

Reconciliation (cont'd.)

Reconciliation requires:

- Honest acknowledgement of the harm/injury each has inflicted on the other;
- Sincere efforts to redress past grievances that caused the conflict and compensate for the damage caused;
- Sincere remorse for the injury and readiness to apologise;
- Readiness to let go of the anger and bitterness and to enter into a new mutually enriching relationship;
- Commitment by the offender not to repeat the injury.

Social Reconciliation

Social Reconciliation involves not just the individual but the whole of the community or society. The psyche and the memory of the nation needs to be healed through the recovery of human dignity and honour, repairing relationships, meeting the demands of justice and reparation. Social Reconciliation involves a renewed appreciation and exercising of a culture of human rights.

Peaceful Co-existence

Peaceful Co-existence can be defined as the minimal, least demanding way for people to relate to one another positively after conflict. There continues to be an acknowledgement of difference and an acceptance that boundaries will remain and that the possibilities for misunderstanding will never completely disappear. People live side by side but don't necessarily relate to/with one another. With such minimal contact the possibility still exists for misunderstandings leading to renewed tension, conflict and violence.

Background to the Peace II Programme

The EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland 2000-2004, (Peace II) is a distinctive European Union Structural Funds Programme aimed at reinforcing progress towards a peaceful and stable society and promoting reconciliation.

The delivery of the Peace II Programme is taking place in a new political and institutional context created by the implementation of the Belfast Agreement and by the new round of Structural Funds. The Programme is managed by one of the six North/South Implementation Bodies, the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

The Peace II Programme is characterised by two specific objectives that contribute to the achievement of the overall aim. These are:

- **Addressing the legacy of conflict** - the Programme will address specific problems generated by the conflict in order to assist the return to a normal, peaceful and stable society;
- **Taking opportunities arising from peace** - the Programme will encourage actions which have a stake in peace and which actively help promote a stable and normal society where opportunities for development can be grasped.

ADM/CPA

(Area Development Management/Combat Poverty Agency)

Area Development Management Ltd (ADM) and the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) are implementing bodies under the Peace II Programme, 2000 - 2004, and for this purpose operate a joint implementation structure known as ADM/CPA. ADM/CPA has responsibility for 10 measures that specifically deal with economic renewal, social inclusion, integration and reconciliation in the border counties. It also works in collaboration with the Community Foundation Northern Ireland and Co-operation Ireland in a cross border consortium to implement two further measures tackling cross border reconciliation and understanding and education, training and human resource development.



Implementing Body under the
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for Peace and Reconciliation**

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Peace-building
in the border
counties

exploring concepts

Introduction

Considerable discussion has taken place in recent years about peace-building, attempting to understand, in particular, the legacy of the Conflict to communities in the border region of Ireland.

What is peace-building in a southern border context? There are no easy answers, no simple formulae or prescriptive processes to this question. The implementation of the Peace II Programme affords a unique opportunity to further explore the concept of peace-building and to deepen our understanding of its context in this border region.

This leaflet is designed to:

1. Be an introductory resource for people interested in exploring peace-building within their communities.
2. Stimulate further discussion and thought on approaches to peace building in the southern border counties.

Impact of the Conflict on the border region

- ▶ In the border region, the Conflict had a major impact on economic and social development. The border has exacerbated the region's peripherality and has also contributed to higher levels of social exclusion. The region is heavily dependent on traditional and low-productivity industry and has failed to attract foreign direct industry. In addition, people who have migrated from Northern Ireland (displaced people) are more heavily concentrated in the border region.

▶ The hallmarks of the impact of the Conflict in the border region include:

- a culture of avoidance and silence
- psychological estrangement
- social and economic exclusion and isolation
- entrenched attitudes
- low skilled population
- highest poverty statistics
- repressed or distorted expressions of identity
- injury, suffering, hurt and injustice

Concepts & Definitions

So what is peace-building? Is it the same as reconciliation? How does it relate to social inclusion? What is meant by peaceful co-existence? A variety of definitions and explanations exist that describe peace-building and relate it to reconciliation. There is no one agreed definition of either concept. Our understanding of both is still emerging. The following definitions do, however, provide the basis for further discussion and exploration.

Peace Building

Peace is sustained by a society-wide network of relationships and mechanisms that promote justice and address the root causes of enmity. Peace-building attempts to address the cause and effects of the conflict in a targeted way.

Causes of Conflict

Root causes of the conflict include:

- Imbalance of political, socio-economic or cultural opportunities among different identity groups (ethnic, religious, regional, social etc);
- Lack of democratic legitimacy and effectiveness of governance;

- Absence of effective mechanisms for the peaceful conciliation of group interests (including democratic structures), and for bridging dividing lines between different interest groups;
- Lack of a vibrant civil society.

A justice gap is created if the root causes are not tackled together. The conflict has been resolved, negotiations are concluded, new political structures are in place, political participation is high but the expectations for social, economic, religious and cultural change are rarely achieved, creating a gap between the expectations for peace and what is delivered. Peace-building is necessary to help realise these expectations.

Conflict Transformation

Conflict Transformation is the process by which people change situations, relationships or structures so that they become less violent, less conflictual and less unjust. It involves exploring alternative and more peaceful ways of settling differences and disputes. By focusing on the processes by which conflict develops into violence, it addresses the root causes of violent conflicts in order to prevent their emergence or resurgence.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict Resolution is the process of building bridges between hostile communities, working to clarify issues which represent points of confrontation between them and creating opportunities for developing new relationships based upon a process of peaceful change and grass-roots level reconciliation.

Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice addresses harms created by a violent conflict through seeking to repair breakdowns in relationships. It seeks to replace the traditional focus on the punishment of the offender (retributive justice) with an approach which seeks to heal the injuries

caused. Serious harm has been done to the victim, the offender and the community in which victim and offender live. Restorative Justice seeks the active involvement of all of these in seeking solutions.

Social Inclusion

Social Inclusion is often a strong component of peace-building. Social Exclusion has been defined as 'cumulative marginalization: from production (unemployment); from consumption (income poverty); from social networks (community, family and neighbours); from decision making and from an adequate quality of life'. A vision for a just and equitable society must incorporate actions to combat social exclusion as well as strategies to build a peaceful and stable society.

Reconciliation

To achieve Reconciliation past trauma, injury and suffering is acknowledged and healing/restorative action is pursued. In addition, relationship breakdown is addressed and sustainable relationships are created. The cultures/structures which give rise to conflict and estrangement are transformed or reconstructed with a view to creating an equitable, diverse and interdependent community.