, partners, statutory agencies and the political divide, with the ultimate aim of achieving a sustainable peace for communities in Northern Ireland and Southern border counties.

It has been a long journey to get to where communities are today, with many still living with a sense of fragility. Progress has been made in the early part of 2020, with the recent announcement of the restoration of the NI Assembly and Executive a significant step forward. The 'New Decade, New Approach' Deal which was agreed by the five main political parties in NI as well as the British and Irish Governments is the blueprint for the future of devolved government in NI.

Within this deal, there is a significant commitment to tackling paramilitarism and ending the harm associated with paramilitary activity. The Agreement also includes a commitment for future support for the Fund in recognition of the important role it plays. Whilst the Fund welcomes the Agreement, more detail is required to help in securing a long-term plan.

A period of complex negotiations is also underway to determine the post-Brexit relationship between the UK and the EU, which will have a lasting impact on the lives of people living in NI and border counties.

In spite of this challenging backdrop, the Fund has continued to engage and support local communities towards peace and reconciliation. To date almost £32m/€36m has been approved under the Fund's three key programmes since 2016, progressing some of the most important reconciliation work. This commitment to achieving a sustainable peace will continue under the new Strategy, the preparation of which is currently underway. Since it was established in 1986 by the British and Irish governments, the Fund has provided significant and much needed support to communities affected by sectarian violence and the legacy of the conflict.



## Political uncertainty

Restoration of the NI Assembly in January 2020 after three years

Long term sustainability of the institutions

Backlog of decisions could lead to **delay** in critical Government commitments

Rise in **anti-social behaviour** at interfaces

Heightened calls for a **border poll** within the next five years

Number of difficult and **controversial issues** to be dealt with

## Brexit

Need for local representation in decision making

Ongoing uncertainty of impact of communities in border areas

**Risk** to existing cross border community relationships

**Uncertainty** around long term relationship between the UK and EU

The emotional, psychological, social and political significance of the border should not be underestimated

## Social and Economic

Communities continue to experience **high levels of social and economic deprivation**

Relatively high rates of **economic inactivity** remain in NI

**21,000 young people** aged 16-24 years in NI who were not in education, employment or training (NEET)<sup>1</sup>

**67%** believe barrier retention will have a negative impact on **health and wellbeing**

Violence

THERE WERE

40

SHOOTING INCIDENTS IN NI  
IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  OF THESE OCCURRED IN  
BELFAST AND  $\frac{1}{3}$  IN DERRY  
CITY AND STRABANE<sup>2</sup>

77

PARAMILITARY-  
STYLE ATTACKS  
IN 2018

128

90%

of the population of  
Northern Ireland still  
live in segregated  
communities

PEOPLE WERE ARRESTED  
UNDER SECTION 41 OF  
THE TERRORISM ACT  
2000 IN THE  
LAST 12 MONTHS

IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS

167

CASUALTIES AS A RESULT  
OF PARAMILITARY STYLE  
ASSAULTS AND 19 CASUALTIES  
AS A RESULT OF PARAMILITARY  
STYLE SHOOTINGS<sup>3</sup>

19

BOMBING  
INCIDENTS  
OVER THE LAST  
12 MONTHS

On average

**5 FIREARMS**

have been found per  
month during the past  
12 months<sup>4</sup>

IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS,

417\*

PEOPLE HAVE  
BEEN SHOT  
OR BEATEN BY  
PARAMILITARIES

# Peace Impact Programme

The Peace Impact Programme (PIP) is designed to deliver real and positive community transformation through sensitive interventions in communities that have not previously, or have only partially, participated in peace building and reconciliation activities. Such interventions are critical to building a truly integrated, shared and peaceful society.

The programme places particular emphasis on engaging with disaffected and marginalised young people who are vulnerable to recruitment or attack by those opposed to the Peace Process.

## IN THE LAST YEAR:



# 5974

## FIRST-TIME PEACE BUILDERS

# 3174

GENERAL EVENTS AND  
ACTIVITIES

# 98

GRANTS TO DATE

# 1841

CROSS-BORDER/CROSS-  
COMMUNITY EVENTS,  
ENGAGEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES.

To build sustainable peace and prosperity in areas suffering from high levels of economic and social deprivation, where there are low levels of engagement in peace building and where the Peace Process has delivered limited benefits.

## 7624

people indicated  
positive attitudinal  
change

## 46

projects were active  
during the year

## 2506

accreditations  
and qualifications  
received

## 7936

people involved in  
capacity building  
events and training

## Programme Summary

98 grants have been awarded: 22 projects received 2 grants (16 in NI and 6 in the SBC's) and 9 projects received 3 grants (6 in NI and 3 in the Southern border counties).

In the reporting period, 46 projects were operational, 30 in NI and 16 in the Southern border counties.

The IFI has invested over £11.5m (almost €14m) in PIP to date with 76% allocated to NI and 24% to the Southern border counties.

July 2018–June 2019

HOW MUCH  
DID WE DO?

**3174**

Number of core and general events and activities

HOW WELL DID  
WE DO IT?

**5974**

participants engaged in peace building for the first time

IS ANYONE  
BETTER OFF?

**7624**

participants expressed positive attitudinal change towards people from different backgrounds

**1841**

Number of intra/inter-community and cross-border events

**2506**

Participants received accreditations and qualifications

**622**

new inter/intra and cross-border relationships forged.

# Personal Youth Development Programme

The Personal Youth Development Programme (PYDP) was launched in late 2015 and aims to help at risk young people build and develop life skills that foster good relations, build confidence and resilience and improve their employment prospects.

The programme is unique in the way it engages and sustains contact with participants. Each PYDP project builds enduring relationships with young people and establishes highly personalised development plans tailored to the needs of the individual. It is interested in engaging young people who are vulnerable to polarisation and recruitment to paramilitary organisations.



# 528

**YOUNG PEOPLE  
PROGRESSING  
TO EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING**

# 3278



**ACCREDITATIONS**

# 46

**STEERING/ADVISORY  
GROUPS**

# 390

**YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE  
SECURED EMPLOYMENT  
10 APPRENTICESHIPS**

# 46\*

**PROJECTS  
(\*31 PROJECTS EXTENDED)**

Helping at risk young people build and develop life skills that foster good relations, build confidence and resilience and make them more employable

# 1888

young people  
participating

# 1166

completing  
accredited training

# 1126

received  
employment  
related training

# 974

taking good  
relations training

# 359

completing  
work placements



# CHARACTERISTICS OF PYDP PROJECTS

PYDP engages 16-25 year olds that are vulnerable to polarisation and face barriers to participation in mainstream provision. It is designed to engage young people who may have:



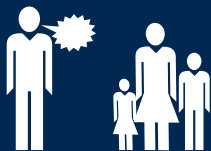
Left education with no or low qualifications or who left the education system early



Been or currently are involved in substance abuse



Become affected by homelessness



Come from a difficult family background



Been in, or close to, the criminal justice system



Suffered from poor health including mental health issues



Mistrust of statutory institutions



Not participated in civic society in a positive manner

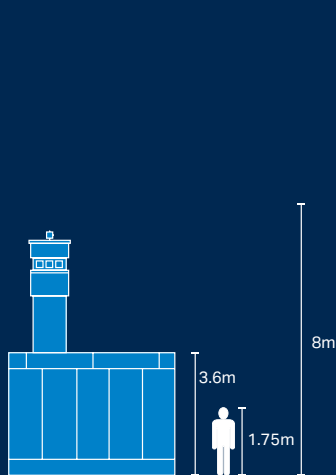


Come from communities with a negative view of their future

# Peace Walls Programme

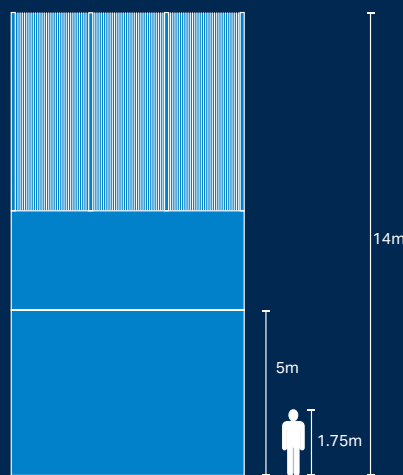
Peace Walls are the most visual remaining symbols of division in Northern Ireland. Today, more than 100 barriers remain mostly in Belfast stretching a distance of 21km.

Launched in January 2012, the Programme focuses on helping interface communities to bring about the conditions that can allow for the removal of Peace Walls. It provides a range of confidence and relationship building initiatives within and between interface communities to help residents arrive at a position where they feel it is safe and appropriate to discuss and consider the removal of Peace Walls in their area.



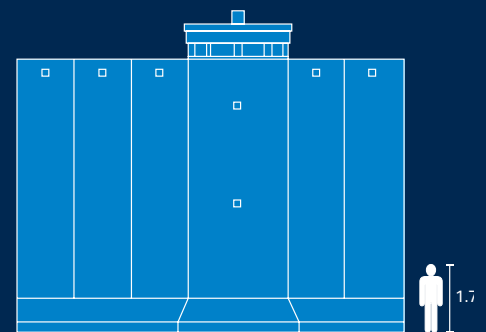
BERLIN WALL

30  
YEARS



CUPAR WAY, BELFAST

51  
YEARS



PALESTINE WALL

20  
YEARS



# 1240

local people have engaged in Peace Walls discussions

## 6 PROJECTS

# 47%

of the target group were engaged in discussions focussed on Peace Wall removal and reduction

The programme aims to develop and deliver a range of confidence and relationship building interventions within and between interface communities to help residents reach a position where they feel it is safe and appropriate to proceed with the removal of Peace Walls in their area.

## 1249

people involved in site specific consultations

## 56%

engaged in intra- and 55% inter-community events

## 205

intra- and inter-community events

## 11

agreements reached

## 10247

participants

### The 2019 Community Attitudes to Peace Walls Survey, Key Findings

#### Community Safety and Local Concerns

- 86% of all respondents either feel 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' compared to 80% in 2017
- 34% of all respondents reported anti-social behaviour (including drug misuse) as the key issue of local concern compared to 10% in 2017

#### Current Views of Peace Walls

- 76% of all respondents were strongly in favour of barriers being removed within the lifetime of their children or grandchildren compared to 68% in 2017 Survey

- 67% believe barrier retention will have a negative impact on health and wellbeing of residents
- 45% believe that additional employment opportunities would promote greater attitudinal change to removal of barriers
- 40% believe that more community facilities would provide greater attitudinal change to removal
- 38% say that greater development of housing (in waste land) will promote greater attitudinal change to removal

#### Interaction and Community Relations

- 57% of all respondents stated that interaction with the 'other' community occurred 'very often' or 'fairly often' compared to 51% in 2017
- 40% of all respondents reported that they had regular contact with the community on the other side of the Peace Walls in comparison to 26% in 2017

#### Looking to the Future

- There is positive attitudinal change towards positive barrier removal since the last 2017 survey. Both communities favour change although CNR favour change at a faster pace
- 85% of CNR respondents were strongly in favour of the barriers being removed within the lifetime of their children or grandchildren compared to 73% in 2017
- 72% of PUL residents were strongly in favour of the barriers being removed



# Overview

The Fund's key priority has been to develop and fund initiatives that tackle segregation and promote integration to build a lasting peace in Northern Ireland and the Southern border counties of Ireland. The Fund has continued to deliver on this priority in spite of ongoing challenges and obstacles at both community and governmental level.





The Peace Walls Programme is working hard at local level to break down the mental barriers and stigma around interfaces and encourage community engagement and dialogue while tackling fears, tensions and divisions.

There has been progress in a number of areas in the last 12 months, including the completion of the Serpentine Road/ Navarra Place shared space which involved the replacement of a peace fence with a multi-use games area and play park.

The Personal Youth Development Programme has focused on offering opportunities for young people, who are at risk, a better way of life through building confidence and developing life skills. In many communities, vulnerable young people have felt 'left behind', with limited opportunities to develop personally.

The Peace Impact Programme (PIP) has engaged with some of the most hard to reach communities on the island, engaging on sensitive and complex issues that have been a part of the lives of people living in these communities for a long time. These interventions are largely at an early stage and

the Fund recognises the impact its project coordinators are having in these areas.

Historically, these communities, such as in North Belfast for example, have experienced the worst of the conflict which includes ongoing paramilitary feuds leading to violence and anti-social behaviour. With communities dealing with these issues they need support now more than ever to continue their individual peace building journeys.

The Fund continues to seek support from its international partners to deliver peace building and reconciliation interventions in areas where sectarian violence has the potential to destabilise the Peace Process.

The Fund, on behalf of communities throughout the island of Ireland, is grateful to its international donors for their very generous financial and political support. Independent evaluations of the Fund's work clearly indicate that it is possible to deliver real and meaningful change. At such a critical time, it is vital that this work continues and intensifies. The Fund, as an independent organisation with extensive experience and skills, is ideally placed to lead on these interventions.



1. Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey – Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
2. Belfast Telegraph (Jan 2020) <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/rise-in-shootings-bombings-and-paramilitary-style-attacks-ni-figures-show-38936189.html>
3. BBC News Online (Jan 2020) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-51072058>
4. Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics March 2019 - <https://www.psnl.police.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/security-situation-statistics/2019/february/security-situation-statistics-to-february-2019.pdf>
5. Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics March 2019 - <https://www.psnl.police.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/security-situation-statistics/2019/february/security-situation-statistics-to-february-2019.pdf>
6. Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics March 2019 - <https://www.psnl.police.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/security-situation-statistics/2019/february/security-situation-statistics-to-february-2019.pdf>
7. BBC News (March 2019) - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-47373925>





INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

“The great unsung hero of the Northern Ireland Peace Process was not actually a person, but a fund. The International Fund for Ireland (IFI), by supporting intercommunal civil society engagement from 1986, contributed hugely to the support given by majorities of Nationalists and Unionists to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998.

The Fund promoted economic and community development; stimulated dialogue and cooperation within and between divided communities; tackled the underlying causes of sectarianism and violence and fostered reconciliation. I am in no doubt that the Fund was essential in consolidating peace.”

JONATHAN POWELL, CHIEF OF STAFF TO PRIME MINISTER TONY BLAIR, 1995 TO 2007

The International Fund for Ireland is an independent international organisation, established by the British and Irish governments in 1986. The Fund's main objectives are to promote economic and social advance and 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.

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