

Workshop Report Summary

Peace III Theme 1.1 Regional Projects 'Networking Opportunity'

Tuesday 21st February 2012, Monaghan Education Centre

Introduction

Peace and Reconciliation Partnerships in Northern Ireland and the six southern border counties have successfully completed the implementation of Phase I of their action plans and have begun implementation of Phase 2, 2011 to 2013. The SEUPB Steering Committee has recently agreed funding for a number of Theme 1.1 Regional Projects. It was therefore timely that both Partnerships and Regional Projects meet to discuss their plans and opportunities for linkages.

Thirty nine people attended with all Partnerships represented.

Purpose of the event

- To provide an opportunity to learn about the work of a number of PEACE III Theme 1.1 Regional that may impact on Partnership areas.
- To discuss present and potential linkages between PEACE III Projects and Partnership Phase II Plans.

Description of the process

The Cafe Dialogue format used in the previous discussion events was used. Seven 1.1 Regional Projects were given a table to host. Six 25 minute sessions were scheduled within the time available. At each session 1.1 Projects gave an outline of their project and answered any questions. At the close of the session participants chose which table they would move to next.

The 1.1 Projects hosting tables were:

	Organisation	Programme
TABLE 1	Community Foundation for Northern Ireland	From Prison to Peace: Building on Experience
TABLE 2	CFNI/Coiste na n-Iarchimí	Conflict Transformation from the Bottom Up
TABLE 3	Rural Community Network	The Rural Enabler
TABLE 4	Community Foundation for Northern Ireland	South East Antrim - Resourcing from Conflict to Hope (SEARCH)
TABLE 5	Edgehill Theological College Reconciliation and Integration Partnership Project	Edgehill theological College Reconciliation and Integration Partnership Project

TABLE 6	TWN	Extending Positive Relations
TABLE 7	Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland	Stepping Towards Reconciliation In Positive Engagement

Summary of discussion at each table

Table 1. Prison to Peace - Building on Experience

Web page: <http://www.communityfoundationni.org/Programmes/From-Prison-to-Peace-Partnership>

- UDA, UVF, Official IRA, IRA and INLA are involved in the Project.
- The Prison to Peace Partnership consortium emerged as a result of a long established working relationship, built between the range of politically motivated ex-prisoner groups and the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland.
- Since 1994, the Community Foundation has worked in a funding and support role with these groups, acting as intermediary funding body under the EU Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (1995-1999), as well as under the EU PEACE 2 and the EU PEACE 2 Extension programmes.
- The project focuses on three collective themes:
 - Conflict Transformation and Peace building.
 - Work around Youth Development and Citizenship.
 - A focus on Social Change and the nature of current challenges at community level.
- A pack for schools has been developed.
- DVD has been produced and includes interviews with former prisoners.
- A set of written resources has been developed in conjunction with QUB.
- Project involves cross community and cross constituency work.
- A current key issue that being tackled is the number of young people getting involved in paramilitary activity.
- The project provides a forum for groups to discuss contested issues of the day e.g. shooting of 2 soldiers in Antrim, shooting of PSNI officer, and look at ways of avoiding/reducing community tensions following such events.

Table 2. Conflict Transformation from the Bottom Up Programme

Web page: <http://www.communityfoundationni.org/Programmes/Conflict-Transformation-~bottom-up>

- Coiste was familiar to many participants in terms of what it does through Peace III funded activity and as a network of Republican Political Ex Prisoners.
- The presenters provided handouts detailing this work and the broad geographical remit in which it operates.
- Discussion was around the continuing issues political ex-prisoners and their families experience and the work Coiste is doing to highlight and address this.
- There is potential through representation of this constituency on Partnership Boards to develop this work and it was especially noted that youth focused interventions through Peace Partnerships could benefit through this cross over.
- It was also noted that some Partnership areas have better linkages than others with this regional project and its target group and there is further room for improvement to maximize interaction of a peace building nature.

Table 3. The Rural Enabler

Web page - <http://www.ruralcommunitynetwork.org/programmes/programmes.aspx?id=2>

- The presenter at this table provided an outline of the scope and remit of this project which included the provision of a “Rural Enabler” in each of the 12 counties overseen by two managers with a total workforce of 17 staff.
- Rural Enabler select, groups come to them or are referred to by another agency.
- There is work with community groups and also institutions.
- Institutions involved include – Macra na Feirme, Young Farmers Clubs of Ulster, Churches, GAA and the Orange Order.
- There are sub regional advisory groups operating in each county which includes community/voluntary and statutory agency representation.
- The project which operates through referrals is limited to work in areas with populations less than 4,500 inhabitants.
- The inclusion of “resource allocation” actions within some Phase 2 Peace Partnership Plan was discussed and there was agreement that there needed to be enhanced interaction between the project rural enablers and Partnership secretariats going forward to avoid any potential for overlap and duplication.
- Grants of up to £1500 / €2000 are available.
- Projects include;
 - Cross community carol services in Monaghan
 - Cross Border project with Bushmills and Sligo Youth
 - Some work with apprentice boys in Cavan
- There is still an issue in some areas with Gatekeepers.

Table 4. The Search Project

Web page - <http://www.communityfoundationni.org/Programmes/SEARCH-Project>

- The presenter outlined the genesis of the project, work to date and profile of beneficiaries and target area of operation.
- Work involves many aspects including youth focused, women's based work, intergenerational work as well as cross community work with Coiste na n-Iarchimi.
- 2000 ex combatants and ex prisoners within the project area.
- Running a successful basketball project for young people at risk.
- Running project linking ex prisoners with young – discussion the realities of the Troubles and prison.
- Developed flags and Bonfires protocols.
- Working with the PSNI.
- Training towards employment – e.g. 58 have now CFR cards and 38 so far have got jobs
- Project with Polish community included visiting Polish war graves in Belfast – worked very well.
- Also looking at working with the Indian community.
- Project runs to November 2012.
- Looking at social economy for long term sustainability of community centre.
- The Project is amenable to doing cross border work. It was suggested that given the interest this project has in historical issues such as WWI, there was potential for linkage with southern border county Partnerships. This was welcomed and it was agreed that the Consortium could provide these contact details which could lead to cross border engagement for this project's target groups which to date has not interfaced to a large extent outside of the south east Antrim catchment area.

Table 5. Edgehill Theological College Reconciliation and Integration Partnership Project

Web page - <http://www.edgehillcollege.org/reconciliation%20programme>

- The presenter of this regionally funded Theme 1.1 project provided literature on the work it does to address sectarian and racist attitudes.
- The aim of the Project is to facilitate and guide Christian churches and church leaders in their vocation of reconciliation and integration through education / training, practice and research in order to help reconcile communities.
- There are 6 strands;
 - Strand 1: Exploring theology
 - Strand 2: Training Placements
 - Strand 3: The Young offender's identity Programme
 - Strand 4: Connections with Loyalist and Republican communities
 - Strand 5: Creative exploration and engagement with inter- culturalism
 - Strand 6: Resource Development

- The cafe dialogue session involved a practical exercise to highlight the methodology it uses to address these conflict related attitudes and behaviours.
- To start the discussion the presenter gave each member on the table a picture of a person – e.g. a Policeman, a student, a postman, a hoodie, a businessman and a hoodie and asked how each could influence (positive / negative) a incident of racism that had occurred in their area.

Table 6. Extending Positive Relations TWN

Web page: <http://www.twnonline.com/positive-relations-project/about-the-project>

- Two presenters explained the role TWN has within this regionally funded project and its role under previous Peace Programmes.
- Accredited training in peace related subject matters as well as personal skills development is the core of this project which operates through 23 Regional Project Management Agencies across the entire eligible area. These Management Agencies are essentially community based organisations that have bases and buy into local communities targeted for support under this project.

Table 7. Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland

- Project started on the 3rd of January 2012.
- The Project covers the 6 northern and 6 southern border counties.
- Currently 4 development officers on the ground.
- The Project will target youth, women and the band community.
- They are running a 1 year certificate course in Leadership and Management through Queens University Belfast. This will have 3 intakes over the 3 years of the project with 30 people per year. 38 are doing the course in 2012.
- At a community level it will also run a community education programme and will have 6 people who can deliver.
- If the Orange Community is confident in itself then it is more confident in dealing with other people.
- The project can act as a bridge between partnerships lodges and other organisation within the Partnership area.
- There are 1200 Lodges, 5000 groups using lodges in Northern Ireland.
- Target – that 19/20% of the 130 groups that they will be working with will undertake cross community work.
- There was a genuine welcome for engagement with the Orange Lodge Sector as well as an appreciation that this community's engagement with Peace III is relatively new. The presenters gave an insight into the diversity within the Orange community with some sections more ready to engage on a cross community basis.

- The presenters were very keen to hear how participants could suggest practical linkages with Partnership led Theme 1.1 actions and there was a willingness to have contact details exchanged to further these potential linkages.
- Considerable resources within plans are devoted to work with the Protestant minority community along both sides of the border and it was accepted that there is significant potential to link this work with the regional project. As a starting point, it contact details could be exchanged this would facilitate this engagement.

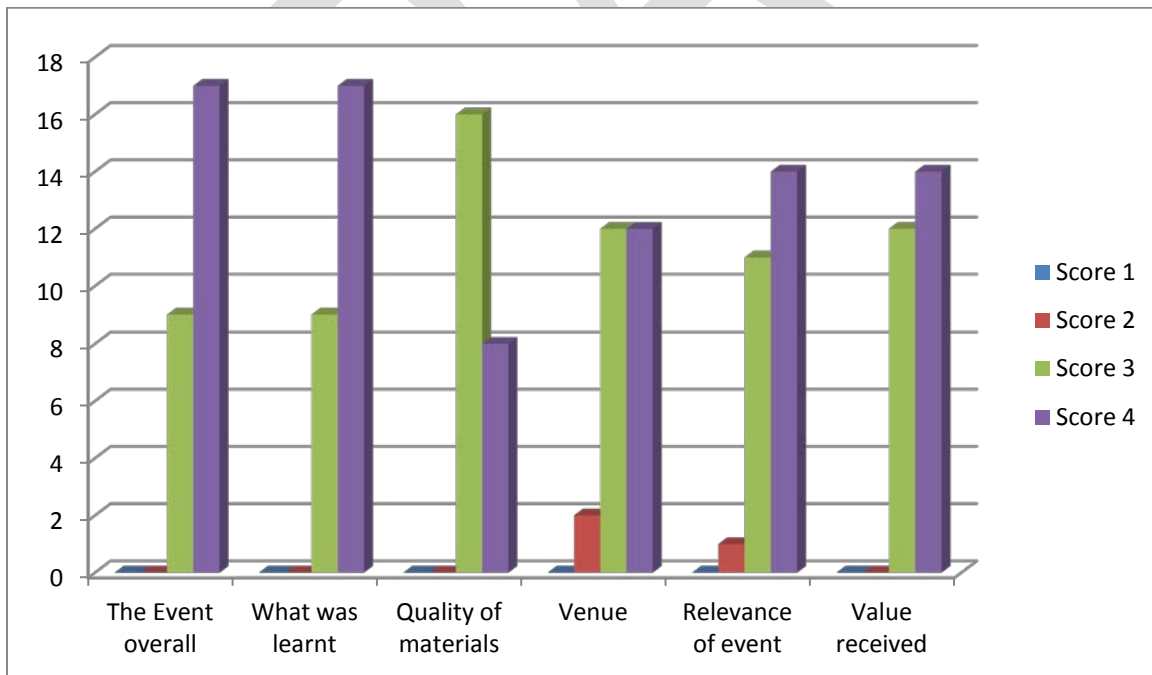
Evaluation

Attendees were asked to rate the event in terms of:

- The overall event.
- What was learnt.
- The quality of the materials provided.
- The venue.
- The relevance of the event.
- Value received for time given.

A total of 26 evaluation responses were received and collated from an attendance of 39 participants.

Rating of the event was high – with the majority of attendees scoring the event at 3 or 4.



Attendees were asked the following questions:

1. What did you like about this event?

- Informaton Sharing.
- Learning what regional projects are doing.
- The Café Table Format.
- The movement every 25 minutes was benifical on a twofold basis 1. Got to now others 2. Had an overview of what good work in ongoing.
- Connections made.
- Networking, learning about other projects and group regionally.
- Variety of Projects represented.
- I enjoyed learning about methodologies of other agencies.
- Learning more about the regional projects.
- The informal café dialogue style, good learning and informative.
- Networking.
- Opportunity to move from table to table.
- The opportunity to engage with other projects / partnerships.
- Very informative.
- Varieity of programmes represented.
- Gained knowledge on a range of programmes that are working in the S Cluster area. Some that I was not aware of before.
- Sharing good practices from different organisations.
- Opportunities to meet other projects.
- Rotating groups to different tables.
- The opportunity to share and engage with almost all the Participants via moving around different groups and discussing the different viewpoints.
- Opportunity to discuss project that work well and barriers that can be faced.
- The Sharing of information about different projects.
- Variety of Partnerships in attendance.
- Interaction with varoius groups and very educational listening to the Orange Order.

2. What did you like least about this event?

- Venue was small for such a large group.
- The heat of the room, not generated by the Participants.
- Tables were too close and noise from other tables hindered concentration.
- The venue was small very warm.
- To quick.
- More handouts on projects needed.
- The distance.
- The overview at the beginning.

- Location.
- You don't get to engage with all attendees.
- Everything was fine, though the room was slightly small.
- Noise levels and lack of acoustic attention.
- Edgehill Theological – group exercise fine in itself but did not get a lot of information about the project on the ground.
- We didn't bring literature perhaps in future groups could be advised to do so before.
- Very little.
- Would have liked to have visited the last table.
- Perhaps timeframe could have been extended.
- The background noise meant I found it hard to hear, particularly with the different accents.

3. How will you use what you learnt at this event?

- Factor it into my own work.
- Explore synergies and opportunities.
- By being proactive in reports to the committees.
- Ensure that we do not reinvent the wheel but there learn from good practice.
- Contact relevant personal.
- Bring information to attention of Partnership Board scope for linkages.
- To create relationships for Phase II delivery.
- Follow up contacts.
- Build networks and methods of engagement.
- Will make contact with 4 of the regional projects to learn more and link with projects in my area
- Contacts, local knowledge.
- Contact others from the event.
- Follow up with relevant project contacts.
- Create links with other projects and builds relationships.
- I will use the educational aspect.
- In my work on the Monaghan Partnership.
- Further meetings with programme managers / officers to assist current research and mapping
- Take the learning back to our area and look at how we can incorporate our work with the new project in addressing the issues together.
- Networking , improving practice.
- Developed lots of contacts.
- To be more aware and sensitive to the ongoing underlying feelings and positions being held by individuals.
- Share ideas with community associations.
- Hopefully to make new connections with groups and generate future engagement with the peace programme.
- Making contacts extremely important.

- In my own group, Peace III and cross border group.

4. Topics for future events:

- Engagement with younger generation.
- Prefer to have more details of those organisations delivering on paper.
- Any examples of genuine peace building on the ground / community.
- Shared spaces projects.
- Challenging sectarianism.
- Local Project examples of good practice.
- More of the same.
- Networking / crossborder / funding.
- What is being done so far is great.
- I particularly enjoyed the presentation by the Grand lodge – other type of representative groups I would find interesting.
- Useful to do events similar again as projects progress and potentially work spreads into new areas.
- It takes great courage to continue to work for peace and goodwill and not to despair that it cannot be achieved
- What works well, the opportunities and lessons learnt

5. Other issues raised / highlighted during table discussion:

- None