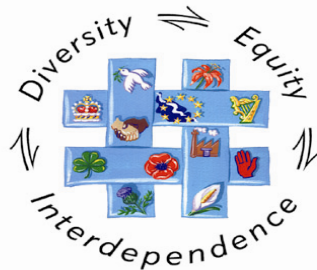


Summary of Funded Research Projects

Measure 2.1 – Reconciliation for Sustainable Peace

Community Relations Council



The information contained herein has been extracted from the funded organisation's original grant aid application form, supplementary documentation and subsequent letter of offer.

For further information on any of the projects listed in this document please contact:

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Revised January 2006

ARK

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Project Title:	NI Young Life and Times Survey
Project Website:	www.ark.ac.uk/ylt/

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

A survey based research project on changing attitudes to community relations among young adults.

AIMS:

To monitor changing attitudes to community relations issues among 16 year olds across Northern Ireland.

OBJECTIVES:

To monitor changing attitudes to community relations issues among a random sample of 16 year olds across Northern Ireland;

To contribute to policy-making on community relations and evaluation of policy over the longer term;

To increase research knowledge of these issues;

To monitor the views of young people in other key areas such as education and to publicise these;

To work with partners and otherwise feed our results into the range of activities now taking place around the needs and wishes of young people in Northern Ireland.

Project reports are available and can be found on the website listed above.

City Bridges - Research

Contact Name: Eamonn Oakes
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Project Title: City Bridges Research Project

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

This research aims to assess how the Belfast and District Trade Union Council and the trade union movement in general can best contribute to a peaceful and inclusive society.

OBJECTIVES:

Explore perceptions of the composition, structures, activities, values and future role of the trade union movement;

Identify any barriers to the full participation in the movement of, in particular, Protestants, Catholics, Nationalists, Unionists, Women and, in general, other potentially excluded groups of people;

Agree actions for the Belfast Trades Council and proposals for the wider movement that will ensure equity, diversity and interdependence within its structures and activities;

Agree actions for the Belfast Trades Council and proposals for the wider movement that outline a positive role in the broader community.

*The final report for this project is available.
Please contact Libby Smit at LSmit@nicrc.org.uk or 02890 227 500 for details.*

The Centre for Contemporary Christianity in Ireland

Contact Name:	David Porter
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Project Title:	CCCI Research Project: Politics, Rights and Community Relations in Transitional Societies
Project Website:	www.contemporarychristianity.org

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

This project is an exploration of the relations between political, human rights and community relations processes in European transitional societies and the potential for enhancing the degree of integration between these processes, with particular reference to the role of religious communities.

AIMS:

To address the question of the interaction between churches in Northern Ireland and the public debate concerning peacemaking in Northern Ireland.

OBJECTIVES:

To explore the interaction between the church and the field of community relations;

To explore the interaction between the church and the field of human rights;

To explore the interaction between the church and the political process.

*The final report for this project is available.
Please contact Libby Smit at LSmit@nicrc.org.uk or 02890 227 500 for details.*

Democratic Dialogue

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Project Title:	Community Reconciliation in Northern Ireland: Realising opportunities, meeting challenges and ensuring new innovation into the future
Project Website:	www.democraticdialogue.org/reports.htm

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

This research seeks to examine the role that community organisations and voluntary groups play in facilitating reconciliation processes at a community level, and their relationships with local councils.

OBJECTIVES:

To audit community relations processes within specific council areas and examine how local councils have supported and developed reconciliation initiatives in three case study areas;

To examine how local councils have constrained or supported community initiatives to promote reconciliation;

To examine how community projects have impacted on local council attitudes towards - and initiatives on - reconciliation, and vice versa;

To produce detailed examinations of specific reconciliation initiatives in case study areas with analysis of how reconciliation is conceptualised, how it is put into practice and how effective the projects are in achieving their objectives;

To produce comparative reports on how the case study projects and councils in the different areas conceptualise and operationalise reconciliation, and how this can be understood in terms of local differences, histories and cultural practices, noting how effective these initiatives are in promoting reconciliation;

To develop a comparative understanding of the meaning of reconciliation between the case study areas;

To extract practical lessons for community based reconciliation interventions through greater conceptual understanding and transference of knowledge between the different areas;

To develop recommendations to guide local council attempts to enhance reconciliation.

Project reports are available and can be found on the website listed above.

INCORE

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Project Title:	Politicians and Community Relations
Project Website:	http://www.incore.ulster.ac.uk/research/projects/pcr/

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

This project aims to acquire a greater understanding of the perspectives of Northern Ireland's politicians on community relations work in order to ensure a more cohesive and agreed approach to the further development of such work with practitioners and policy makers.

OBJECTIVES:

To outline how NI politicians understand and define 'community relations'.

To achieve an understanding of how current CR work is viewed by NI politicians, and the variety of such views;

To achieve an understanding of the kinds of CR work politicians are willing to support and assist, and in which they will participate;

To achieve an understanding of the kinds of work they are reluctant to support, and about which they have reservations in terms of their participation;

To achieve an understanding from CR practitioners about their perceptions of the kinds of support they believe could be helpful from politicians on CR issues.

A project report is available and can be found on the website listed above.

Institute for Conflict Research

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Project Title: Youth alienation and communal disorder

Project Website: www.conflictresearch.org.uk
www.conflictresearch.org.uk/documents/Troubled%20Youth.pdf

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

This research aims to explore the situation of young people in communities worst affected by sectarian division, to document their roles in relation to violence and to identify ways in which marginalized young people can be positively engaged and involved in building social capital and inter-generational alliances.

AIMS:

To investigate the role played by young people in inter and intra community disorder and violence;

Explore the factors facilitating their participation in disorder and violence;

Determine the nature of their attitudes towards their own and neighbouring communities.

OBJECTIVES:

Ascertain the factors that contribute to young people becoming involved in street violence, rioting and forms of anti-social behaviour;

Investigate community responses to such violence;

Establish the range of options for help for communities and young people;

Assess alternative forms of response to such behaviour.

A project report is available and can be found on the website listed above.

Institute for Conflict Research

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Project Title: Interface Violence in East Belfast

Website: www.conflictresearch.org.uk/documents/Interface%20Violence.pdf

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

The research seeks to explore the impact of the outbreak of violence in 2002 at the Short Strand/East Belfast interface, the initiatives used to end the violence, and the lessons that can be learned from this context.

AIMS:

To identify the understandings of residents in the lower Newtownards Road – Short Strand - Albertsbridge Road area, as to why the interface violence erupted so violently in 2002;

To determine the impact of the violence on the lives of adults and children living in the area, on local voluntary, community and commercial networks and on the wider community of interest in East Belfast;

To identify the factors that have helped to prevent the violence from continuing or recommencing in 2003.

OBJECTIVES:

To document the recent history and nature of the interface violence in the Short Strand/Inner East area from the perspective of local residents and other local interested parties;

To identify the various types of impact that the violence has had on the lives of residents and other local people in terms of feelings of safety, health, sense of well-being and community relationships;

Record and analyse the initiatives that have been put in place to try to stop or reduce the violence;

Highlight lessons that can be learned from recent events and actions for statutory bodies and local community and voluntary groups.

A project report is available and can be found on the website listed above.

Institute for Conflict Research

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E-mail: info@conflictresearch.org.uk

Project Title: Mixed Residential Communities in NI

Project Website: www.conflictresearch.org.uk

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

The research focuses on auditing the existing mixed residential communities across Northern Ireland and researching how they have survived, developed, prospered, and/or struggled through the conflict and current peace process to identify lessons that can benefit future strategic planning and development.

AIMS:

To provide base line quantitative data on the scale and location of non-segregated residential communities in Northern Ireland;

To offer an analysis of quality of life issues and the nature of social relationships in mixed residential communities;

To explore the value and relevance of the theoretical concepts of bonding, bridging and linking social capital in creating sustainable, integrated residential communities.

OBJECTIVES:

To identify the NIHE estates and properties which are defined as mixed or non-segregated residential areas;

To map the location of non-segregated residential communities across Northern Ireland;

To identify the make up of the population of non-segregated residential communities;

To identify a small number of mixed residential communities for more detailed qualitative research;

To map the range and variety of organisations and networks operating in the selected communities;

To interview selected residents, community activists and representatives of local organisations and statutory bodies to elevate quality of life issues in selected communities;

To explore how residents in mixed communities respond to tensions and conflict and how tensions and conflict from outside might impinge upon communities in mixed residential areas;

To identify issues around the levels of support provided for mixed residential areas by statutory and governmental bodies and agencies.

As of January 2006 this project's final report has not yet been completed.

Public Achievement

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Project Title:	Training Educators for Change
Project Website:	www.publicachievement.com

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

Public Achievement works with groups of young people and volunteer 'coaches' to address issues that are important and around which they design, carry out, and evaluate their own active citizenship projects. The Training Educators for Change research is designed to develop and evaluate a new pedagogy and curriculum for active citizenship. Individuals engaged in youth worker and teacher training would act as 'coaches' for the active citizenship projects, and would be involved in the action research process.

AIMS:

To develop through action research new pedagogical models for active learning and civic engagement cross community.

OBJECTIVES:

Development of action projects: This project will pair students in teacher and youth work training programmes (in cross-community pairs where possible) to coach young people on action projects within a variety of communities¹ around issues they indicate are meaningful and important and that result in public outcomes. These projects will also be publicly evaluated.

Training of coaches: All participating coaches will be trained on action research methods and their use in responding to issues of practice. Of particular emphasis will be how and if this methodology can be useful when working in contested and divided

¹ These communities are generally areas that face significant social disadvantage – high on NTSN indicators, and also areas that have suffered disproportionately through the conflict – including a number of 'interface' communities

societies². In addition, coaches will receive training on democratic civic practice, youth work in contested and divided societies, basic group work, and building reconciliation.

Development of curriculum: An important objective of this project is to develop a curriculum to use in both teacher and youth work training programmes to develop future teacher and youth workers' skills and knowledge in coaching young people on action projects in a contested and divided society and understand at an intermediate level the orientation and ethos necessary to successfully coach young people on a cross community basis.

Field tested curriculum: This curriculum will be field tested over three years, with improvements and suggestions coming from young people engaged in action projects within their schools and communities and from the coaches working with them. The objective is to provide a research based curriculum for adults working with young people across communities in Northern Ireland that has been thoroughly evaluated.

Development of resources: Guides, evaluation reports, training exercises, and any other resources used in this project will be gathered and organised so that others can have supportive materials on engaging young people in action projects.

Dissemination of learning: This methodology and curriculum will be disseminated through a summer institute and through ongoing conversations and trainings with faculty at teacher and youth worker training programmes throughout Northern Ireland.

As of January 2006 this project's final report has not yet been completed.

² This will include an examination of local and international effective practice in these areas

University of Ulster – Prof Owen Hargie, David Dickson and Aodheen O'Donnell

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Project Title: Breaking Down Barriers: Sectarianism, Unemployment & the Exclusion of Disadvantaged Young People

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

This research focuses on social marginalisation/exclusion amongst young adults and its relationships to unemployment as a feature of sectarianism and the ongoing legacy of the conflict.

AIMS:

To explore the role of sectarianism in creating social exclusion through the perpetuation of unemployment amongst young adults in interface areas of Belfast;

To identify ways of helping employers overcome barriers to the recruitment and retention of a representative and harmonious work force.

OBJECTIVES:

To document and profile three groups (unemployed, once employed, employed) of young people (16-24 years) in Belfast exploring what those in low investment, high unemployment areas perceive to be barriers to social inclusion;

To compile a comparative profile of each group, which will highlight differences across groups in terms of reasons for not seeking or securing employment, and catalogue positive and negative experiences of employment;

To explore barriers to employment and inclusion, including inter alia, perceived and actual incidents of sectarian harassment, community and familial pressures, issues of threat, organisational culture, and personal profiles;

To investigate current employment practices and procedures in NI and highlight how they impact upon the recruitment and retention of young people across the sectarian divide;

To capture the views, opinions, and experiences of those who work closely with unemployed young people in fulfilling a formal training role in relation to sectarianism, unemployment, and social exclusion.

As of January 2006 this project's final report has not yet been completed.

University of Ulster - Dr Patricia Lundy & Dr Mark McGovern

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Project Title:	A Critical Evaluation of Community Based 'Truth-telling' Processes in Conflict Resolution: A case study of the Ardoyne Commemoration Project

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

This project uses Ardoyne as a case study of a community that has recently undergone a 'truth-telling' process (Ardoyne Commemoration Project). The research aims to examine the usefulness of such processes for post-conflict transition and to evaluate the methodologies and mechanisms employed by the Ardoyne Commemoration Project in order to develop a model of best practice for possible use by other community groups.

AIMS:

To provide insights into and an understanding of the methodology and processes adopted by the Ardoyne Commemoration project;

To provide an understanding of the positive and negative implications and impact of engaging in such 'truth-telling' processes for peace-building in Northern Ireland.

OBJECTIVES:

To critically evaluate the methodology and research processes employed by the ACP in carrying out its work and develop a model of best practice for conducting community-based 'truth-telling' processes;

To critically evaluate the impact and perceived value of engaging in the ACP for participants (family, friends, eyewitnesses);

To critically evaluate the impact and perceived value of the ACP for the wider Ardoyne community;

To critically evaluate the impact and perceived value of the ACP outside the Ardoyne community;

To critically evaluate the ways in which community based 'truth-telling' projects might or might not contribute to conflict resolution and intra/inter community reconciliation;

To carry out a systematic review of international examples of 'truth telling' processes and innovative approaches to measuring the supposed benefits;

To develop a model of 'best practice' for conducting community-based 'truth-telling' projects.

The final report for this project is available.

Please contact Libby Smit at LSmit@nicrc.org.uk or 02890 227 500 for details.

University of Ulster - Dr Patricia Lundy & Dr Mark McGovern

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Project Title:	An Analysis of Attitudes to Official Truth Recovery Processes – A Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey
Project Website:	http://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/results/polatt.html

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

The project will undertake a quantitative research survey carried out by the Northern Ireland Life and Times with a representative sample (1,800 responses) in order to provide an analysis of attitudes towards official, or formal post-conflict truth mechanisms.

AIMS:

The central aim of the research is to provide an analysis of attitudes toward official, or formal post-conflict truth mechanisms.

OBJECTIVES:

To examine and provide policy-relevant information on attitudes toward formal post-conflict truth recovery mechanisms;

To explore and provide information on the ways in which an official truth recovery process might (or might not) contribute to conflict resolutions intra/inter community reconciliation;

To critically analyse and provide information on how various sections of society comprehend concepts such as 'truth', 'justice', 'healing' and 'reconciliation';

To critically analyse and provide information on levels of knowledge, fears and expectations of such a process amongst different sections (and at different levels) of society;

To critically analyse and provide relevant information on how civil society feel they could (or should) directly participate in the shaping, structure and delivery of a truth recovery process;

To provide comparable data on attitudes, which can be measured and assessed over time in relation to relevant policy initiatives;

To provide important data relevant to societies undergoing transition and exploring similar policy interventions internally.

As of January 2006 this project's final report has not yet been completed.

University of Ulster – Dr. Peter Shirlow

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Project Title:	The Politically Motivated Former Prisoner Community & Post Conflict Resolution

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

This project seeks to determine, via research, the structures and media necessary in order to promote the socio-political inclusion of the politically motivated former prisoner community. Key research themes include:

- 1) Examining the impact of victim-hood as well as social, cultural, economic, legal and educational structures which undermine inclusivity;
- 2) Analyse the role and capacity of the former prisoner community to encourage and promote conflict amelioration.

AIMS:

To evaluate the extent to which two distinct former prisoner groups (Tar lsteach & EPIC) have developed models of conflict resolution/transformation both within and between them.

OBJECTIVES:

To study the knowledge and practical experience among the former prisoner community in relation to conflict resolution/transformation;

To appraise the potential of the former prisoner community to challenge community tensions and the upsurge in recent violence;

To measure and evaluate the extent and nature of conflict resolution/transformation and cross community relationships between members of the loyalist and republican former prisoner communities;

To explore the notion of former prisoners as agents of social and communal transformation away from the reliance upon violence as a mechanism for dealing with crime and anti-social activity.

*The final report for this project is available.
Please contact Libby Smit at LSmit@nicrc.org.uk or 02890 227 500 for details.*

University of Ulster – Dr. Arthur Williamson/Dr Nick Acheson/Prof. Ed Cairns/ Prof. Maurice Stringer

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Project Title: What Capacity do Voluntary Agencies in NI have to Deliver Improved Community Relations?

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

The proposed research looks at the capacity of already functioning voluntary groups to use their work to improve community relations as well as how the work of these organisations has been hampered by structures built around sectarianism and mistrust.

AIMS:

To establish the extent to which voluntary and community organisations in Northern Ireland (organised around issues that in themselves have nothing to do with the conflict, (which is true of much of the voluntary and community sector) nevertheless have the potential to contribute to improved community relations;

To identify the contribution that voluntary and community organisations currently make to the resolution of inter-communal tensions in Northern Ireland;

To provide new knowledge and understanding of the voluntary and community sector by providing an ethnic and socio/political breakdown of the sector;

To identify the extent to which ethnic and identity questions within organisations adversely affect their work and thereby impact negatively on beneficiaries, staff and volunteers and/or inhibit contact or joint working with other organisations;

To provide guidance and information as to how voluntary and community sector organisations may more effectively contribute to promoting peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and may more effectively contribute to reducing sectarianism and ethnic tensions.

OBJECTIVES:

To provide valid and reliable data on the extent and impact of inter-communal contact within the voluntary and community sector;

To provide new ways of thinking about the relationship between voluntary activity and ethnic/socio political divisions in Northern Ireland;

To showcase evidence of good practice;

To provide an opportunity for reflection and learning among voluntary and community organisations and within the policy community;

To enhance the capacity of the voluntary and community sector to be effective agents of change in a deeply divided society.

As of January 2006 this project's final report has not yet been completed.