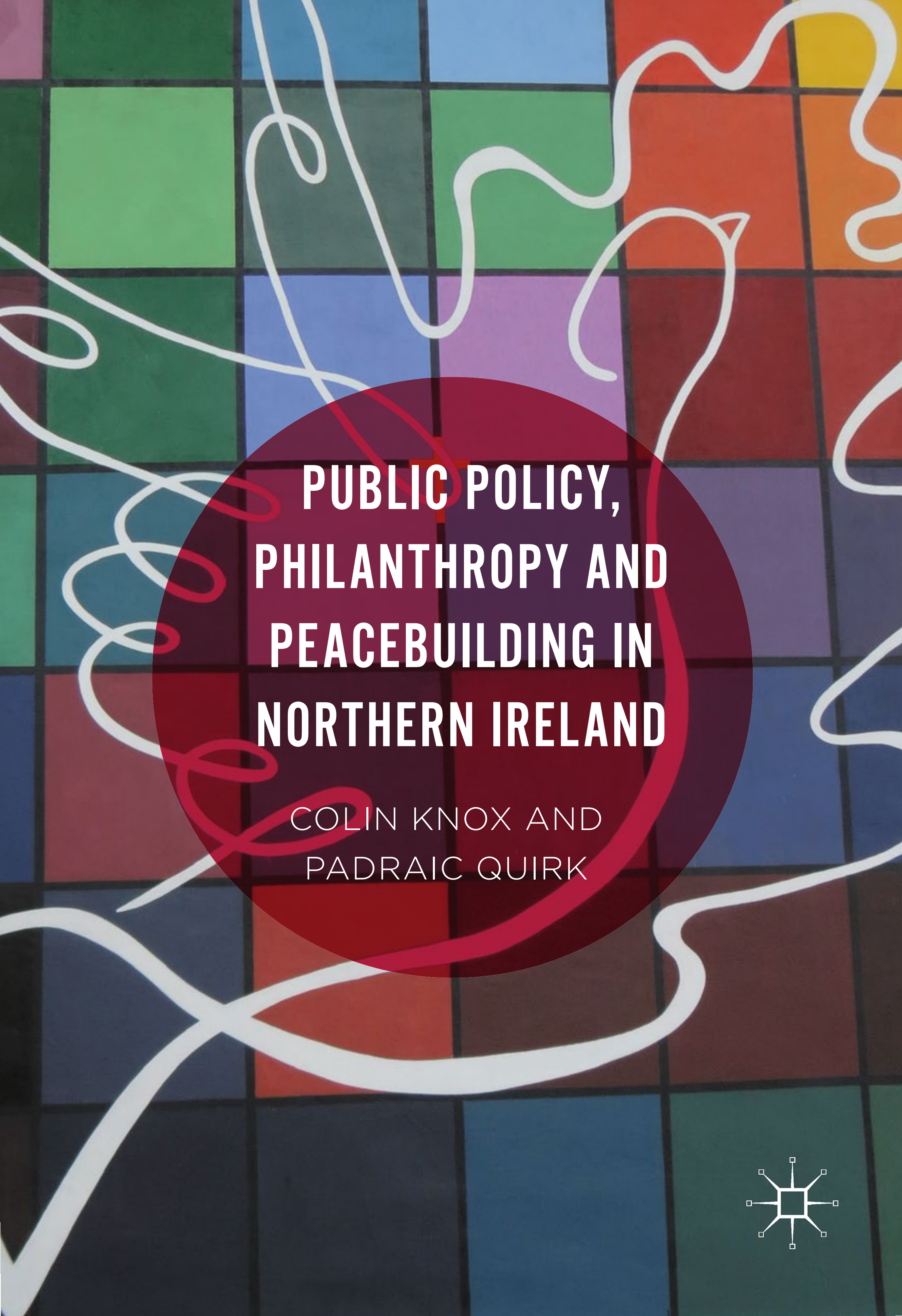

PUBLIC POLICY, PHILANTHROPY AND PEACEBUILDING IN NORTHERN IRELAND

COLIN KNOX AND
PADRAIC QUIRK

Public Policy, Philanthropy and Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland

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To Meabh, Finn, Jenny and Ryan

PREFACE

Much has been written about the politics of Northern Ireland and its struggle to move beyond the violence with which it was synonymous for over 30 years. To all intents and purposes, for the international community the Northern Ireland ‘problem’ has been solved. With a power-sharing devolved government in place, old enmities have faded and the prospect of a shared future seems entirely realistic. In fact, Northern Ireland has yet to move from what Galtung would describe as ‘negative’ peace to ‘structural positive peace’ because some of the enduring inequalities which precipitated the conflict have yet to be resolved. Northern Ireland is still a highly segregated society with, for example, only 6 % of its school children attending integrated schools. While there has been a small decrease in residential segregation, more than one-third of local government wards are still single identity in their composition (i.e. those with 80 %+of one religion). Much remains to be done therefore to address these structural deficiencies and embed a lasting peace. One economic forecast paints a rather bleak picture of the medium term: income inequality in Northern Ireland will rise as a result of the impact of welfare reform and the changing sector and skills profile of future job creation. Absolute poverty will rise to 2020 on top of an already large increase during the recession; relative poverty will also rise as UK per capita consumer spending and disposable income growth outstrips NI growth (Oxford Economics 2014).

Using these facts as the starting point, this book is framed around two thematic areas: peacebuilding and the role played by philanthropy (specifically Atlantic Philanthropies) in moving to a post-conflict society in Northern Ireland. Chapter 1 begins by looking at the key theoretical approaches to peacebuilding, drawing on models developed by Lederach, Galtung and Aiken. All three scholars highlight the importance of addressing 'structural violence' and the need for social justice to sustain and institutionalise peace. As a baseline for subsequent chapters of the book, we ask what constitutes 'quality' or 'positive' peace (using a rubric developed by the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies), and where Northern Ireland sits within this framework. Have key political agreements at the macro level (e.g. Belfast [Good Friday] Agreement 1998; St Andrews Agreement 2006; Stormont House Agreement 2014; and the Fresh Start Agreement 2015) resulted in positive or quality peace as experienced by people who live in Northern Ireland?

The second conceptual thread in the book is The role played by an external stakeholder (Atlantic Philanthropies) in tackling some of the key social justice issues of relevance to the conflict, and thereby the contributions of that stakeholder towards what Lederach describes as the move from transition to transformation, and ultimately reconciliation, in divided societies such as Northern Ireland. Chapter 2 therefore begins by exploring the role played by philanthropy in the United Kingdom and the limited scholarly attention paid to it. Much of the academic literature is American and does not easily transfer into European settings, and yet Atlantic Philanthropies has played a key role in peacebuilding and reconciliation in Northern Ireland. We therefore explore the social justice change process used by this philanthropy, the scale and nature of its work, and the challenges posed by a model at the centre of which is a strong advocacy focus aimed at creating systemic change. We adopt a public policy framework based on the work of Ferris and Mintrom as a way of examining, through the use of case studies, how Atlantic Philanthropies defined the following: social justice problems; associated theories of change; agenda setting; policy advocacy techniques; and how their work was adopted into public policy. An overview of peacebuilding and social justice philanthropy therefore sets the context for a more detailed examination, through case studies, of the work of Atlantic Philanthropies in Northern Ireland.

Chapter 3 is the first case study in a series where we consider the example of shared education in some detail. The seemingly intractable problem faced by government in Northern Ireland was the segregated nature of the education system. Although both types of existing faith-based schools (Controlled and Maintained) claim to be open to all pupils, de facto, Protestants attend the former and Catholics the latter, making the system one of voluntary segregation. Despite Atlantic Philanthropies' financial support to the integrated school movement over a number of years, there was limited growth in the number of pupils attending. An alternative emerged in the form of 'shared education' where two or more schools from different sectors share resources, in a sustained way, and pupils take classes across a network of schools. This chapter traces, using Ferris and Mintrom's public policy framework, how Atlantic Philanthropies moved shared education from being an externally funded concept, operating through pilot projects, to a mainstream activity with full legislative endorsement. This was achieved despite the reluctance of education officials who preferred a model based on the improvement of community relations or on relationship-building between Catholics and Protestants across a network of schools.

Chapter 4 considers the second case study involving systemic change. Here the 'wicked' problems of segregated public spaces and poor public services are addressed in geographies most impacted by the conflict—interface areas where the two communities abut. Interface communities are an example of Galtung's 'structural violence' at the micro-level in Northern Ireland, where statutory organisations have neglected the most vulnerable, impoverished people who live in highly segregated spaces and suffer from duplicated, poor quality public services. People living in these communities have not yet experienced a peace dividend and major government initiatives aimed at improving interface areas have failed to improve the quality of people's lives. In light of these failures, Atlantic Philanthropies first worked with a pilot intervention interface community in West Belfast (Suffolk and Lenadoon) and, based on the accumulated learning, moved to partner with government in a scaled-up initiative entitled *Contested Spaces/Interface Programme*. This chapter traces the way in which Atlantic Philanthropies secured policy leverage, the outcome of which was a flagship public policy now being implemented by all government departments across Northern Ireland, known as Together: Building a United Community.

Chapter 5, the third case study, looks at the contentious issue of the informal community 'justice' system which operated in working-class republican and loyalist communities from the early 1970s. In the absence of what paramilitary organisations, particularly in republican areas saw as a credible, responsive and legitimate state police service, these organisations took on the mantle of community law and order enforcement, with the endorsement of many of the people living in these areas. Those alleged of committing crimes against the community were often brutally assaulted (shot or beaten up) by paramilitaries without due process or respect for their human rights. From the mid-1990s onwards an alternative form of community restorative justice emerged through voluntary non-state organisations (Northern Ireland Alternatives and Community Restorative Justice Ireland), which attempted to divert those engaged in anti-social behaviour away from the 'attention' of paramilitaries. Although these organisations worked informally with statutory bodies, none of the latter could be seen to endorse their work because of their perceived closeness to paramilitaries. Atlantic Philanthropies stepped in to support restorative justice voluntary organisations at a time when no public funding was on offer. This was a high-risk venture but one which eventually paid off as government introduced a protocol for restorative justice schemes with human rights safeguards.[1] Over time, community restorative justice schemes came to be accredited by Criminal Justice Inspection NI and they are now recognised as an integral part of the formal criminal justice system working for, and funded by, a number of statutory organisations.

Chapter 6 takes a quite different approach by examining a human-rights-based model, at the centre of which is the principle of holding state bodies to account for their social and economic obligations through international human rights standards. Peacebuilding without the protection of human rights is vacuous since the abuse of rights has been at the heart of the conflict, and tackling this issue is pivotal to building a post-conflict society. The chapter considers the work of one very prominent group (Participation and Practice of Rights—PPR) in Northern Ireland which adopted the human-rights-based model, and examines its successes and the ongoing challenges which it faces. The overall aim of this model's approach was to impact on power relationships through creating an understanding of how knowledge and ownership of a package of tools of rights could enable the powerless to reconstruct their relationship with the powerful. Effective participation by communities experiencing disadvantage could increase the accountability of the state. The intention therefore was to promote the practice of rights through raising awareness of domestic and international human rights instruments and standards and building capacity in marginalised communities and groups in order to use them to achieve substantive equality. This chapter unpacks the model used by Participation and Practice of Rights and draws on examples where they have held the state to account in areas of housing, mental health, urban regeneration and domestic violence.

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[1] At the time the protocol was introduced Atlantic Philanthropies did not support this development because they perceived it as placing unnecessary control into the hands of government.

Chapter 7 concludes the book in a way which moves outwards and beyond the confines of Atlantic Philanthropies' peacebuilding work. We step back and take a more strategic overview of all of the interventions made by Atlantic Philanthropies in Northern Ireland. This includes a review of their work in policing and human rights, the ageing sector and children's and youth services. Using a typology developed by Fleishman, we consider the various roles played by Atlantic as driver, partner and catalyst for social change. From here we move on to discuss, as befits the final chapter of the book, the overall impact of Atlantic's work in peacebuilding and how it can be sustained as its funding ends. In particular the most recent developments in partnering government under the Delivering Social Change initiative are examined along with the potential offered for embedding the work of Atlantic Philanthropies into mainstream public services in Northern Ireland.

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CONTENTS

1 Introduction: Peacebuilding 1

2 Philanthropy and Peacebuilding 43

3 Shared Education Case Study 79

4 Shared Spaces and Services 115

5 Community Restorative Justice 151

6 Human Rights-Based Approach 183

7 Atlantic Philanthropies' Legacy in Northern Ireland 219

Appendix 263

Index 267

ABBREVIATIONS

AP	The Atlantic Philanthropies
ASF	A Shared Future
BIP	Belfast Interface Project
BMHRG	Belfast Mental Health Rights Group
CAJ	Committee on the Administration of Justice
CBYL	‘Card Before You Leave’ scheme
CCMS	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
CFNI	Community Foundation of Northern Ireland
CJINI	Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
CRED	Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education
CRJ	Community restorative justice
CRJI	Community Restorative Justice Ireland
CSI	Cohesion, Sharing and Integration
DENI	Department of Education (Northern Ireland)
DoJ	Department of Justice
DSC	Delivering Social Change
DSD	Department for Social Development
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment
ETI	Education and Training Inspectorate
EU	European Union
FSM	Free school meals
GCSE	General Certificate in Secondary Education
GOAL	Global Opportunity and Leverage
HET	Historical Enquiries Team
HRA	Human rights-based approach
IFI	International Fund for Ireland

IMC	Independent Monitoring Commission
IRA	Irish Republican Army
LLW	Learning for Life and Work
LSRV	Lower Shankill Residents' Voice
MLA	Member of the Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly
NEELB	North Eastern Education Library Board
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NIA	Greater Shankill Alternatives Programme
NIA	Northern Ireland Assembly
NIACRO	Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders
NICVA	Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NILTS	Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
NRAs	Neighbourhood renewal areas
OFMDFM	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
PDMU	Personal Development and Mutual Understanding
PfG	Programme for Government
PILS	Public Interest Litigation Support Project
PPR	Participation and Practice of Rights
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
QUB	Queen's University Belfast
RCT	Randomised control trial
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SELF	Shared Education Learning Forum
SEP	Shared Education Programme
SLIG	Suffolk and Lenadoon Interface Group
SPUR	Support Programme for University Research
STMG	Seven Towers Monitoring Group
T:BUC	Together: Building a United Community
UU	Ulster University
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force

List of Figures

Fig. 1.1 Lederach's peacebuilding model (1997) 4
Fig. 1.2 The conflict triangle (Galtung 1996) 6
Fig. 1.3 Aiken's (2013) social learning model of transitional justice 8
Fig. 1.4 Security-related incidents 23
Fig. 1.5 Relations between Catholics and Protestants 30
Fig. 1.6 How much has the NI assembly achieved? 34
Fig. 2.1 Three elements of the philanthropic logic model (Adapted by the authors from Frumkin 2006) 47
Fig. 2.2 Logic model of effecting social change 51
Fig. 2.3 Atlantic philanthropies—grants to Northern Ireland 1991–2015 60
Fig. 2.4 Peacebuilding and philanthropy in Northern Ireland 72
Fig. 3.1 Percentage of pupils entitled to FSM 83
Fig. 3.2 Percentage of year 12 pupils achieving 5+ GCSE A*–C with E & M 83
Fig. 3.3 Growth of integrated education 85
Fig. 3.4 Theory of change model: shared education 92
Fig. 3.5 ETI shared education self-evaluation framework 106
Fig. 3.6 Mainstreaming shared education 109
Fig. 4.1 Theory of change: shared spaces and services 126
Fig. 4.2 From external interventions towards government policy 148
Fig. 5.1 Theory of change—community restorative justice 158
Fig. 5.2 Paramilitary-style attacks 173
Fig. 6.1 Reconciliation and human rights—a nested model 185
Fig. 6.2 Theory of change: PPR human-rights-based approach 193
Fig. 6.3 Modelling participation and practice of rights 198

Fig. 7.1 Preference for mixed neighbourhood 247
Fig. 7.2 Better community relations 249
Fig. 7.3 Better community relations and preference for mixed neighbourhood 250
Fig. 7.4 Scree plot of mixed/integrated society 251
Fig. 7.5 Roles, impact and sustainability: Atlantic Philanthropies in Northern Ireland 260

List of Tables

Table 1.1 Peace-making in practice 7
Table 1.2 Key economic indicators 19
Table 1.3 Confidence in PSNI's ability to provide a service for all people of NI 22
Table 2.1 Atlantic philanthropies' grant-making in Northern Ireland 1991–2015 61
Table 2.2 Top 3 grantees in Northern Ireland 62
Table 2.3 Atlantic philanthropies—agenda-setting in Northern Ireland 67
Table 3.1 Segregated schools in Northern Ireland 2014/2015 81
Table 3.2 5+ GCSEs at grades A*–C including English and Maths 84
Table 4.1 Interface clusters and social deprivation 125
Table 4.2 Mapping policy adoption 147
Table 5.1 Community-based restorative justice schemes—the transition 176
Table 6.1 Reconciliation and human rights—characteristics 186
Table 6.2 Human rights infrastructure and building support for rights 187
Table 6.3 Participation and practice of rights—nine-step model 197
Table 7.1 ANOVA—preference for mixed neighbourhood 246
Table 7.2 ANOVA—better community relations than five years ago 249
Table 7.3 Rotated component matrix 253
Table 7.4 Total variance explained 254
Table 7.5 Atlantic Philanthropies: key successes in Northern Ireland 255
Table A.1 Recoding Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILTS) data 263
Table A.2 Descriptives 264
Table A.3 Descriptives 265

LIST OF BOXES

Box 5.1 *Vignette: Northern Ireland Alternatives* *166*
Box 5.2 *Vignette: Community Restorative Justice Ireland* *170*
Box 6.1 *Participation and Practice of Rights: Housing Need Example* *190*
Box 6.2 *Participation and Practice of Rights—Mental Health Example* *203*
Box 6.3 *Participation and Practice of Rights: Domestic Violence Example* *208*
Box 6.4 *Mary Robinson on the Work of Participation and Practice of Rights* *212*
Box 6.5 *Professor Paul Hunt on the Work of Participation and Practice of Rights* *213*

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Peacebuilding

WHAT IS PEACEBUILDING?

Peacebuilding as a concept is attributed to Boutros-Ghali in his 1992 *Agenda for Peace* paper (although Galtung first used the term in 1975). In this definition, Boutros-Ghali delineates between the United Nations Security Council's different roles as follows:

> (a) To seek to identify at the earliest possible stage situations that could produce conflict, and to try, through diplomacy, to remove the sources of danger before violence resulted;
> (b) Where conflict had erupted, to engage in peace-making aimed at resolving the issues that had led to conflict; through peacekeeping, to work to preserve peace where fighting had been halted, and to assist in implementing agreements achieved by the peacemakers; and,
> (c) To stand ready to assist in peacebuilding in its differing contexts; and to address the deepest causes of conflict: economic despair, social injustice and political oppression.
> (d) (Boutros-Ghali 1992: 823; authors' emphasis)

Post-conflict peacebuilding, he argued, 'was action to identify and support structures which would tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict' (Boutros-Ghali 1992: 823). Beyond this period a liberal peacebuilding hypothesis emerged which argued that the

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establishment of liberal institutions such as democracy, human rights, free markets and the rule of law were prerequisites for sustainable peace in countries which had suffered conflict. In other words, peacebuilding became synonymous with state-building or 'the creation of democratic liberal economies is seen as a guarantor for peace' (Paffenholz 2013: 348). As Ryan (2013: 32) points out: 'none of these ideals seem inappropriate or contemptible in themselves and yet the liberal approach to peacebuilding has become the target of a number of critical studies', but Ryan also cites grounds for scepticism: the approach is insensitive on the grounds of gender and class divisions and is blind to ethnic and national identity (Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2011).

Francis (2012) argues that there are two contrasting but linked definitions of peacebuilding—a narrow and a broad definition. In the former, peacebuilding involves interventions aimed at capacity-building, state reconstruction, reconciliation and societal transformation. In the latter, peacebuilding comprises security, political, economic, social and developmental interventions which attempt to strengthen political settlements and address the cause of conflict. Francis (2012: 5) concludes: 'in effect, though peacebuilding has a normative orientation i.e. reconstructing a secure, peaceful and developed society, it is a largely value-laden project that apportions disproportionate powers to those who prescribe, fund and implement peacebuilding programmes'. The overall goals of peacebuilding will be achieved, according to Jeong (2005: 13), by 'reconstruction and reconciliation that are geared not only toward changing behaviour and perceptions but also toward social and institutional structures that can be mobilised to prevent future conflict'. Hamber and Kelly (2005: 38) see reconciliation as a core component of peacebuilding, which they define as the 'process of addressing conflictual and fractured relationships and this includes a range of activities. It is a voluntary act that cannot be imposed'.

Critics, on the other hand, see significant limitations in placing reconciliation at the heart of peacebuilding in Northern Ireland. Such an approach, they argue, is concerned with relationship-building over the challenge function, ignores power differentials between those being reconciled and neglects the role of the state in creating or maintaining divisions (McVeigh 2002; Lamb 2010). McEvoy et al. (2006: 82), for example, argue that a successful peace process in Northern Ireland has been achieved 'which effectively side-lined a significant reconciliation industry' because reconciliation became synonymous with healing relations between two religious blocs (the 'two tribes' approach) without acknowledging the role of the

British state in the conflict. Hence the term ‘reconciliation’ was seen as a ‘dirty word’ which was used and abused, which was ‘anti-ex-combatant, weak in rights’ protection, and geared towards creating an imagined middle ground’ (McEvoy et al. 2006: 98).

Models of Peacebuilding

Several scholars have offered models of peacebuilding which allow us to conceptualise how different approaches might provide a better understanding of various policy and practice interventions. We discuss these in no particular order. **Lederach:** Lederach (1997) makes three broad observations about peacebuilding in deeply divided societies. First, he argues, there is an over-emphasis on short-term tasks which are often separated from the longer-ranging goals of social change necessary to sustain any macro-political achievements made. Each political crisis or incident becomes the focus of attention rather than a strategic vision of where the divided society is going. Examples here could include problems which arose over decommissioning paramilitary arms in Northern Ireland, the political and legal ramifications of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s findings in South Africa and prisoner releases in Israel (Knox and Quirk 2000).

Second, Lederach argues there is a hierarchical approach to peacebuilding instead of an organic approach. He presents this as a three-level pyramid (see Fig. 1.1). At the top level, politicians, the military/police and appointed officials/advisors engage in high-level negotiations with the aim of reaching some kind of political ‘solution’ or compromise. At the middle level there is input from sectoral leaders, e.g. the business community, trade unions, religious leaders, academics and think tanks. At grass-roots level, NGOs, the voluntary and community sectors and local activists are involved. Lederach makes two observations about the pyramid population. First, the grass-roots level is the tier at which many of the symptoms of conflict are manifest—social and economic insecurity, political and cultural discrimination and human rights violation—but the lines of ethno-national conflict are drawn vertically rather than horizontally through the pyramid. In other words, the three levels in the model are not pitted against one another; conflict is cross-cutting. Second, there are two inverse relationships in a conflict setting. Those at the top of the pyramid have the greatest capacity to influence the wider peacebuilding process but are least likely to be affected by its consequences on a day-to-day basis. Those located at the bottom of the pyramid, on the other hand,

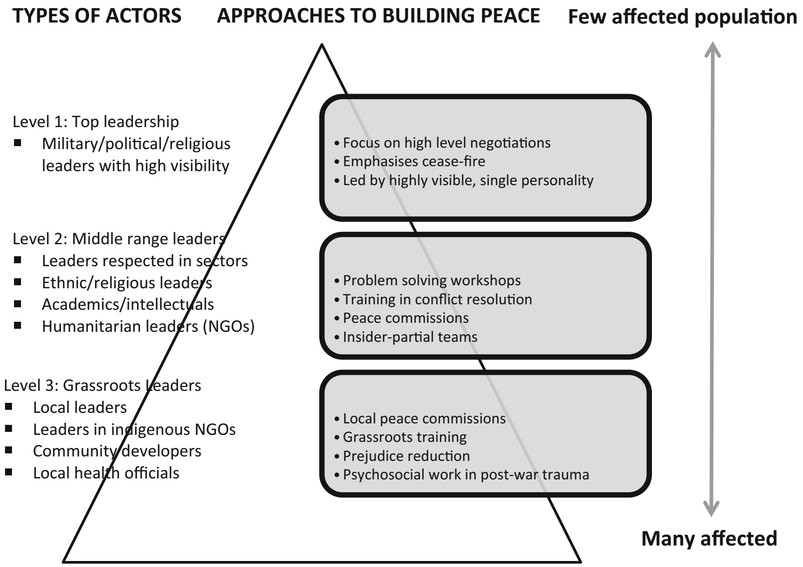
TYPES OF ACTORS
APPROACHES TO BUILDING PEACE
Few affected population
Level 1: Top leadership
Military/political/religious leaders with high visibility
Level 2: Middle range leaders
Leaders respected in sectors
Ethnic/religious leaders
Academics/intellectuals
Humanitarian leaders (NGOs)
Level 3: Grassroots leaders
Local leaders
Leaders in indigenous NGOs
Community developers
Local health officials
Focus on high level negotiations
Emphasises cease-fire
Led by highly visible, single personality
Problem solving workshops
Training in conflict resolution
Peace commissions
Insider-partial teams
Local peace commissions
Grassroots training
Prejudice reduction
Psychosocial work in post-war trauma
Many affected

Fig. 1.1 Lederach's peacebuilding model (1997)

will be directly influenced by the outcomes of macro-developments but will have limited access to the decision-making process and a narrower view of the wider agenda, which may demand bargaining and compromise (Lederach 1997: 43). Lederach argues: 'my basic thesis would be that no one level is capable of delivering and sustaining peace on its own. We need to recognise the interdependence of people and activities across all levels of this pyramid' (Lederach 1996: 45). In short, much of the activity is focused on top-level leaders and the macro-level political activities in which they are engaged.

This has significant consequences in terms of the pace of change experienced across the three levels. The peace process can be seen as moving simultaneously too slowly or rapidly. It will be too slow for those whose expectations have been raised by the possibility of peace, according to Lederach, and too rapid for those who feel they have conceded too much and received too little. An example here could be unionists in the Northern Ireland peace process, who now claim to have experienced a significant loss of their culture, rights and socio-economic status. Lederach concludes that the top-level official process is incapable of delivering on its own and that there is a need for an organic approach which treats peacebuilding as a web of interdependent activities and people across all three levels, rather than a hierarchical model.

The third component of the model poses the question: how do divided societies move from transition to transformation and ultimately reconciliation? Here Lederach argues that there are important political changes which are integral to the process of transition in divided societies, referred to as 'the technical or task oriented' components of any negotiated settlement. While these political changes are necessary if reconciliation is to be achieved, moving beyond transition to transformation requires a more comprehensive approach involving social, economic, socio-psychological and spiritual changes. Only then can new relationships be built based upon a willingness to acknowledge truth and past injustices and an openness to both offer and accept forgiveness. Lederach concludes:

> Peacebuilding requires a vision of relationship. Stated bluntly, if there is no capacity to imagine the canvas of mutual relationships and situate oneself as part of that historic and ever-evolving web, peacebuilding collapses. The centrality of relationship provides the context and potential for breaking violence, for it brings people into the pregnant moments of the moral imagination: the space of recognition that ultimately the quality of our life is dependent on the quality of life of others. (Lederach 2005: 35)

Galtung (1969, 1996): is widely recognised as having made a seminal contribution to the field of peacebuilding. He makes the distinction between three forms of violence: direct violence, structural or indirect violence and cultural violence. He defines direct violence as taking a verbal and physical form, and as causing harm to the body, mind and spirit. Structural violence takes various forms: political, repressive, economic and exploitative. Cultural violence involves religion, law and ideology, language, art and so on. Galtung delineates between 'negative' and 'positive' peace. The former is the absence of violence, whereas the latter requires peacebuilders to address the multiple manifestations of structural and cultural violence. Demmers (2012: 57) explains structural violence further, as the processes and mechanisms that prevent people from achieving their potential: 'the silent violence of poverty, low education, poor health and, in general, low life expectancy inherent in the way societies are organised'. This has a particular resonance in the 1960s civil rights movement within Northern Ireland, which highlighted the hegemony of unionism, inequalities suffered by Catholics in securing jobs, housing and economic prosperity and precipitated 'the troubles' (McGarry and O'Leary 1995). Galtung described conflict in the form of a triangle comprising attitudes (A), behaviour (B) and (C) contradiction (see Fig. 1.2). All three are required for fully fledged conflict. The manifest, observable or conscious aspects of conflict are identified by B for behaviour (violence and discrimination); and, the latent, theoretical, inferred or subconscious elements are identified by A for attitudes/assumptions (fear, prejudice) and C for contradiction. Galtung (1996: 70) describes the latter thus: 'deep inside every conflict lies a contradiction, something standing in the way of something else, a problem in other words'.

Demmers (2012: 75) explains the interconnectedness of violence and the route to peacebuilding, using the conflict triangle:

> Working on conflict attitudes (A) is primarily what reconciliation is about. Likewise, it is not enough to work on the B (behaviour) corner of the triangle. This is what conflict settlement efforts are about: to make parties refrain from fighting ('negative peace'). Whereas reconciliation efforts focus on A, and settlement is largely about B, conflict resolution only begins when C (the contradiction in the structure of the system) is addressed ('positive peace').

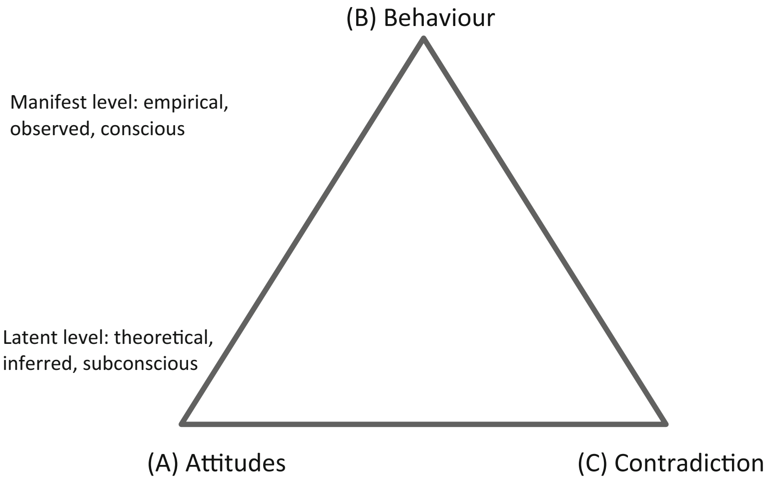
(B) Behaviour
Manifest level: empirical, observed, conscious
Latent level: theoretical, inferred, subconscious
(A) Attitudes
(C) Contradiction

Fig. 1.2 The conflict triangle (Galtung 1996)

Brewer (2013) explains that the political peace process introduces negative peace and the social peace process offers positive peace. He operationalises these two concepts in Table 1.1.

Structural positive peace, according to Galtung (1996: 32), will 'substitute freedom for repression and equity for exploitation, and then reinforce this with: dialogue instead of penetration; integration instead of segmentation; solidarity instead of fragmentation; and, participation instead of marginalisation'. Demmers (2012: 57) concludes: 'for what was hitherto recognised as a state of "peace" (the absence of protracted manifest violence) may actually be a state of conflict. Through Galtung's analytical lens, peace may very well be sustained by highly destructive forms of structural violence'. This has also been referred to as 'violent peace' (Zizek cited by Demmers 2008).

Aiken (2013) synthesises the work of other scholars but adds significant value through a social learning model (see Fig. 1.3) which connects transitional justice and reconciliation in divided societies (Beirne and Knox 2014). This connection, he argues, is heavily mediated by social learning: 'transitional justice strategies will be successful in promoting reconciliation to the extent that they are able to facilitate changes in the antagonistic identities and hostile systems of relations between former enemies

Table 1.1 Peace-making in practice

	Positive peace	*Negative peace*
Social	Involves civil society and grass-roots groups working in their areas of expertise to focus on social transformation and societal healing whether in pre- and/or post-agreement phases. Politicians acknowledge the valuable role of civil society in peacebuilding	Involves civil society and grass-roots groups working in their areas of expertise to focus on conflict transformation by intervening as mediators in specific instances of violence and/or campaigning to end violence generally. Civil society is active in ending violence
Political	Involves political parties, negotiators and politicians incorporating social transformation and societal healing into the terms of the accord and/or using the new political structures to address social transformation and societal healing	Involves political parties, negotiators and politicians negotiating ceasefires and campaigning for all factions to desist from killing. Politicians are active in ending violence

Source: Adapted by the authors from Brewer (2013: 166)

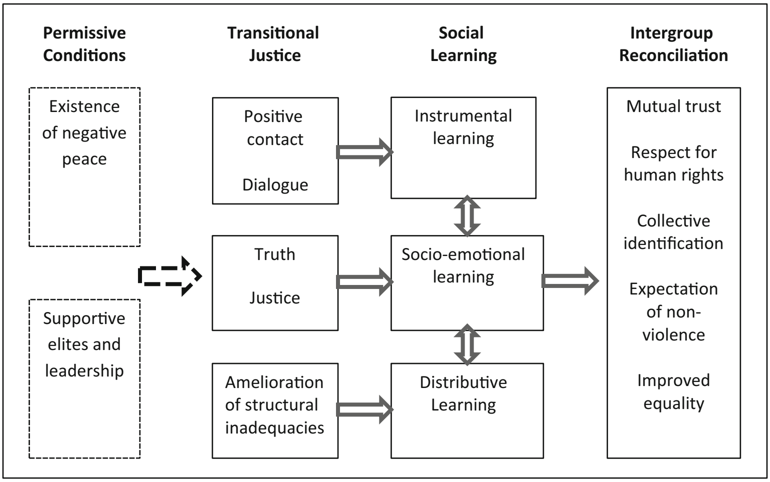
Permissive Conditions
Transitional Justice
Social Learning
Intergroup Reconciliation
Existence of negative peace
Supportive elites and leadership
Positive contact
Dialogue
Truth
Justice
Amelioration of structural inadequacies
Instrumental learning
Socio-emotional learning
Distributive Learning
Mutual trust
Respect for human rights
Collective identification
Expectation of non-violence
Improved equality

Fig. 1.3 Aiken's (2013) social learning model of transitional justice

developed during past violence' (Aiken 2013: 50). In his work on South Africa and Northern Ireland, he argues that transitional justice interventions can best contribute to post-conflict reconciliation if they help to promote positive intergroup contact, transformative dialogue, truth, justice and the amelioration of structural and material inequalities.

He expands on each component of the social learning model as follows:

- Positive intergroup contact is the essential mechanism of social learning and reconciliation. Contact must be of a non-adversarial quality; groups must be afforded equal status; this must occur over a long period of time, and be done in pursuit of cooperative or superordinate goals. In addition, the context should include supportive institutional structures, the agreement of authorities and a broader normative climate of improved intergroup relations.
- Transformative dialogue is needed to dissolve perceptions of the 'other' that informed past conflict. The content of interaction must be meaningful and transformative.
- Justice: it is necessary to directly acknowledge the injustice to victims of past violence by delegitimising violence against the 'other' and holding perpetrators accountable for their crimes.

- Truth: truth recovery is vital in securing sustainable peace. This demands an inquiry that can record the 'truth' so that there is a mutually accepted/tolerable shared understanding between former antagonists about past events.
- Structural and material inequalities. Positive peace addresses the deeper structural violence underlying conflict. There is a need to address the structural divisions that created interactions under conditions of material inequality.

Aiken argues that the above interventions work best under two permissive conditions: the existence of a negative peace or the absence of violence and, importantly, the presence of conducive elites or entrepreneurs. While not disregarding the role that local 'bottom-up' actors can play, he highlights the part which domestic leaders, elites or international actors can play in promoting reconciliation:

> These entrepreneurs may therefore prove integral to social learning both by attracting or coercing others to engage with the processes and mechanisms of transitional justice institutions and by modelling a commitment to reconciliation between former antagonists. (Aiken 2013: 50)

These three models offer a very useful context for examining peacebuilding in Northern Ireland and the role of an international actor (Atlantic Philanthropies) in tackling structural and material inequalities there.

Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland

Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland has had a long gestation period, but in the eyes of the international community, the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement of 1998 marked the end of the conflict and a move to 'negative' peace, or the absence of high-intensity political violence (Galtung 1996). The Agreement also provided, inter alia, for a devolved Assembly with full executive and legislative authority for all matters that are the responsibility of Northern Ireland government departments. Despite substantial public endorsements of the Agreement via referenda in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, devolution faltered, largely over decommissioning of paramilitary weapons. From the inception of devolution in December 1999 until October 2002, the Assembly was suspended four times with intermittent flurries during which public administration and legislative business could be conducted. The British Secretary of State dissolved the Assembly in April 2003 and local political parties engaged in a review of the Belfast Agreement with the aim of restoring devolution. A political breakthrough came in the form of the St Andrews Agreement in October 2006, which set out a timetable to reinstate devolution and fixed the date for the third elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly. Following the elections, devolved power was restored to the Assembly on 8 May 2007 in the form of a power-sharing executive headed by Ian Paisley as Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) First Minister (now replaced by Peter Robinson) and Sinn Féin's Martin McGuinness as Deputy First Minister. Although Northern Ireland has witnessed many 'historic breakthroughs', a public meeting between Ian Paisley (then DUP leader and now deceased) and Sinn Féin leader, Gerry Adams, carried huge symbolic significance as a turning point which copper-fastened the peace process. The five main political parties are now working as a power-sharing coalition in a devolved government at Stormont as of May 2007.

Concomitant with this working system of local governance, described by the First Minister, Peter Robinson (2009: 1), as the 'most settled period of devolution for over forty years', there has been a significant reduction in violence. An uninterrupted period of devolution since May 2007, the transfer of policing and justice powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly (the so-called final piece of the 'devolution jigsaw'— Hillsborough Agreement 2010), and a move away from constitutional and security issues all herald a return to 'normal' politics. But 'peace' is a fragile commodity, as illustrated by the frequent lapses into low-intensity conflict. This was exemplified in the street riots (December 2012) which followed a decision by Belfast City Council to limit the number of days the Union flag could be flown over the City Hall from 365 to 17 designated days throughout the year. Nationalists on the council had wanted to remove the flag permanently but voted in favour of a compromise proposal by the Alliance Party, which held the balance of power, to restrict it to designated days, consistent with practice in Stormont's Parliament Buildings. Riots resulted as 1500 objectors gathered outside Belfast City Hall in protest, followed by violence orchestrated by loyalist paramilitaries and a campaign of blocking roads across Northern Ireland. Much of the anger was directed towards members of the Alliance Party, several of whom witnessed their properties attacked or worse, as in the case of Naomi Long, (then) MP for East Belfast, who received a death threat.

The fragility of the peace process has also been apparent during the traditional annual marching season, when the Orange Order parades to mark King William of Orange's victory over King James II at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. This event is a cultural landmark in the calendar of the Protestant community in Northern Ireland. Although there are numerous parades and marches during the season, a small number remain contentious because the parade route can give offence to nationalist/republican communities. In July 2009 riots broke out in North Belfast (Ardoyne) following parades through nationalist/republican areas. Each year since then there has been significant violence surrounding contested marching routes with the police appealing for a political consensus on parades which has thus far been impossible to achieve. Loyalists set up a protest camp at Twaddell Avenue in North Belfast in July 2012 after a Parades Commission decision stopped an Orange Order parade taking place on a stretch of the adjoining Crumlin Road, which separates unionist and nationalist areas. Serious violence erupted in the area in 2013 when Orangemen were stopped from marching past (Catholic) Ardoyne while returning from their annual Twelfth of July demonstrations. A plan to establish a panel to examine North Belfast parades was abandoned by the Northern Ireland Secretary of State (Theresa Villiers) after the Stormont House Agreement was signed. The cost of policing the Twaddell Avenue protest camp is estimated to be £333,000 a month, according to Justice Minister David Ford. As one former Alliance Party leader put it: 'the war may be over but the battle for reconciliation has not even begun' (Cushnahan 2012: 14). This quotation makes the distinction between peacemaking, or reaching a political settlement, and peacebuilding.

Political stability and permanence of the power-sharing arrangements have been threatened by outstanding contentious issues: flags, parades and dealing with the past. After a long period of talks in 2014, the Stormont House Agreement was reached. The agreement consisted of the following: the establishment of a Commission on Flags, Identity and Culture; proposals to devolve the adjudication of parades to the Northern Ireland Assembly and replace the Parades Commission; mechanisms to deal with the legacy of Northern Ireland's past, including an oral history archive; the creation of a new Historical Investigations Unit to look at the deaths that occurred as a result of the conflict; and an Independent Commission for Information Retrieval, to be established by the UK and Irish governments. All of which suggests that truth recovery, in some format, and acknowledging and dealing with the past, are essential components of reconciling differences in a post-conflict era (Rowan 2015).

A more recent crisis has emerged on two fronts which threatens the stability of the power-sharing arrangements and could lead to the collapse of Stormont. First, Sinn Féin and the SDLP have vetoed proposals contained in the Stormont House Agreement over welfare reforms which are being rolled out in other parts of the UK. Second, there have been claims made that members of the Provisional IRA were involved in the murder (August, 2015) of a republican (Kevin McGuigan) as part of an ongoing internal feud. In terms of the former, because republican and nationalist parties have vetoed welfare reform proposals, all other measures in the Stormont House Agreement have been put on hold. This includes: the devolution of corporation tax powers to Belfast from London; access to HM Treasury's offer of £2 bn of additional spending powers; a major civil service redundancy scheme; and the establishment of new institutions to deal with the legacy of the conflict outlined above. During her period in office as DUP Finance Minister, Arlene Foster claimed that failure to implement welfare reform was costing the Northern Ireland Executive £312 K per day as a penalty from the Westminster block grant intervention and hence is damaging public service provision in Northern Ireland. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland's position is that the British government will not finance a more generous welfare reform system in Northern Ireland than in the rest of the UK, resulting in deadlock.

On the second issue, the political ramifications of IRA involvement in murder, if proven by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), could be significant. Sinn Féin's participation in government is based on their commitment to exclusively peaceful and democratic means, and support for the police, the courts and the rule of law. Should the IRA be involved in murder, this would undermine the position of Sinn Féin in the Northern Ireland Executive and precipitate a call for their exclusion which, in turn, could lead to the collapse of the Assembly. The Chief Constable of the PSNI has attempted to assuage unionist anger over the incident by saying: 'I accept the bona fides of the Sinn Féin leadership regarding their rejection of violence and pursuit of the peace process, and I accept their assurance that they want to support police in bringing those responsible to justice' (Hamilton 2015: 1). Whether unionists will be convinced by the words of the Chief Constable remains to be seen. Notwithstanding the recent political crisis, have these political developments led to positive peace?

Quality Peace?

However welcome these political developments are, does the absence of violence, a functioning, devolved, power-sharing government, and a 'settled' constitutional agreement constitute a sustainable and quality (positive) peace in Northern Ireland? This is *not* to underestimate the significant achievements made in reaching this point, but to ask whether the popular euphoria emanating from the Belfast Agreement (1998), the St Andrews Agreement (2006), the Agreement reached at Hillsborough Castle in 2010 and most recently the Stormont House Agreement (2014) have translated into so-called peace dividends or to an improvement in the quality of people's lives.

To examine this question we draw on a conceptual framework developed by Darby et al. (2012, Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies) which identified five variables that may promote and/or frustrate a stable peace. These are (in no particular order): the role of civil society, economic reconstruction, post-agreement security, transitional justice and reconciliation, and negotiations and governance. We will therefore examine these factors in some detail and consider what progress has been made, through these variables, to embed a 'quality (positive) peace' in the context of Northern Ireland. This examination will provide the framework within which we will discuss the role played by Atlantic Philanthropies in peacebuilding.

The Role of Civil Society

Civil society groups have a long history of involvement in Northern Ireland, linked directly to the political, constitutional and security problems which they faced. The most recent statistics available indicate that there are 4836 voluntary and community sector organisations, employing around 27,773 individuals representing 4 % of the total Northern Ireland workforce (Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action [NICVA] 2012). The primary purposes of civil society groups are: community development (15 %); children and families (14 %); health and wellbeing (8 %); and education and training (7 %). Data are not available to track the functions of civil society prior to the Belfast Agreement but it seems reasonable to suggest that at that time there was a greater emphasis by the sector on issues of human rights, equality, cross-community relations, and criminal justice work.

The prorogation of Stormont and the introduction of direct rule from Westminster in 1972 was an important milestone in the evolution of civil society. Direct rule witnessed the demise of local government and the absence of political accountability for public services. British ministers had no local electoral base in Northern Ireland and were preoccupied with 'high' politics—this vested significant powers in the hands of civil servants, who paid scant regard to local councillors. The resulting democratic deficit stirred the first signs of self-help in the community. A number of community action groups emerged in response to the trauma of political violence, but without government support. As Nolan described it:

> All over Northern Ireland there were people trying to help the families that had been burnt out, or establishing food co-operatives, or taking kids from the frontline areas off on holiday, or setting up peoples' assemblies, or trying to get dialogue going between Catholics and Protestants. There was prodigious energy, and an optimism that this ragbag of people could create a sort of counter-culture that would not only challenge the rising sectarianism, but would give expression to a new radical politics. (Nolan 2000: 30)

Increasingly, Northern Ireland Office ministers and senior civil servants recognised the contribution which civil society could make to a wide spectrum of government programmes in health and social services, urban renewal, economic development, poverty initiatives and, importantly, community relations. This, in turn, led to a more professionalised sector that worked with, and accepted more resources from, government in the 1980s and was well placed to support efforts to build a peace process in the 1990s. Self-help and community activism, however, were more evident in nationalist areas, whose history depicted the state as unionist oppressor. Fearon (2000: 26) observed that 'groups were more likely to be found in areas of high economic deprivation and nationalist in hue. Unionist groups still saw community development as a rebellious activity, something that sought to subvert and undermine the state.'

Following the Belfast Agreement some politicians were envious of the privileged access which civil society had to senior civil servants during the period of direct rule—as one Ulster Unionist Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) put it 'it is time for the sector to stand aside' (Cobain 2001: 370). Yet there is also an acknowledgement of the valuable contribution which the sector makes to post-conflict Northern Ireland (Williamson et al. 2000; Cochrane 2001; Hodgett and Johnston 2001;

Acheson and Williamson 2007). Consociational arrangements brokered through the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement cannot, in themselves, deliver stability on the ground, and require active engagement with civil society as key stakeholders in the community (Byrne 2001). This approach has been described by Taylor (2009: 312) as social transformation which 'challenges ethno-national group politics in favour of a democratic, non-sectarian future'.

In recognition of the contribution of the role which civil society could play in peacebuilding, the devolved government launched a strategy document entitled *Partners for Change* (Department for Social Development 2001). Although this was billed as a government strategy, the Joint Government/Voluntary and Community Sector Forum had developed it collaboratively. *Partners for Change* undoubtedly gave a very firm commitment to collaborative working between the devolved administration and civil society. The Department for Social Development described how the voluntary and community sector had become a key social partner in the processes of government. That involvement, it argued, 'reflects a more developed and mature relationship and role within Government than anywhere else in the United Kingdom, Ireland or indeed Europe' (Voluntary and Community Unit 2002: 15). The contribution of civil society to the Northern Ireland Executive's *Programme for Government 2008–2011* emphasised the importance of 'the Executive working together with the Assembly and harnessing the talents of all the sectors—public, private, voluntary and community' (Northern Ireland Executive 2008: 14). The follow-on *Programme for Government 2011–2015* reinforced the concept of partnership working between government and civil society and made a firm commitment to 'invest in the growth of social enterprise to increase the sustainability of civil society' (Northern Ireland Executive 2011a: 33). The devolved government has also provided substantial funds to support the development of civil society and its activities, as well as purchasing services from it. Government funding has moved from being primarily grants made to the sector, to the purchasing of public services (earned income) provided by community and voluntary organisations. Over half of civil society income (£392 m) derives from government purchasing of goods and services (NICVA 2012). One manifestation of the growing strength of the relationship between civil society and the devolved government is a joint concordat described as a 'shared vision to work together as social partners to build a participative, peaceful, equitable and inclusive community in Northern Ireland' (Northern Ireland Executive 2011b: 10).

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) carried out a review of the voluntary and community sector and concluded: 'the public sector's relationship with the Sector is complex. This has contributed to over-bureaucratic, disproportionate and risk-averse approaches to monitoring of funding and lack of focus on what is actually being delivered' (Public Accounts Committee, Northern Ireland Assembly 2012). The PAC concluded that the concordat between government and the sector offered another opportunity for a fresh start. However, it argued that there needed to be a concerted effort by all public bodies and sector organisations to actively implement and live by its values and principles.

In response, the Department for Social Development led the establishment of a cross-departmental Addressing Bureaucracy Project (Northern Ireland Executive 2013). Therein the government acknowledged that the voluntary and community sector 'makes an important and valued contribution to all aspects of community life in Northern Ireland'. It highlighted the partnership role between executive departments and the voluntary sector in delivering key priorities in the *Programme for Government* and concluded: 'In many instances the voluntary and community sector takes responsibility on behalf of Government (through a grantfunding arrangement) for the delivery of important and vital services to often marginalised and disadvantaged communities' (Northern Ireland Executive 2013: 1, 3). The government claimed a common purpose with the voluntary sector: 'the delivery of high quality services that make a real difference to our society'. Recommendations in the report were aimed at delivering greater proportionality of administration, reducing duplication of effort and delivering better value for money. A joint forum between the government and the voluntary sector exists to oversee the implementation of the concordat and the recommendations of the reports outlined above. The joint forum noted:

> All members recognise that a good working relationship between Government and the Sector is vital to the overall well-being of the people of Northern Ireland and that this is a unique opportunity to make a positive contribution to society. Particularly notable is the enthusiasm of members to address the long-standing issues that have impacted on this relationship and to take a different perspective at ways and means of taking matters forward. (Joint Government/Voluntary and Community Sector Forum 2014: 21)

So, while not without problems in terms of the practicalities of cooperation between government and the third (voluntary) sector, there appears to be a willingness to acknowledge both the role played by civil society, and the valuable support which it offers in a post-conflict Northern

Ireland—which corresponds to that of grassroots leadership in Lederach's peacebuilding model. That said, the current period of austerity is impacting significantly on the voluntary and community sector. In March 2015, for example, the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action reported on what they described as 'black Thursday' (26 March 2015) when a number of government departments made swingeing cuts to the sector. The Departments of the Environment and Education and Learning made cuts to European Social Fund budgets, which resulted in many voluntary organisations losing this significant revenue stream. The Department of Education removed the Early Years Fund, and the Department of Justice drastically cut support for voluntary organisations working to prevent recidivism and further crime by ex-offenders. The sector accused government departments of making cuts that were 'grossly disproportionate to the fiscal pressure they are under', slashing what they saw as peripheral activities and protecting their own core business. 'Carry on like this', the NICVA warned, 'and we will have poorer public services, a disconnected workforce, a disgruntled public, and a poorer society' (McAleavey 2015: 1). This point highlights the growing dependence of the voluntary and community sector on funding derived from the provision of erstwhile public services. This, in turn, challenges their independence and ability to call government to account.

Economic Reconstruction

Following the Belfast Agreement, the arrival of better economic prospects or the so-called 'peace dividend' was much heralded. An underlying theme in this economic reconstruction was that a peaceful Northern Ireland would attract international investment from companies which had previously regarded it as too unstable for a business location. Typical of this type of international 'open-for-business' endorsement was that of (former) New York Mayor, Michael Bloomberg, who addressed an investment conference in Belfast (2008) at which he highlighted American support in four key areas: infrastructure, small business development, tourism and private investment. He noted: 'I would be willing to bet that a decade from now, the Dublin-London-Belfast triangle could be one of the largest and most competitive financial hubs in the world if the political situation continues to improve', although he qualified his remarks with reference to demolition of the 'peace' walls (Bloomberg 2008: 2). The United States has been consistently supportive of Northern Ireland, both in terms of the peace process and efforts to encourage and grow levels of private investment. For example, the region has been able to attract American investment from companies such as Terex, Seagate, Dupont, NYSE Technologies, Allstate, Caterpillar and Citi. Northern Ireland has also attracted further US investment in the form of technology companies and in the areas of television and film production (HM Treasury 2011).

Despite international support and gestures of goodwill, Northern Ireland's economic fortunes since 1998 have been, at best, mixed. The European Union, for example, has supported Northern Ireland over several decades through structural funds, four phases of PEACE funding and via the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) (with match funding from the USA) (International Fund for Ireland 2015a). In May 2007 a European Commission Task Force was set up to support efforts to create change and improve competitiveness by helping Northern Ireland become more integrated into European networks. Northern Ireland's regional priorities are consistent with Europe's response to the global economic and financial crisis—sustainable and inclusive economic growth that will deliver high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion.

Until the beginning of the economic downturn in 2008, Northern Ireland experienced a period of comparatively strong economic growth. For example, between 1997 and 2007, the average rate of growth was marginally above the UK (5.6 % compared to 5.4 %). However, little progress was made in improving living standards (measured by the Gross Value Added) which remained at around 80 % of the UK average. Northern Ireland's living standards are below those of other parts of the UK except for two regions (North East England and Wales). However, the rate of economic growth during this period was reflected in increased levels of employment. For example, the Northern Ireland economy created 124,000 jobs between December 1997 and 2007—an increase of 20.5 %, well in excess of the growth in employee jobs in the UK, which grew by 10.7 % over the same period. Despite the growth in employment, the local economy continued to experience a relatively low employment rate and a high level of economic inactivity. The unemployment rate had fallen to one of the lowest within the UK by 2007 (Table 1.2).

With the onset of the economic recession, Northern Ireland, in common with the rest of the UK has faced, significant economic pressures—some 34,000 employee jobs have been lost since the peak of employment in June 2008, at which point 773,150 people were in employment in Northern Ireland (NI) compared to 699,650 in June 2011—a decrease of 4.6 %. The majority of the losses were in manufacturing, construction, retail and business and finance—unemployment increased by 158 % from 23,600 people (February 2008) to 60,900 (September 2011). The latest (July 2015) NI seasonally adjusted unemployment rate (6.2 %) was the same as the overall UK average rate (5.6 %) and was the sixth lowest rate among the twelve UK regions. The NI unemployment rate was below those of the European Union (10.0 %) and Republic of Ireland (10.9 %).

The rise in job losses has been reflected in an increased number of people claiming unemployment benefits, with the majority of claimants from lower-wage occupations. The claimant count has fallen by 14,600 since its most recent peak in December 2012. It stood at 44,000 (4.9 % of the workforce) in July 2015. Although all age groups have been impacted by the recession, the 16–24 year olds have been hit hardest and there is a growing number of long-term unemployed. Moreover, future forecasts are no less pessimistic. Economic growth prospects globally have been downgraded. The eurozone faces huge challenges, and Northern Ireland's trading sector has significant exposure in this market. Invest Northern Ireland, the agency charged with regional development, has attracted high-quality inward investments, especially in finance, technology and business services, but under EU rules the state financial aid which incentivised these deals ended in 2013/2014. In 2010–2011 there was a £128 m net reduction in the funding available for public services in Northern Ireland, and the UK public spending review resulted in a loss to the Northern Ireland block grant of £4 bn over the period 2011–2015, from an overall annual budget of approximately £10 bn. These budget cuts will clearly impact on public sector jobs and services in an economy that is heavily reliant on them. Public sector jobs (of which there are 210,030) account for the employment of 29.2 % of employees in Northern Ireland (at March 2015).

Table 1.2 Key economic indicators

Rate (%)	*1997*		*2007*		*2011*		*2015*	
	NI	*UK*	*NI*	*UK*	*NI*	*UK*	*NI*	*UK*
Employment	65.5	71.2	67.9	72.9	67.9	70.3	67.8	73
Unemployment	8.8	6.5	4.3	5.2	6.9	8.3	5.8	5.8
Economically inactive	28.1	23.8	29.0	23.1	26.9	23.2	27.9	22.4

Sources: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency; Office for National Statistics (2015)

The worst of this economic downturn is felt in socially deprived areas of Northern Ireland, which have also suffered most from sectarian violence.[1] As one former MLA put it: ‘Why is it that 13 years on from the Good Friday Agreement, while we have settled into political stability, we haven’t addressed long-term unemployment, life expectancy and low educational attainment?’ (Butler 2011: 25). Some unionist/loyalist community activists accuse politicians of abandoning the grass roots: ‘when you look at areas such as the greater Shankill there has been no peace dividend, no investment, and no improvement in the lives of people who live there’ (Irvine 2011: 12). Serious street rioting in East Belfast during the summer of 2011 was attributed by some to the widespread feeling of alienation because of the extent of deprivation among the local working-class unionist community. Others dismiss this completely:

> These (deprivation and street rioting) are two separate issues and care should be taken not to conflate them. Doing so partly excuses the inexcusable, reinforces a sense of self-pitying helplessness, heightens resentment, lets paramilitaries off the hook and signals that violence is a way to gain sympathetic publicity for social problems. Never mind monetary gain from the peace process, the overriding benefit that has followed to all of us in equal measure is the peace it has delivered. (Adams 2011: 14)

The difficulty in tracking economic development in Northern Ireland since the Agreement is threefold: first, can we attribute improving economic prospects up until 2007/2008 directly to the peace dividend or would they have happened in any case (the counterfactual problem)?; second, given Northern Ireland’s reliance on public sector jobs and the fact that it is faced with public expenditure cuts, future economic prospects are more dependent on the size of the public purse than on political stability; and third, external factors such as uncertainties in the eurozone and global volatility may put at risk local efforts at economic reconstruction.

[1] Data from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research agency show the difference between poor areas (Neighbourhood Renewal Areas) and the remaining more affluent areas (non-Neighbourhood Renewal Areas). The differences are stark: attainment of 5 GSCEs at A*–C with English and Maths (38 % and 63.6 %, respectively); suicide rates per 100,000 population (29.1 % and 13.2 %, respectively); male life expectancy (71.9 % and 78.03 %, respectively); recorded crime as percentage of population (13.23 % and 4.37 %, respectively); and numbers receiving Jobseekers’ Allowance as percentage of eligible population (10.54 % and 4.46 %, respectively). These statistics illustrate the significant differences between the poor and affluent in Northern Ireland (Knox 2015b).

Post-Agreement Security

With the signing of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, given the highly contested nature of the former security forces (the Royal Ulster Constabulary—RUC) and the centrality of human rights and equality principles to any durable political settlement, decisions were taken to ‘hive off’ controversial issues to independent commissions on policing, a review of the criminal justice system and the establishment of new independent human rights and equality institutions. In other words, a decision was made to ‘park’ these contentious problems and secure agreement on those constitutional issues on which the main political parties could agree. An independent commission chaired by Chris Patten published a report entitled *A New Beginning*: *Policing in Northern Ireland* (1999) containing radical proposals for change which were subsequently endorsed by the British Secretary of State and included: the creation of a new independent Policing Board to hold the Chief Constable and police service to account; downsizing police numbers with generous severance arrangements; a new 50:50 recruitment policy of Catholics and Protestants to address a significant imbalance which favoured the latter; a change in the name and symbols associated with the police; a new emphasis on community policing; and, an oversight commissioner to monitor the implementation of the changes (Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland 1999). The new Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) came into existence in November 2001. Independent accountability mechanisms are now in place through the Northern Ireland Policing Board and the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland.

Two of the more obvious sources of evidence which can be used to track the effectiveness of post-agreement security are statistics on the levels of crime associated with the security situation and public perceptions of the police. In a probability survey of around 1200 people, participants were asked: ‘how much confidence do you have in the PSNI’s ability to provide an ordinary day-to-day service for all the people of Northern Ireland’. Given the highly negative perceptions of the RUC in nationalist/republican communities, confidence in its successor is clearly important to a sustainable peace. Sinn Féin, for example, refused to join the Policing Board until 2007, because it was not satisfied that the recommendations of the Patten report had been implemented in full. The results of the survey are set out in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Confidence in PSNI's ability to provide a service for all people of NI

	2001			*2010*			*2014*		
Rating	*Catholic (%)*	*Protestant (%)*	*Total (%)*	*Catholic (%)*	*Protestant (%)*	*Total (%)*	*Catholic (%)*	*Protestant (%)*	*Total (%)*
A lot or total confidence	28	60	47	39	46	42	43	52	49
Some confidence	41	30	35	39	37	38	46	36	40
Little or no confidence at all	29	9	18	21	16	18	10	12	11

Sources: Compiled from Omnibus Surveys—Northern Ireland Policing Board (2014)

What is interesting about these statistics on perceptions of the PSNI is that Catholic confidence in the police has grown over the 13-year period, yet Protestants are now less confident (than in 2001) that the police can provide a policing service for all the people of Northern Ireland. This could be a reaction, in part, to the 50:50 recruitment process which has resulted in an increased number of Catholic police officers in the PSNI; currently, the figure is 67.02 % Protestant and 30.97 % Catholic (at August 2015—the remainder are 'not determined'). The 50:50 quota policy ended in March 2011.

Notwithstanding public perceptions about the PSNI, levels of violence directly linked to the security situation have decreased significantly. Compare, for example, the 2014 figure of two deaths caused by terrorism with the figure of 470 in 1972, at the height of the conflict. There has been a similar trend for security-related incidents (shootings by terrorists and the security services). There were 73 shooting incidents in 2014 compared with 10,631 in 1972 (Police Service of Northern Ireland 2015). Fig. 1.4 shows trends in security-related incidents (deaths, shootings and bombing incidents) since 1998 onwards. Officially however, the level of the security threat from terrorism, according to MI5 (The Security Service), is still considered to be 'severe', defined as meaning that 'an attack is highly likely'. The threat is perceived to be principally from republican terrorist groups (for example, the Continuity IRA and Real IRA).

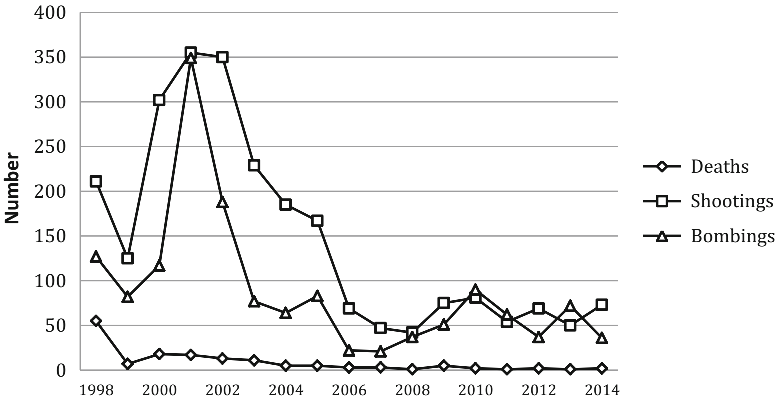

Fig. 1.4 Security-related incidents

(*Source*: Compiled from Police Service of Northern Ireland statistics)

Policing, however, remains a highly sensitive area in Northern Ireland. A report by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate was very critical of the office of the Police Ombudsman over his handling of high-profile historical cases, claiming evidence of flawed investigative processes resulting in the lowering of the standards of independence of the office (Criminal Justice Inspectorate 2011). Significant political pressure was exerted on the (then) Ombudsman, who left the post before his intended retirement date.

Transitional Justice and Reconciliation

Transitional Justice

While the above statistics show the security situation has improved significantly (although there remains a threat of dissident republican activity), Northern Ireland is a society whose conflict is yet to be fully resolved. Dealing with the past remains an ongoing issue and attracts diverse opinions. All politicians claim to support justice for those who have unanswered questions surrounding the deaths of their relatives. Unionists, for example, supported the work of the Historical Enquiries Team (within the PSNI) which, if it finds evidence, may secure convictions through the courts. Nationalists and republicans also support some form of truth recovery process. Sinn Féin, for example, wants to see the establishment of a fully independent international truth commission by a reputable international body (such as the United Nations). This would be the equivalent of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, which had the power to grant protection from prosecution for those who had carried out crimes in the cause of truth recovery. First Minister, DUP Peter Robinson, has rejected this idea claiming that it would be a ‘half-truth commission’ in which state organisations would be forthcoming with information and evidence, but paramilitaries would not be and, hence, a distortion of the truth would emerge. What has happened to date has been a piecemeal approach, consisting of: individual enquiries (such as the Saville Enquiry (2010) on ‘Bloody Sunday’, which exonerated 14 marchers shot dead by British soldiers at a civil rights demonstration in (London)Derry in 1972); the publication of a controversial report titled *Consultative Group on the Past* (Eames and Bradley 2009); and ongoing work by the PSNI’s Historical Enquiries Team (see further discussions below) and the Police Ombudsman’s Office.

There is a degree of cynicism about the call for, and support given to, any proposed truth commission. As one observer has noted:

> It is tempting to conclude that republicans rhyme on about a commission knowing there isn't going to be one, in the comfortable certainty they will never face moral pressure to follow generals and politicians to the stand. The British authorities are just as determined as Sinn Féin and a host of others … to keep guilty secrets. Across the barriers of nationality and opposing versions of history, ex-combatants by their demands and protestations secure each other's silence. (O'Connor 2011: 14)

Perhaps this assertion is borne out by the former British Secretary of State Owen Paterson's blunt refusal to set up a truth commission, the rejection by Prime Minister Cameron of an enquiry into the high profile Pat Finucane case, for which there is reported evidence of state collusion (uncovered by Lord Stevens and retired judge Peter Cory) and the PM's lack of support for any future public enquiry.

The Consultative Group on the Past (chaired by the former Church of Ireland primate Lord Eames and former vice-chair of the Policing Board, Denis Bradley) was established by a previous British Secretary of State (Peter Hain) to try to achieve community consensus on how the legacy of the past might be tackled and, as a result, to help build a shared future. Its overall recommendations were overshadowed by a specific proposal for the government to make a one-off ex-gratia payment of £12,000 to the nearest relative of someone who had died as a result of the conflict. This payment included relatives of republican and loyalist paramilitaries or those involved in killings through official state collusion. Hence, relatives of some 3700 people killed in the conflict would receive the payment, amounting to approximately £40 m. This recommendation was immediately vetoed by the British government. Unionists rejected the report, claiming there could be no moral or legal equivalence between innocent victims of violence and criminal terrorists. The consultative report also recommended the setting up of an independent Legacy Commission with the aim of promoting peace and stability. The British government has simply sat on the report since its publication. Another proposal (from the First Minister) was to establish a storytelling archive for victims in a Conflict Resolution Centre, to be built as part of a major development project at the site of the former Maze Prison (H-Blocks) where paramilitaries had been held and republican hunger strikers had died. The centre had already secured an £18 m grant from European PEACE III funds, and was to be one component of a 350-acre redevelopment project costing £300 m and which was aimed at attracting jobs and inward investment. Funding was reallocated after the First Minister withdrew his support (August 2013), stating that the project could not proceed without consensus, after some unionist politicians and victims' families expressed fears it would be turned into a 'shrine' to IRA terrorism and not become a shared space.

The Historical Enquiries Team (HET) was established by the Secretary of State at that time, Paul Murphy, in 2005, with a six-year timescale, a budget of £24.3 m, and an objective of pursuing new evidence on the murders committed during the 30 years of the conflict and provide answers to the bereaved. The HET is a special investigative unit attached to the Police Service of Northern Ireland and accountable to the Chief Constable, which re-examines the deaths of thousands of people in the civil unrest between 1968 and the signing of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in April 1998. The HET works closely with families and aims to provide each with a report based on 'maximum permissible disclosure' on the death of their relative. Maximum disclosure may be restricted because of the role played by informants, which could jeopardise national security in cases where Special Branch and MI5 have/had a particular interest. Not every family engaged with the HET, with some preferring not to know some of the gruesome details of how the death occurred, but others did, and found comfort in answers to questions which had troubled them. The HET have completed more than half of their investigations at the time of writing, with the remainder expected to take a further two to three years. According to one journalist who has closely monitored the work of the HET 'it may not uncover all the evidence surrounding an incident, but it can, in most cases, bring closure that no rambling political activist and a cast of highly-paid lawyers will ever achieve' (Murray 2011: 24).

Part of the work of the HET involved reviewing 157 killings by the British army between 1970 and 1973. Controversy arose when an Ulster University academic, Professor Patricia Lundy, claimed it gave former soldiers preferential treatment and did not properly investigate deaths caused by the military (Lundy 2009, 2010, 2011). The HET and PSNI rejected the claims in her report. Only after a request from the Policing Board did the Chief Constable at that time, Matt Baggott, agree to commission a review by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary on the matter. The review found that the Historical Enquiries Team's policy was based on a 'misrepresentation of the law' and its approach to cases involving the state was inconsistent with the European Convention on Human Rights. Since 2010, there had been 39 cases, involving 119 killings, referred back to the PSNI for potential criminal investigation. However during this time frame, no British military cases were referred to the PSNI for further investigation.

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, Stephen Otter said:

> We think the HET was acting unlawfully in regard to state cases because it treats them differently in policy terms and in the way that then acts out in practice. So, state cases were less effective as a result. Effectiveness is a key test of whether it is Article 2 Compliant under the European Convention on Human Rights. What is indefensible is that Professor Lundy made these findings in 2009, so for four years nothing was being done to address those findings and I do find that that is very difficult to believe. Historical Enquiries Team risked undermining the confidence of the families of those who died during the Troubles in its effectiveness and impartiality. (Moriarty 2013: 4)

The Director of the HET stood down and, under pressure to cut its budget (in line with other public bodies), the PSNI moved to close the Historical Enquiries Team although claiming it would continue to meet its legislative responsibilities with regards to the past, including setting up fresh investigations where new and compelling evidence emerged. The police service has claimed that it continues to shoulder the burden of a broader failure to deal with the past. This process goes back to the Eames/Bradley consultation in 2007, the Haass/O'Sullivan talks[2] and now awaits the outcome of the Stormont House Agreement (2014). The latter makes clear 'that legislation will establish a new independent body to take forward investigations into outstanding Troubles-related deaths: the Historical Investigations Unit (HIU). The new body will take forward outstanding cases from the HET process, and the legacy work of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (PONI). A report will be produced in each case' (Northern Ireland Office, Stormont House Agreement 2014: 6).

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[2] Richard Haass, the former American diplomat, and Professor Megan O'Sullivan chaired six months of talks on flags, parades and dealing with the past. Their proposals included: support for victims and survivors; acknowledgement; the setting-up of a Historical Investigations Unit; the setting-up of an Independent Commission for Information Retrieval; and investment and research into narratives and archives. They failed to reach agreement by 31 December 2014. The two unionist parties rejected their proposals, although the other three parties involved, Sinn Féin, the SDLP and Alliance, had all been more accommodating.

This issue of state collusion with paramilitaries continues to haunt the PSNI. In June 2015, RTÉ's (Raidió Teilifís Éireann, the public service broadcaster of Ireland) *Prime Time* programme featured several instances of alleged collusion involving the British army, MI5 and the RUC. The programme collated numerous cases in which British state forces allegedly colluded with loyalist paramilitaries, going back to the 1970s and running right up to the late 1990s and early 2000s. It covered cases such as the Dublin-Monaghan bombings, which claimed 34 lives, the 1989 murder of Belfast solicitor Pat Finucane, and the activities of the 'Glennane Gang', which operated in Mid-Ulster during the 1970s, and the Mount Vernon UVF gang, which was allegedly involved in numerous killings from the 1990s. It also followed on from the recent BBC *Panorama* programme, *Britain's Secret Terror Deals*, which had examined the extent of British security force collusion with republican and loyalist paramilitaries. In that programme the former Northern Ireland Police Ombudsman, Baroness Nuala O'Loan, said that 'hundreds and hundreds' of deaths happened in Northern Ireland as a result of security forces collusion. She made similar allegations on the RTE Programme, Collusion. Both programmes also covered some of the ground of the book *Lethal Allies*, written by journalist Ann Cadwallader, which alleged that the Glennane gang, made up of loyalist paramilitaries, RUC members and Ulster Defence Regiment soldiers, killed up to 120 Catholics (Moriarty 2015: 2; Cadwallader 2013).

Reconciliation

The British government and local politicians have made attempts to promote reconciliation through two key public policy commitments: *A Shared Future* and the consultation document *Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2005, 2010, respectively). British ministers devised the former during the direct rule era and the latter emerged after protracted negotiations between Sinn Féin and the DUP. The *Shared Future* policy document, drawing on extensive public consultation, argued that there was overwhelming support for a shared society in Northern Ireland (Hughes 2009). Its underpinning principles were rooted in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, which claimed that 'an essential aspect of the reconciliation process is the promotion of a culture of tolerance at every level of society, including initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education and mixed housing' (The Agreement 1998: 18). The policy document was emphatic in its tone: ‘separate but equal is not an option’. A *Shared Future* was rejected by the devolved government because of its genesis as a document put forward by British Ministers. NI politicians launched the consultation document *Programme for Cohesion*, *Sharing and Integration*, which set out the Northern Ireland Executive’s vision for the future by challenging the assumption that division and segregation is a ‘normal’ pattern of living (Knox 2011). The Executive listed a number of ‘themes for action’. These included:

- Ensuring that good relations considerations are embedded within all government policy making.
- Reducing and eventually eliminating segregated services.
- Addressing interfaces and encouraging shared neighbourhoods.

Responses to the government’s proposals were mostly negative, and are best captured by one political commentator who described them as ‘aspirational or motherhood and apple pie’ (Davenport 2010: 1). This reaction reflected wider criticism that *Cohesion*, *Sharing and Integration* failed to set targets or dates for measurable progress and did not mention any financial commitment on the part of government. As one newspaper editorial described it: ‘the proposed programme suggests that the Executive has set out to manage, rather than eradicate, sectarianism’ (Irish News 2010: 10). Following concerted criticism, the government published a revised strategy, entitled *Together*: *Building a United Community* (OFMDFM 2013a). This was a much more ambitious document, with four priorities and associated aims:

- Children and Young People: to continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations.
- Shared Community: to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone.
- Safe Community: to create a community where everyone feels safe in moving around and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety.
- Cultural Expression: to create a community which promotes mutual respect and understanding, is strengthened by its diversity, and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced.

Acutely aware of the criticism levelled at previous attempts to develop reconciliation policies, the government made very explicit commitments to do the following: build ten new shared education campuses; get 10,000 young people who were not in education, employment or training a place on the United Youth volunteering programme; establish ten new shared housing schemes; develop four urban villages; develop a significant programme of cross-community sporting events; remove interface barriers by 2023; and to pilot 100 shared summer schools (OFMDFM 2013a 9). These commitments involve several government departments and, in some cases, capital projects, which are contingent on public spending approval.

So is Northern Ireland a more reconciled society, illustrative of positive peace, since the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement? Fig. 1.5 traces probability survey responses (n ≈ 1200) over a 16-year period (1998–2014) when members of the public were asked the question: 'Would you say that relations between Catholics and Protestants are better than they were five years ago, worse, or about the same now as then?' Despite a dip in relations during 2001–2002 (when devolution was in trouble) the overall trend has been towards better relations between the two communities, although the contentious issues of parades may well have had a negative impact recently (we return to examine this trend in more detail in Chap. 7). Notwithstanding, the number of 'peace walls' or physical barriers, built as security measures to protect communities from each other

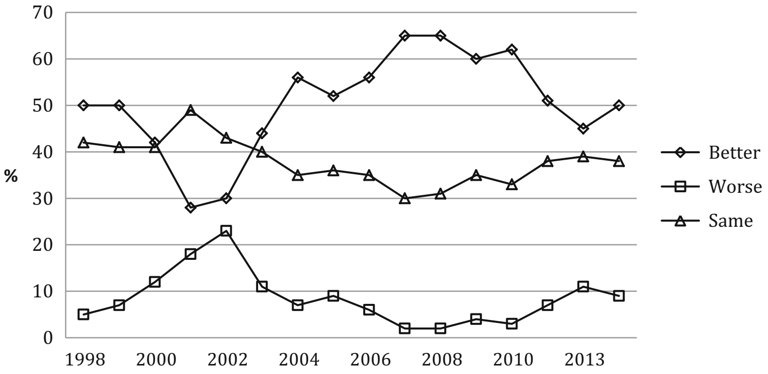


Fig. 1.5 Relations between Catholics and Protestants
(*Sources*: Compiled from Northern Ireland Life and Times surveys 1998–2014)

(so called ‘interface areas’), remain as a symbolic reminder of separation (Gormley-Heenan et al. 2013). There are at least 60 walls, gates or fences dividing communities, most of them in Belfast. There is some political impetus for the Department of Justice to remove these symbols of a divided society; this move would be accompanied by financial support from the IFI to communities living on either side of these barriers, which would aim at creating dialogue and building trust and confidence so as to allow them to be dismantled.

Negotiations and Governance

Devolution in Northern Ireland followed directly from the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement which provided, inter alia, for a democratically elected assembly ‘inclusive in its membership, capable of exercising executive and legislative authority, and, subject to safeguards to protect the rights and interests of all sides of the community’ (The Agreement 1998: 5). The British government linked the political process and the peace process directly. Peter Mandelson, the (then) Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, argued that the Agreement established the principle that ‘political stability is best achieved in the absence of violence, but an unbreakable peace can only be built in the context of fair, inclusive and functioning political institutions’ (Mandelson 2000: 1). Hence, long-term political stability and peace are predicated upon violence abatement *and* devolution. Intermittent and faltering spells of devolution delivered a hugely imperfect peace at the start of this process until the St Andrews Agreement (October 2006). This resulted in full support for policing and the rule of law across the whole community, the subsequent devolution of policing and justice powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly, and support for power-sharing and the political institutions. Strand 1 of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement created democratic institutions within Northern Ireland. Strands II and III involved North-South and East-West relationships, respectively. Strand II is operationalised through the North-South Ministerial Council and Strand III via the British Irish Council and British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference. Coakley (2007) cites the limitations of Strands II and III as having an absence of political direction and failing to ignite popular imagination, respectively.

A key element in securing an agreement on which a power-sharing government could be based was the provision of safeguards to copperfasten inclusion under the new arrangements and avoid regression to the unionist hegemony which had characterised the Stormont regime from 1921 to 1972. Wilford outlines how the ‘consociational bargain’ plays out in devolved government in Northern Ireland through four key characteristics or safeguards, which are integral not only to the design and operation of the Assembly, but also to how wider society is organised:

- A partnership within and between the executive and legislature: [a] four (now five) party coalition which makes up the executive; the relationship between the Executive and the Assembly; and intra-Assembly arrangements among political parties within statutory committees.
- Proportionality in electoral systems, allocation of public expenditure and public employment.
- Autonomy over each community’s sense of identity—the endorsement of social segregation.
- Mutual veto among political élites—unanimity among decision makers in the form of ‘key decisions’ and ‘cross-community’ consent. (Wilford 2001: 108–10)

Most decisions taken in the Assembly are agreed by a simple majority of members. Certain ‘key’ decisions, however, require cross-community support. Issues subject to key decisions are either laid down in legislation or are listed in the standing orders of the Assembly (e.g. exclusion of a minister or members from holding office, a financial vote or a vote on making or amending standing orders). This is to protect against any one political group dominating the decision-making process, or a reversion to majoritarianism. This may be done in two ways:

- Parallel consent, where over 50 % of members voting, including over 50 % of nationalists and over 50 % of unionists voting, all agree to the motion; or
- A weighted majority, which requires the support of 60 % of those voting, including 40 % unionist and 40 % nationalist support.

Cross-community voting demands ethnic self-designation. Members of the Legislative Assembly must therefore designate themselves as ‘nationalist’, ‘unionist’ or ‘other’ and can only change his/her community designation between elections if (s)he changes political party affiliation. Critics argue that designation reinforces sectarian divisions by accepting the pre-existing order of Northern Ireland society, and that the system is too rigid and acts as a deterrent to non-aligned parties (Farry 2009).

Following the first complete electoral mandate of the Northern Ireland Assembly from 2007–2011, only modest policy successes could be reported, such as the following: free public transport is available to everyone over 60; local rates (property taxes) were frozen for 3 years; medical prescription charges have been abolished; there has been investment in infrastructure projects for schools, roads and hospitals; and water charges have been deferred (Knox 2010a). While these policies have been popular with the electorate, they are predicated on an expanding public sector budget, which is no longer available. The key achievement has been that there is a coalition of the five main political parties which continues to share power, although its long-term sustainability is far from guaranteed.

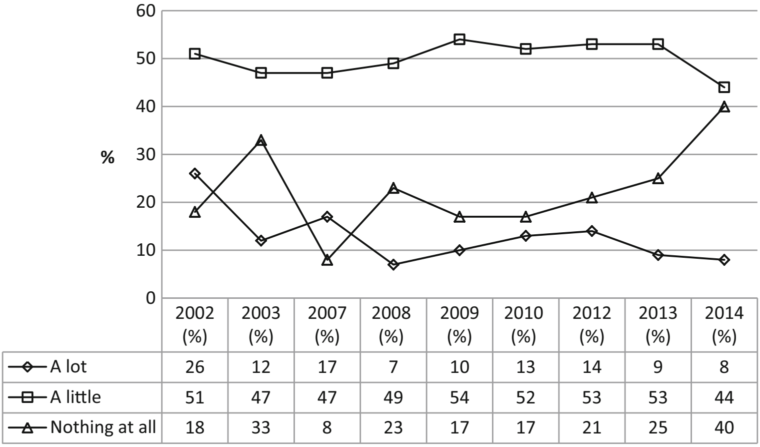
Politicians, particularly those from the two largest power-sharing parties (the DUP and Sinn Féin), are quick to stress what they see as the significant benefits of devolution. The former First Minister, Peter Robinson, has argued:

> Devolution is good in theory but it has also been good in practice. However, I concede that one area where we have failed has been selling the benefits of devolution. Significantly, devolution provides the foundation for peace and prosperity, but it also allowed us to make a real difference to people's everyday lives. (Robinson 2009: 4)

The verdict on 'making a real difference to people's lives' is perhaps best left to the people of Northern Ireland, who have expressed their view through survey data since 2002 on the performance of the Assembly (see Fig. 1.6). Survey participants responded to the question: 'Overall, do you think that the Northern Ireland Assembly has achieved a lot, a little or nothing at all?' The trend from 2002–2014 is not particularly encouraging, with around half of all respondents (n ≈ 1150) claiming the Assembly had achieved 'a little'.

POSITIVE PEACE?

So, does Northern Ireland offer an example of a successful peacebuilding process—a positive peace? The five key variables considered in this chapter to 'test' the quality and stability of peace in Northern Ireland provide evidence of the following: a dynamic civil society which has a strong



	2002 (%)	2003 (%)	2007 (%)	2008 (%)	2009 (%)	2010 (%)	2012 (%)	2013 (%)	2014 (%)
◇ A lot	26	12	17	7	10	13	14	9	8
□ A little	51	47	47	49	54	52	53	53	44
△ Nothing at all	18	33	8	23	17	17	21	25	40

Fig. 1.6 How much has the NI assembly achieved?
(*Sources*: Compiled from Northern Ireland Life and Times surveys)

and growing relationship with the devolved government but is cautious about losing its independence as a consequence, and is feeling the pressures of public spending cuts; some early signs of economic reconstruction adversely affected by the global recession, and limited peace dividends in socially deprived areas; a significant decline in violence associated with the security situation, although there is a mixed picture on public confidence in policing; unresolved and contested policy responses to dealing with the past, alongside improving relations between Catholics and Protestants; and mixed optimism about the political stability of the power-sharing institutions of governance, but an unremarkable performance by the Northern Ireland Assembly in policy terms.

If one were to judge the relative contribution of these factors to securing ‘quality (positive) peace’ in Northern Ireland, then security, negotiations and governance must rank as the most important constituents. However, the decline in violence and the political power-sharing governance which has emerged from the negotiated settlement are, though necessary, not sufficient requirements for building a future quality peace. Conflict impacts on the quality of people’s lives, whether directly as a result of violence, or indirectly as a consequence of segregated communities living under the control of paramilitaries. People must therefore see the real benefits of a political settlement beyond the absence of violence and the presence of political stability, particularly in those socially deprived communities most impacted by the conflict. Hence, economic reconstruction is pivotal to embedding peace, and is described in the Northern Ireland context as the 'peace dividend'. In an empirical study which considered key quality of life indicators (measuring education, physical and mental health, crime, and social welfare) in areas which were socially deprived and affected by violence during the conflict, little had changed since the Belfast Agreement in 1998 (Knox 2015b). In fact, the performance gap between conflict-affected areas and others had widened on almost all the indicators. The absence of violence (negative peace) clearly helps to create more certainty for potential external investors, but at a time of a global recession economic reconstruction is a huge challenge. However, there is much that can be achieved by targeting public sector budgets towards those areas blighted by terrorism and social deprivation. Unless people living in these areas experience a difference in the quality of their lives, young unemployed men (largely) become easy targets for recruitment by dissident republicans and loyalists. To move forward demands a consensus on dealing with the past set alongside reconciliation pathways to the future. Northern Ireland has yet to resolve these issues. A key element of building confidence in the future is a dynamic civil society working in partnership with government and giving voice to community groups which represent the fabric of a more cohesive society.

There is, however, the potential to underestimate public expectations in the wake of a peace process. Given the protracted nature of the Northern Ireland conflict, the euphoria of declining violence and political stability quickly evaporated and heralded the prospects of a better life for those whose lives had most been impacted by violence. When this didn't happen, disillusionment and a sense of helplessness set in amongst those who had the most to gain from peace—communities not only subjugated by paramilitaries but also abandoned by government departments, local authorities, health trusts and agencies, which have clearly failed to deliver key public services. External bodies which have supported efforts to reach an inclusive political settlement (for example, the International Fund for Ireland, the European Union and Atlantic Philanthropies) now witness a functioning locally elected legislative power-sharing Assembly and are in danger of withdrawing—'job done'. The Department for International Development, in a framework for building strong state–society relations

(2010), notes that 'in fragile contexts, public goods may be delivered in a biased and selective manner that helps maintain an exclusionary political settlement—addressing this is essential to improve confidence in the state and to address grievances' (DFID 2010: 32). Somewhat ironically, the political structures put in place in Northern Ireland to ensure a consensus (that is, the power-sharing devolved government) actually make it more difficult to respond effectively to public expectations for better services and an improved quality of life. The plethora of government departments needed to ensure five political parties have seats at the Northern Ireland Executive table has resulted in highly fragmented public services and a failure to tackle social disadvantage. Consociationalism, put in place to protect against any one political group dominating the decision-making process or a reversion to majoritarianism, has had public policy consequences through mutual vetos exercised by the DUP and Sinn Féin. The electorate, in turn, has confirmed the dominance of these parties in government. In the last three Northern Ireland elections (2015 Westminster; 2014 local government; and 2011 NI Assembly) the combined voting share of the DUP and Sinn Féin has been 50.2 %, 50.8 % and 56.9 % respectively. In summary, a failure to respond positively to public expectations of peace has contributed significantly to the fragility of post-conflict Northern Ireland.

One commentary has pointed out that the 'moral basis of the 1998 peace accord has evaporated':

> Dr Richard Haass has warned that Northern Ireland can no longer be held up as a model of conflict resolution. The evidence he puts forward for that view – divided neighbourhoods and divided schools. Despite some movement in terms of residential segregation and shared schooling, the fundamental divisions remain unchanged. Over 93 per cent of children are educated in separate schools, interface walls still divide communities and sectarian riots are accepted as routine annual events. Twenty years on from the first ceasefires the terms of trade have been set by deals and side-deals. These have prevented the return of large-scale violence but the model on offer from the top is peace without reconciliation. A culture of endless negotiation has become embedded and, without a vision of a shared society to sustain it, the peace process has lost the power to inspire. (Nolan 2014: 11)

What do the above peacebuilding models tell us about the evolving process in Northern Ireland? There are a number of important features which can be identified. First, as Lederach points out, the move from transition, to transformation and ultimately reconciliation requires systemic social change to support macropolitical achievements. This is a critical point in the evolving peace in Northern Ireland. Loyalists and unionists, for example, consider that they have not benefited from the peace process to the same extent as nationalists and republicans have done. An asymmetric 'peace dividend' can store up resentment and create circumstances which are unlikely to be conducive to the long-term social change that will embed peace. Second, Galtung's conflict triangle highlights the importance of addressing 'structural violence'. Why, for example, in Northern Ireland are working-class Protestant children so badly served by the education system? Third, Aiken's social learning model offers a useful landscape for peacebuilding within which the role of Atlantic Philanthropies can be identified. In this context, their role fits Aiken's description (2013: 50) of an external international actor who 'attracted or coerced others to engage … by modelling a commitment to reconciliation'. It is the role played by Atlantic Philanthropies in peacebuilding which we turn to in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER 2

Philanthropy and Peacebuilding

Introduction: Philanthropy

We begin this chapter with an understanding (from Chap. 1) of the need for any macropolitical developments in Northern Ireland to be supported by social change which address the systemic causes of conflict, the structural inequalities in society and the potential role that external actors can play to assist in addressing these issues. One of those external actors is Atlantic Philanthropies, which we examine in some detail in this chapter. Before doing so, however, we consider from the literature the role played by philanthropy in the UK.

Philanthropy is defined as 'the use of private resources for public benefit and social change' and is 'traditionally perceived as a niche activity, subordinate and supplemental to government, and the public, private and third sectors' (Jung and Harrow 2015: 47; Harrow and Jung 2011: 1047, respectively). The Kellogg Foundation defines it as 'the giving of time, money and know-how to advance the common good'. The role played by philanthropy, however, particularly in European countries, has been underexplored and only partially understood in the literature. Schuyt (2010: 774), for example, refers to philanthropy as a 'distinct concept' that has received 'little scholarly attention' in research journals. Much of the literature on philanthropy, particularly in relation to grant-making that supports advocating for public policy change, has its origins in the USA (Suárez 2012; Fleishman 2009; Frumkin 1998; Karl and Katz 1981). Montanaro (2012) however claims that the USA experience in

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philanthropy has limited transferability to European settings. Exceptionally, the UK scholars Jung et al. (2014) showed how the Corston Independent Funders' Coalition, a group of grant-making trusts and foundations, came together and influenced government policy on the treatment of women in the criminal justice system. While European foundations tend to see themselves as, firstly, innovative entities with the potential to effect social change, and secondly, as independent though complementing the role of the state, this has not featured to any extent in the US discussions on philanthropy (Anheier and Daly 2007b). Toepler (2007: 334), in comparing foundations in Europe and the United States, noted 'the commonalities include a clear rejection of substitution and redistribution as appropriate roles for foundations, a half-hearted acceptance of the pluralistic function, and a full embrace of innovation as a role to which foundations should aspire to fulfil'.

Anheier and Daly (2007a: 8–9), citing Anheier (2001), list the following characteristics of a foundation:

- It must be an asset-based entity, financial or otherwise. The foundation must rest on an original deed, typically a charter that gives the entity both intent of purpose and relative permanence as an organization.
- It must be a private entity. Foundations are institutionally separate from government, and are 'non-governmental' in the sense of being structurally separate from public agencies. Therefore, foundations do not exercise governmental authority and are outside direct majoritarian control.
- It must be a self-governing entity. Foundations are equipped to control their own activities. Some private foundations are tightly controlled either by governmental agencies or corporations, and function as parts of these other institutions, even though they are structurally separate.
- It must be a non-profit distributing entity. Foundations are not to return profits generated by either use of assets or commercial activities to their owners, members, trustees or directors as income. In this sense, commercial goals neither principally nor primarily guide foundations.
- It must serve a public purpose. Foundations should do more than serve the needs of a narrowly defined social group or category, such as members of a family, or a closed circle of beneficiaries. Foundations are private assets that serve a public purpose.

- Self-understanding and identity. Given the great diversity of foundation forms and foundation-like institutions, the foundation should have an organizational identity or self-understanding as a 'foundation', i.e. as distinct from operating non-profit, fund-raising organizations and other types of fund-distributing organizations.

Anheier and Daly (2007b) make the distinction between grant-making, operating and mixed foundations. Grant-making foundations or endowed organisations award funds for specified purposes (Ford Foundation in the USA, Leverhulme Trust in the UK, the Bernard van Leer Foundation in The Netherlands). Operating foundations primarily operate their own programmes and projects (Institut Pasteur in France, Hospitalstiftung in Germany). Mixed foundations (Fundación March in Spain, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Portugal) operate their own programmes and projects and engage in significant grant-making. As a broad distinction, US foundations fall into the grant-making category and European foundations tend towards operating foundations.

The literature points to philanthropic organisations playing multifarious roles. At one end of the spectrum, philanthropies can be characterised as funding deficits in government spending or acting as a provider of public goods. Beyond this, McChesney (2000) describes philanthropies as having a 'pay-to-play' role where financial resources 'entitle' them to a place at the policy-making table. At the other end of the spectrum, private philanthropic funding can be used to 'impose' the organisation's own agenda (values and beliefs) on others without the necessary democratic and accountability mandates which pertain in the public sector (Jung and Harrow 2015). As Daly (2011: 1090) (drawing on Nickel and Eikenberry 2010) has argued, 'philanthropy best serves democracy when it becomes a space for imagining social changes' and 'is not something that is done to but done *with* recipients'.

More recently, there has also been the emergence of 'philanthrocapitalism' in which philanthropy is seen as a business opportunity where entrepreneurs seek to secure a return on their investments through social and environmental projects (McGoey 2014). Edwards (2008) suggests this 'new' philanthropy has three distinguishing features: the involvement of a large amount of resources from a small number of people who have made huge profits from the IT and finance sectors; the application of business techniques to social problems which the public sector has failed to solve; and the claim that this approach can transform society. Grant (2012) differentiates philanthrocapitalism from venture philanthropy, which he describes as a new form of philanthropy that takes the principles of venture capitalism and applies them to philanthropy.

The interface between government and philanthropy has also received some attention in the literature. Smyllie et al. (2011), for example, argue that for some philanthropic organisations the willingness of government to subsidise or fund projects initiated by philanthropy is a measure of success. Whether this happens can depend on the nature and form of the particular welfare state. European foundations (with the exception of the UK) see value in partnering with the state—the US and UK foundations are less inclined, although this is changing (Anheier and Daly 2006). Smyllie et al. (2011: 1141) pose the question of whether 'this activity [partnership between government and philanthropy] results in public policy development' an area which, they argue, is currently unexamined and which is also an important rationale for this book. Thümler's study (2011: 1112) on the role played by philanthropic foundations that co-operated with public actors in school improvement partnerships in Germany and the USA highlighted 'essentially symbolic types of action that satisfy the social appetite for reform while they spare their audiences the impositions of "real" change—instances of "successful failure"'. Anheier and Daly (2006, citing Prewitt et al. 2006) argue that while redistribution is linked to notions of charity, social and public policy change is associated with philanthropy—an area which is being given greater attention in research. European foundations have not yet proved to be as controversial in effecting change as those in the USA.

Effecting Social Change

If, as our peacebuilding models from Chap. 1 suggest, progressive social change through tackling the systemic causes of the conflict is central to a long-term stable post-conflict society, then philanthropic organisations have a key role to play. The key question is *how* can philanthropy play a role in building positive peace? To effect social change and make a significant impact, Frumkin (2006) argues, donors need to understand how the change process works. He draws on three main categories, theories of change, theories of leverage and theories of scale, all of which have strong connections (see Fig. 2.1) and fit into a logic model (or a diagram which shows the steps to achieving the goals or impact required by a donor—see Wyatt-Knowlton and Phillips 2009). In short, how does a philanthropic organisation move from funding specific activities to securing maximum

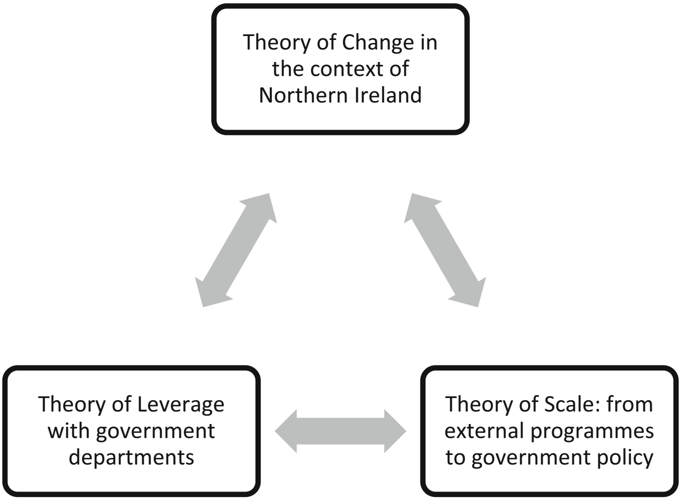
Theory of Change in the context of Northern Ireland
Theory of Leverage with government departments
Theory of Scale: from external programmes to government policy

Fig. 2.1 Three elements of the philanthropic logic model (Adapted by the authors from Frumkin 2006)

impact or achieving its outcomes; what tools does it use to lever significant change; and finally, how does it take the changes to scale, moving beyond the confines of a funded pilot project to system-wide change? He concludes that:

> Theories of change are the heart of the logic models and strategy development. Theories of leverage and scale are the supporting tactics at the front and back ends of the logic model that allows the donor to maximise impact. Donors able to sketch out some clear notion of any of these three elements will be in a better position to maximise the public benefits of giving. (Frumkin 2006: 176)

Of particular interest here is an explication of the theory of change at the heart of this process. Frumkin (2006: 179–87) argues that there are five broad interrelated approaches to progressive social change (or theories of change) which philanthropies can adopt as follows:

1. **Individuals:** Training individuals for leadership in a particular field with the assumption that change occurs one person at a time. A focus on building skills and creating opportunities for individuals is appealing because it promises to create an army of agents, ready

both to change practice in the field and to lead efforts to change public policy. An example in the Northern Ireland context could be supporting leadership development in interface communities. There are also examples of charismatic NGO leaders who have a track record in advocating for social change, and who are highly skilled in the machinations of the political process and undaunted by recalcitrant bureaucrats who favour the status quo.

2. **Organisations:** Building stronger organisations with the goal of creating greater and more sustainable capacity. Working to support stronger organisations can be seen as a theory of change that prioritises institution-building as a critical ingredient in broader efforts to change a field. Atlantic Philanthropies' support of advocacy groups such as the Law Centre and the Children's Law Centre in Northern Ireland might be examples of building sustainable organisational capacity.
3. **Networks:** Establishing new networks connecting organisations that share common purposes. These networks can support the sharing of best practices, the pooling of resources and the mobilisation of advocacy efforts. This process can resolve obvious problems in the voluntary and community sector such as duplication of effort and the inability to learn from others what works. An example in Northern Ireland might be supporting the ageing sector network (Older People's Policy Forum) and the amalgamation of community groups working in this area (Age Concern and Help the Aged).
4. **Politics:** Influencing politics and shaping the legislative agenda at local, regional and UK levels. Policy can be shaped by entering the political arena and exerting pressure on the political process via at least three different approaches. First, projects are supported that stimulate civic engagement by exposing citizens to politics and mobilising them to take action (e.g. a human-rights-based approach to public participation). Second, philanthropists can fund groups to inform and educate the public and policy-makers. Advocacy efforts can take place at local, regional, national and international levels and often take the form of policy research and information campaigns (e.g., raising awareness of the value of pre-school learning through Early Years research). Third, donors make grants to groups which engage in direct lobbying around specific legislative issues (e.g., supporting groups to lobby for the Bill of Rights in Northern Ireland). This is different from advocacy in that it focuses on specific legislation—translating donor funding into direct political action.

5. **Ideas:** Generate new ideas and proposals for a field with the goal of shaping the underlying paradigm and conversation (e.g., should Northern Ireland have an integrated education system). Support is offered to groups which can reorient entire fields and lead to important breakthroughs in basic knowledge. If these new perspectives penetrate the field broadly, they can usher in changes that will have lasting effects not only on the further production of ideas, but on the way practitioners do their work.

Frumkin (2006) argues that if these approaches to philanthropy are pursued simultaneously and implemented cleverly, they can reinforce one another and lead to synergies. What is particularly interesting about Frumkin's work is what he describes as 'unresolved issues' around these interventions. These 'issues' are particularly apt when we consider some of the difficulties faced by Atlantic Philanthropies in achieving policy traction through interventions in the context of Northern Ireland. If philanthropy operates across all five of the levels (individuals, organisations, networks, politics and ideas) described above, then two major unresolved issues arise. The first relates to the interaction *between* these levels. The second concerns the relative effectiveness of *each* level. Frumkin's discussions (2006: 187–90) on these issues are summarised below.

Interaction Between the Levels

- The five levels start at the micro-level of the individual, moving up to the meso-level of organisations and networks, and finally to the macro-level of politics and ideas. But the interactions among these levels need not be, or are unlikely to be, linear and aggregating. The interactions need not proceed up the levels in a linear fashion. Many funders operate simultaneously at two or three levels and attempt to capture the synergies across the levels.
- Within and across programme areas many, if not all, five levels of change will be pursued over time. The difficulty lies in specifying how these disparate attempts at driving change within and across fields add up to the kind of broad policy impact that Atlantic wants to achieve in: ageing, disadvantaged children and youth, and reconciliation and human rights in Northern Ireland.
- Philanthropy does not have a clear and compelling way of understanding the change produced by giving at each of the five levels.

> More important, the field lacks a well-defined theory of how change at multiple levels builds toward significant effects and whether impact and causal inferences established at one level contribute to and build greater rigour and impact at other levels.
>
> ### *Relative Effectiveness of Each Level*
>
> - Information about the relative effectiveness of the five levels of change is hard to locate because few donors think in terms other than the established dichotomy between service delivery and advocacy. Although there is little consensus about which level is most likely to yield results in a range of different substantive fields, there is some agreement that risk and return are related in philanthropy. Risk and reward increase as one moves from small units of change (individuals) to much larger units (ideas).
> - The field of philanthropy lacks much basis for adjudicating between competing effectiveness claims related to change theories. Even if effectiveness could be gauged, it would be hard to establish the inherent superiority of any single change theory across contexts. As a result of the knowledge gap, individual donors and professional staff typically end up falling back on what they know and are most comfortable with.
> - Some donors simply believe, or want to believe, that change is ultimately achieved from the bottom up. Start by training leaders, through building stronger organisations, and mobilising these actors to lobby the political system, finally producing new/revised public policies. Other donors take the opposite approach and seek change from the top down. Theories of change do not operate in a vacuum. Other social, economic and political forces contribute to shaping the ultimate outcome of an intervention.
> - Theories of change are best tested and refined over time through practice. To get better over time at constructing and applying theories of change, donors must be willing to watch closely how their philanthropy evolves across a wide variety of fields and contexts. The donors can use this information to gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of how to produce desired outcomes.

All of the above is predicated on having a robust logic model and logframe. The logic model sets out the funder's theory of change—what interventions they will fund to bring about the desired social change they wish to effect. The theory is tested by assessing, through monitoring and evaluation, whether the desired changes have occurred. If not, then from a formative evaluation, the original theory of change and intervention model/activities/interventions are reconsidered and readjusted. This process is set out in Fig. 2.2.

While hugely important in terms of setting out the cause and effect assumptions on which interventions are based, Grant (2012) highlights some of the key problems with logic models and logframes. The most obvious of these is how to measure outcomes. Effecting social change is not easy to measure. 'Has Northern Ireland become a more peaceful society?', for example, is a multifaceted question. At what point does the implementation of peacebuilding stop? Philanthropic organisations, which might be convinced of the effectiveness of a particular theory of change, may simply provide the resources and let others (grantees) complete the process. This has tended to be Atlantic Philanthropies' modus operandi—'leading from behind'. Alternatively, funders may see the potential for implementation failure, particularly if they are distrustful of public sector partners, and wish to continue their work until the ultimate impact is measured and achieved. As with all causal models, the logic model begs the question of the potential influence of external factors on the aims and outcomes of a funder's intervention. Could, for example, a positive development in the macropolitical climate of Northern Ireland do more to promote a peaceful society than specific micro-interventions led by community groups? One particular problem with this approach is the assumption that the logic model can include all the relevant determinants in a causal chain leading from intervention to social outcomes. In reality, social outcomes can be influenced by a substantial amount of 'noise' outside the system that affects those outcomes. This large residual factor may be a more important determinant of the intervention's success than the activities contained in the logic model. If, for example, the Alliance Party became the largest

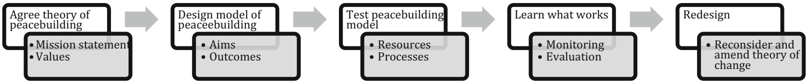

Fig. 2.2 Logic model of effecting social change

Source: Adapted by the authors from Grant (2012) political party in Northern Ireland, Atlantic's current interventions in integrated education and community peacebuilding would benefit significantly from such a development. On the same point, if the political parties in Northern Ireland offered leadership by demonstrating effective working of a power-sharing model of government, then peacebuilding amongst cross-community groups would become easier to initiate and sustain.

Moreover, even if a theory of change is tested through a pilot project and found to be effective, can we assume that this success can be taken to scale? So, while it is extremely useful to set out in explicit terms a theory of change (since funders will have some implicit understanding of how they are attempting to effect change even if they don't use a logframe), in practice it makes assumptions about cause and effect which will often be difficult to prove. What it does, of course, is to make those causal links clear so that grantees and critics can challenge the underpinning methodology and offer ways in which the interventions might be better designed or targeted.

Grant (2012: 48) argues that the largest risk for philanthropies 'is not really about money, it's about effects'. In other words, the real concern for funders is that the interventions they are supporting do not lead to the anticipated social change intended. Minimising that risk, according to Grant, requires excellent information and knowledge to track the impact of interventions.

Brest and Harvey (2008: 56) summarise the process as follows:

- To solve a problem, you must understand its causes. Solutions must be based on an empirically sound theory of change, a theory on how the relevant parts of the physical or social world work.
- A solution is ultimately embodied in a logic model, a causal chain leading to the desired outcomes.
- The logic model should set clear goals defining what success would look like and should measure progress toward them.
- Every logic model has risks: the logic model may not work as you expected, grantees may not be up to the task, or the plan may have unintended bad consequences. Identifying the risks up-front can help reduce them.

Critics argue that we should not assume philanthropic organisations are effective in promoting social change. Sanghera and Bradley (2015: 187), for example, in their study of British foundations, concluded that while many ‘possess the capacity for social change and justice, they have internal features and occupy structural positions within the polity that produce tensions and limitations to their pursuit of progressive issues’. Pifer (1984: 11, cited by Anheier and Leat 2006) also points out: ‘the great myth about foundations today is that they are firmly ensconced on the leading edge of social change, managed by far-sighted trustees and staff who make brilliantly daring decisions about the disposition of the funds over which they have stewardship’. Anheier and Leat (2006) concur. They argue that despite foundations being credited with social changes—such as promoting radical structural changes, changing the way in which we think about social issues and offering alternatives through new ways of working, and exploring new ideas and cultural forms—it is difficult to ‘point to the precise contributions that foundations have made to social change … and greater research effort is clearly called for to examine the issue more fully’ (Anheier and Leat 2006: 34); this is a further rationale for the research in this book. Anheier and Leat promote the idea of creative philanthropy based on the two key concepts of creativity and innovation: ‘this enables foundations to ignore political, disciplinary and professional boundaries, if they choose, and to take risks and consider approaches others cannot’. We will show through the case studies presented in this book how Atlantic Philanthropies adopted the roles described by Frumkin and also struggled with some of the ‘unresolved issues’ in funding interventions in Northern Ireland, but ultimately contributed significantly to positive social change. Before doing that, however, we consider the background to, and work of, Atlantic Philanthropies in peacebuilding in Northern Ireland.

Atlantic Philanthropies

Irish-American businessman Charles F. Feeney established Atlantic Philanthropies in 1982. The role of Atlantic Philanthropies in Northern Ireland has received almost no attention in the literature. Jung et al. (2013: 411) examined community foundations across the UK, which they define ‘as independent philanthropic organisations working in a specific geographic area which build up a permanent collection of endowed funds contributed by many donors’ (see also, Daly 2008). The only foundation referenced in Northern Ireland (Community Foundation of Northern Ireland, CFNI) makes grants to meet a wide variety of needs in its service area. While recognising the absence of high-net-worth donors in Northern Ireland, Jung et al. (2013: 420) noted that the position of CFNI was 'greatly enhanced by major funding from Atlantic Philanthropies' and the EU funds for Peace and Reconciliation. Beyond that, there has been no in-depth academic examination of the role played by Atlantic Philanthropies in peacebuilding.

How does Atlantic Philanthropies characterise its own role in terms of the spectrum outlined above: from funding government deficits, through 'pay-to-play', to 'imposing' Atlantic's own agenda? One example illustrates the potential for significant influence through external funding. Atlantic Philanthropies awarded $27 m to Health Care for America Now (HCAN) in 2009, the main advocacy organisation working to support the Obama Administration's push for healthcare reform. As Callahan (2014) commented: 'While it's hard to measure the impact of that grant, one thing is crystal clear: Chuck Feeney's wealth bought him a much bigger voice in the healthcare debate than any ordinary citizen—or even an army of them—could ever hope for', raising questions about the undemocratic and largely unaccountable nature of philanthropy.

Atlantic awarded its first grant in 1982 and emerged from anonymity in 1997. During the 1990s Atlantic Philanthropies' funding in Ireland went largely to support higher education. Some €500 m went to Irish universities during that decade: €204 million to academic projects, and €202 m to capital projects in universities in the Republic since the early 1990s. Atlantic Philanthropies has also donated €86 m to other projects in third-level education. The remainder of the money went to Queen's University, Belfast, and Ulster University (Oliver 2002). In a personal capacity, Mr Feeney was one of the biggest American financial backers of Sinn Féin, underwriting the Sinn Féin office in Washington during the same period. Although criticised for this decision, his reported grant to the loyalist paramilitary organisation the Ulster Defence Association (via Gary McMichael) received less attention, as did Atlantic Philanthropies' withdrawal of funding from the research group the Centre for Public Inquiry after former Irish Justice Minister, Michael McDowell, claimed its executive director, Frank Connolly, had travelled to Colombia on a fake passport. An investigative journalist, Mr. Connolly is a brother of Niall Connolly, one of three republicans arrested in Colombia in 2001 on suspicion of helping to train members of the country's largest rebel group, FARC. Gerry Adams, President of Sinn Féin claimed that Feeney's investment in the peace process in Northern Ireland accelerated the ceasefires and 'that scores of lives were saved' (Bishop and Green 2008: 254). Frumkin (2006: 44), on the other hand, warns of the risks of American philanthropists intervening in political issues abroad: ‘attempting to foment social and political change overseas can easily expose American donors to criticism of inappropriate meddling or even, in some circumstances, to charges of philanthropic imperialism’.

Atlantic also made its first grants in Northern Ireland in the early 1990s but from 1994 onwards, following the republican and loyalist ‘ceasefires’, Atlantic’s focus changed. It funded the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland to support a new programme that allowed ‘politically motivated’ ex-prisoners to get involved in constructive political and community developments. Such an approach carried with it high risks and was largely unproven at a time when governments (North and South) could not be involved in providing financial support, not least with the breakdown of the ceasefires in 1996. Atlantic’s role became one of shoring up aspects of a very fragile peace process, including crisis intervention work with local paramilitary leaders in loyalist communities in North Belfast. In a similar vein, Atlantic funded community restorative justice initiatives in loyalist and republican areas of West Belfast—an attempt to address a pervasive problem of paramilitary beatings and shootings largely against young people allegedly involved in criminal behaviour within their own communities. This work was formally eschewed by the (then) criminal justice agencies (Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Northern Ireland Office) although some police officers and government officials gave tacit support to the Atlantic initiative.

In 2002 Atlantic announced its intention to distribute all of its assets and close down by 2020. By that point it will have granted an estimated $7.6 bn worldwide, the largest exercise in limited-life philanthropy to date. The philosophy of Atlantic Philanthropies has always been described in the simplest of terms. It was established as a limited-life foundation, one that It committed to spending its entire multi-billion-dollar endowment by 2020, in order to make greater and more immediate improvements in the world

> Our goal, simply put, is to do as much good as possible, for as many disadvantaged and vulnerable people as possible, as soon as possible. This limited-lifetime approach yields other benefits as well, including giving our work a sense of urgency and motivating us to concentrate more resources on the achievement of fewer objectives. (Atlantic Philanthropies, Annual Report 2004: 3)

Underpinning this general goal however is a particular focus on tackling inequity and injustice in the world. Atlantic funded selected societies to confront some of the root causes of inequalities—to build opportunity for those who have had limited access, or whose contributions have been undervalued. The founder of Atlantic Philanthropies, Chuck Feeney, imbued the foundation with his personal philosophy of 'giving while living' so as to achieve profound social change during his lifetime.

Since 2002 Atlantic Philanthropies funded work in four key thematic areas: ageing, disadvantaged children and youth, population health, and reconciliation and human rights. These areas were selected because 'they represented some of the most critical social problems facing the world today and provided profound opportunities for us to make lasting effects on people's lives'. The organisation also supports the initiatives of its Founding Chairman, many of which are in the field of biomedical research. Atlantic's working model is to judiciously select organisations with the expertise to improve the lives of significant numbers of disadvantaged and vulnerable people, and then help these organisations create positive, lasting changes. Atlantic offers support to grantee organisations in a variety of ways through funding to:

- Increase their services and programme capacity;
- Disseminate best practice;
- Conduct research that becomes the basis for future activities; and,
- Advocate for social change through strategic participation in public-policy debates.

In 2004 the (then) Chief Executive of Atlantic Philanthropies, John R. Healy, adopted a set of advocacy principles to help guide investments in organisations that pursue social change through participation in public-policy debates. Atlantic Philanthropies therefore adopted what Jung et al. (2014: 48) describe as the 'central hallmarks associated with effective advocacy—having a theory of change, an evidence-based blueprint for reform, and an independent resource base'. By 2013, Atlantic Philanthropies had awarded $6.5 bn in grants over seven countries/regions which it had identified as those where it could make the most significant impact in the selected thematic areas chosen: Australia, Bermuda, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, South Africa, the USA and Vietnam.

By 2009, Atlantic's (then) Chief Executive, Gara LaMarche, articulated what he saw as the social justice framework which guided Atlantic's grant-making. This is at odds with foundations in the Britain where research indicates that although they pursue a liberal agenda on social justice, most do not describe their grant-making in this way. Sanghera and Bradley (2015: 183) argued that community foundations and grant makers in Britain believe that the term 'social justice could alienate their audience and suggested that the public, donors and trustees preferred less contentious and more neutral terms, such as "social change", "poverty", "community development" or "human rights"'. Drawing on work developed by the USA Foundation Center and Independent Sector, a coalition of nongovernmental organisations and foundations, LaMarche defined social justice philanthropy as follows:

> Social justice philanthropy is the granting of philanthropic contributions to nonprofit organisations based in the United States and other countries that work for structural change in order to increase the opportunity of those who are the least well off politically, economically and socially. (Foundation Center 2005: 5)

He described the characteristics of a social justice framework which makes lasting change more likely as including:

- A focus on the root causes of inequity rather than symptoms.
- Striving for lasting systemic and institutional change.
- Employment of a combination of tactics such as policy advocacy, grassroots organising, litigation, and communications that together are more likely to yield enduring results.
- Strengthening and empowering disadvantaged and vulnerable populations to advocate on their own behalf.

LaMarche (2009: 2) commented:

> A social justice framework puts a premium on addressing the causes of inequities that prevent people from participating fully in society and that perpetuate disparities in power and access. It seeks institutional or systemic change to eliminate the sources of continuing inequities rather than focusing solely on the symptoms of those inequities and addressing them with charity.

Associated funding to effect social justice was described by Ostrander (2005: 36) as 'philanthropic support for advancing progressive social change, that is, the redistribution of power and resources (economic, social cultural, and/or political) in a more egalitarian direction'.

Expanding on the detail of the social justice approach to Atlantic's work, LaMarche went on to argue:

> We would rarely fund direct service in isolation from work to change or implement policy … This is a value judgement in the approach we have taken so far, and that we propose to sharpen in the future, that believes social inequities are more likely to be reduced from the empowerment of those who have been on the short end of that stick than from, say, a belief that the core of the problem is insufficient data that all reasonable minded parties can agree on … Atlantic believes that strengthening institutions, leadership and movements, particularly amongst the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, can save us LaMarche 2009: 4.

How the social justice framework applies in the context of Northern Ireland, he suggests, 'might lead us to see all of our work through the lens of whether it serves to perpetuate peace, and whether it supports emerging political and social structures that encourage, over the long term, the integration of deeply divided societies.'

The current Chief Executive of Atlantic, Christopher G. Oechsli, cites a range of success stories delivered through Atlantic Philanthropies grantees (Oechsli 2012). They have:

- Promoted reconciliation and peace in Northern Ireland and South Africa.
- Transformed key university infrastructure and research capacity in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, South Africa and the United States.
- Successfully campaigned to abolish the juvenile death penalty in the United States and to abolish the death penalty in five states, with further significant prospects underway.
- Advanced same-sex civil partnerships in the Republic of Ireland and gay marriage in South Africa.
- Transformed major health care facilities and enhanced health care system practices to measurably improve and save lives in Viet Nam.
- Strengthened world-class biomedical research in Australia.
- Changed the perception of HIV/AIDS and secured access to anti-retrovirals for millions of people in South Africa.
- Recovered billions of dollars in unclaimed government benefits for over 2 m older adults in the United States and Northern Ireland.

- Strengthened civil society organisations and philanthropy in Bermuda.
- Fought to secure health care for children in the United States.
- Transformed end-of-life care in the Republic of Ireland.

Oechsli summarised the work of the foundation in three phases: first, as an ‘entrepreneurial start-up company’ in the 1980s and 1990s, operating ‘opportunistically’, typically without formal programme plans and firm categories of grant-making, but ‘like a good investor, always seeking diversity in its portfolio to exploit opportunities and maximize returns.’ In the second phase, around 2000, came a commitment to a limited life, a written mission, and four clearly bounded programme areas, along with the continued, entrepreneurial grant portfolio of its Founding Chairman (Proscio 2012). The third and final stage is the Global Opportunity and Leverage (GOAL) Fund, which has been established ‘to solidify the biggest accomplishments, shore up leadership in promising fields, gather up the lessons and insights from past work, and generally ensure that the Foundation’s work results will be strong and enduring’ (Proscio 2013: 1).

Atlantic’s role in supporting a social justice model appeared to buck the trend in the field of American philanthropy. Suárez’s research (2012: 272), for example, indicated that larger private foundations were much less likely to discuss social justice than public foundations for fear of ‘drawing attention to their work by using potentially contentious language like social justice and social change in their programming’. Conversely, those foundations which mentioned ‘social justice or social change in their programming reject the legal and normative restrictions on social action, sending signals to activist grant seekers that their ideas and tactics are welcome’ and, as a consequence, foundations become ‘institutional entrepreneurs, pushing the broader philanthropic community to reconsider funding strategies and acceptable priorities’ (Suárez 2012: 273). We now consider the specific role of Atlantic Philanthropies in Northern Ireland.

NORTHERN IRELAND

During the period 1991–2015, Atlantic Philanthropies awarded 618 grants totalling $604 m grant aid in Northern Ireland (see Fig. 2.3)—the average grant was $978 k. The first grant awarded was to the Northern Ireland

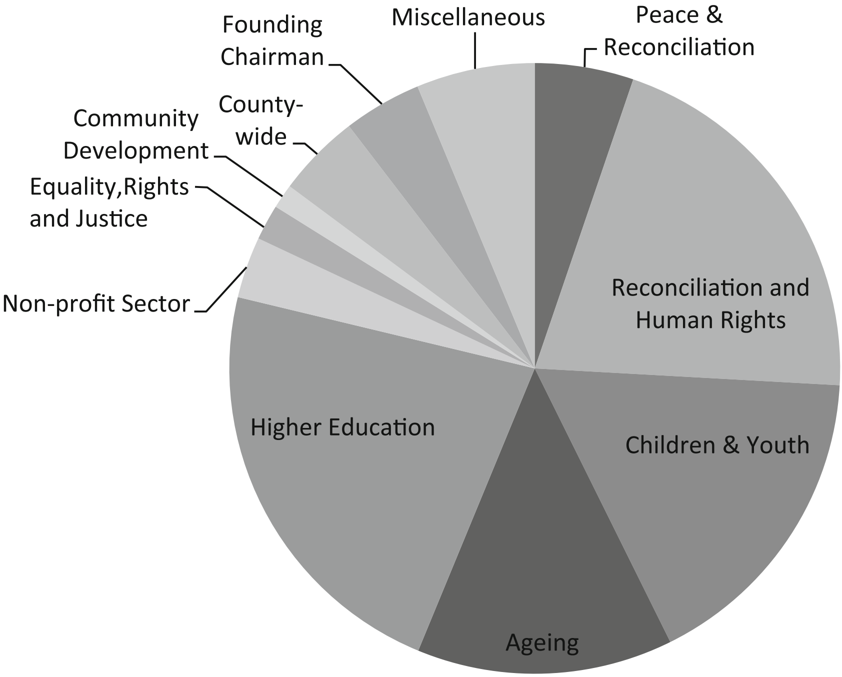

Fig. 2.3 Atlantic philanthropies—grants to Northern Ireland 1991–2015
(*Source*: Atlantic Philanthropies 2015—Global Staff Conference)

Council for Integrated Education in 1991 ($9631) and Co-operation Ireland ($204,824). To put the total grants provided by Atlantic into perspective in the context of public sector spending, the Northern Ireland yearly public expenditure is around £10 bn per year. Hence, over the lifetime of Atlantic Philanthropies' involvement in Northern Ireland it has provided grant-aid to the value of approximately 3.6 % of *one* year's public expenditure budget. Specifically, in the areas of peace, reconciliation and human rights it spent $156 m or 26 % of its Northern Ireland funds—dismissing potential criticism that they were 'paying to play' or imposing a specific agenda. This was the largest percentage of its spending, followed by grants to the thematic areas of higher education (22.5 %), children and young people (16.8 %) and ageing (13.5 %). Atlantic made capital grants in Northern Ireland of $166.4 m, an example of which was the Centre for Molecular Biosciences at Ulster University and a Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology at Queen's University. The remainder of the funding was spent on a variety of areas, including community development and civic engagement, youth development, early childhood development and strategic learning and evaluation (see Tables 2.1 and 2.2).

Examples of grants on the thematic area of reconciliation and human rights included projects which supported: mainstreaming community restorative justice; a rights-based approach to community development; supporting integrated education through the transformation of schools; peacebuilding models at interface areas, and protecting rights and improving public services for minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland.

Table 2.1 Atlantic philanthropies' grant-making in Northern Ireland 1991–2015

Thematic area of support	*Grants*	*Total USD (millions)*
Peace and Reconciliation	117	31.6
Reconciliation & Human Rights	100	124.8
Children & Youth	75	101.5
Ageing	74	81.9
Higher Education	61	136.1
Nonprofit Sector	46	19.6
Equality Rights and Justice[a]	30	11.4
Community Development	22	7.8
Pre-Collegiate Education	21	7.9
Strategic Learning & Evaluation (Legacy)	14	4.3
Country-Wide	13	26.7
Evaluation	12	6.9
Outside Programme Areas (Legacy)	7	3.8
Miscellaneous	7	6.4
Youth Development	6	2.5
Cross Programme/Strategic Initiatives (Legacy)	5	2.6
Founding Chairman	3	25.0
Early Childhood Development	2	1.4
Continuing and Adult Education	1	1.8
CEO (Legacy)	1	0.2
Grand Total	618	604.2

Source: Atlantic Philanthropies 2015—Global Staff Conference

[a] The Equality Rights and Justice Programme was a forerunner to the Reconciliation and Human Rights Programme

Table 2.2 Top 3 grantees in Northern Ireland

Queen's University Belfast	$132.7 m	71 grants
University of Ulster Foundation	$62.6 m	47 grants
Community Foundation for Northern Ireland	$30.1 m	21 grants

Source: Atlantic Philanthropies 2015—Global Staff Conference

Human rights groups that have received funding include the Committee on the Administration of Justice, the Law Centre and the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities.

In a biography of Atlantic's founder, Chuck Feeney, O'Clery (2007: 268) recounts a social event attended by Ireland's (late) Nobel Laureate, Seamus Heaney, at which the latter described Atlantic's interventions in Ireland (North and South) as 'epoch making'. He ended with some lines from his play (*The Cure at Troy*, 1990):

> History says, don't hope
>
> On this side of the grave,
>
> But then, once in a lifetime
>
> The longed-for tidal wave
>
> Of justice can rise up
>
> And hope and history rhyme

For Heaney, Atlantic Philanthropies represented the 'longed-for tidal wave of justice'.

Frumkin's work (above) suggests a number of fundamental questions relevant to Atlantic's work in Northern Ireland which might prompt reflection across the themes of ageing, disadvantaged children and youth, and reconciliation and human rights. One of the issues identified by Atlantic Philanthropies at the early stage of its work in Northern Ireland was the lack of effective engagement and policy traction at the highest political and official levels. In the absence of this, Atlantic strove for greater effectiveness at the micro- and meso-levels. Hence, it invested in building networks, connecting organisations with common purposes—advocacy coalitions. Atlantic also reflected on how change took place at each of the five levels (individuals, organisations, networks, politics and ideas) and the cumulative policy impact across its three thematic areas of investment. It posed key questions about the nature of its work in Northern Ireland as follows:

1. Do we have a view about [at] which level(s) Atlantic investment is more likely to be effective in achieving social change? Have our interventions a more bottom-up or top-down orientation and why? Do we consciously consider the dichotomy between funding direct service provision and advocacy?
2. Do we rely on 'what we know'—are our interventions driven by intuition and hunch, by what we are most comfortable with? Have we learned from the specific social, economic and political context of Northern Ireland about 'what works' or simply by a 'suck it and see approach'?

In short, Atlantic Philanthropies struggled in a constantly changing political and security milieu on how best to effect social change in a society coming out of conflict and which is beset with systemic inequalities and 'structural violence'.

Conceptual Framework for Analysing Atlantic's Work in Northern Ireland

In subsequent chapters of the book we will examine through case studies the reconciliation work of Atlantic Philanthropies in Northern Ireland. We take as our starting point a public policy conceptual framework developed by Ferris and Mintrom (2002) which considers the role played by foundations in influencing policy change. Their work is presented with reference to philanthropy in the United States. We adapt (selectively) their framework for examining reconciliation in Northern Ireland and update their scholarship with more recent literature on the public policy-making process (Cairney 2012; Hill 2013; Hudson and Lowe 2011; John 2012; Knoepfel et al. 2011; Osborne 2010; Wu et al. 2010). The Ferris and Mintrom framework is an attractive conceptual framework because it allows us to examine in systematic ways the different approaches which Atlantic Philanthropies have adopted under the same thematic area: approaches to peacebuilding in Northern Ireland through various reconciliation interventions.

Ferris and Mintrom's work begins with the contention that foundations can influence the public policymaking process through their principal assets of money, knowledge and networks. Using these resources they lever change in the areas of interest outlined in their mission statement. To do this, Ferris and Mintrom suggest five general approaches that foundations could adopt to policymaking—they are not dissimilar to Frumkin's model of delivering progressive social change:

i. Fund activities that can potentially have significant effects on public policy: hence foundations fund activities and programmes which offer alternative ways of delivering and implementing public policy—a challenge to the status quo.
ii. Create stores of knowledge that can affect how others think about policy issues. This can be done through funding research and scholarship in particular policy areas that stimulate creative thinking and new ideas. Mintrom et al.'s later work (2009, 2014) went on to look in some detail at the role of policy entrepreneurs in influencing policy change.
iii. Forge networks among individuals and organisations, bringing their knowledge, resources, and skills to bear on policy debates. This approach, suggested by Ferris and Mintrom, links to the wider debate on the role played by advocacy coalitions in public policy or 'co-ordinated actions between actors from a variety of institutions who share a set of policy beliefs' (Sabatier 1999: 9).
iv. Build good relations with influential policymakers through policy briefings, and conferences which engage officials, politicians and policy champions.
v. Develop a reputation as a credible, reliable policy player through high-quality funding programmes, research and practical exemplars which showcase policy alternatives.

Ferris and Mintrom see none of these approaches as mutually exclusive or exhaustive. Indeed one could add to these approaches the role which a foundation can play as an external agent capable of challenging the status quo, and largely unconstrained by the baggage of incrementalism and risk aversion so prevalent in the public sector in the UK.

The Ferris and Mintrom model breaks down into three key component parts:

1. How do foundations seek influence.
2. What forms of engagement should be used.
3. What to fund and how to fund.

We consider the details of each component with examples drawn from the work of Atlantic Philanthropies.

Stage 1: Influence

Foundations can seek to influence at different points in the policy cycle: from policy definition through agenda setting to policy adoption, implementation and evaluation. This stagist or sequential model of examining public policy has however been criticised by John (2012: 20) as a linear model 'more relevant for understanding the presentation and legitimation of policy than detecting the reality of bargaining that happens largely away from public view'. Hill (2013: 154), on the other hand, recognised that 'the advantage of a stages model is that it offers a way of chopping up, if only for the purposes of analysis, a complex and elaborate process'. As a heuristic framework it is therefore valuable but does not reflect real-world policymaking (Parsons 1995, cited in Hill).

Problem definition: Public policies are developed to tackle significant social problems but it is not always clear-cut how government should address these problems. The role of foundations could be to fund research or data collection which defines what the problem is and ways in which it might be tackled. Why is it the case, for example, that despite public opinion polls in Northern Ireland which report high levels of support for integrated education, only 6.5 % of schoolchildren attend integrated schools? In other words, why has integrated education not gained policy traction in Northern Ireland as a way to reconcile two divided communities? By funding basic research, foundations can contribute to problem definition and, as a result, to policymaking.

Agenda setting: For items to get onto the policy agenda, they need to attract the attention of those with political influence (politicians, special political advisors, senior officials). Drawing on the work of Kingdon (1995), Ferris and Mintrom point out that there are three 'streams' of activity: political, policy and problem. The political stream involves elections and changes in government; the policy stream is where ideas are formulated from the broader policy community. The problem stream is when a crisis emerges or events happen that attract public attention. As Kingdon (1995: 19) explains: 'these are largely independent of one another, and each develops according to its own dynamics and rules. But at some critical junctures the three streams are joined, and the greatest policy changes grow out of that coupling of problems, policy proposals, and politics'.

To illustrate the influential role which Atlantic Philanthropies grantees played on public policies in Northern Ireland, Table 2.3 offers a snapshot of those issues on which they advocated that also featured in a number of government documents and policies [variously: *Programme for Government 2011–2015*; *Together: Building a United Community* (2013); *Stormont House Agreement* (2014)]. This is *not* to claim direct causation between the work of grantees and their appearance in policy documents but rather to suggest that their role was prominent in lobbying for these issues either to appear on the policy agenda and/or to become government policy—other significant factors were also at play.

Policy adoption: This stage of policymaking tends to be seen as the beginning of the legislative process in securing a Bill (in the Northern Ireland Assembly) through to it becoming an Act following Royal Assent. During this process, foundations can exert influence on elected members through policy briefings, legal analysis, and by offering evidence to statutory oversight committees. In other words, foundations or, more likely their grantees, can act as an alternative form of advice and expertise to that given by senior government officials.

Implementation: This stage is where public policy is transformed into actions which allows for some discretion on the part of those charged with policy implementation (so called street-level bureaucrats, Lipsky 1980). Foundations can build partnerships amongst the stakeholders charged with implementation and collaborate with government agencies involved in delivery. As Wu et al. (2010: 67) point out, 'policy implementation is also best seen as a form of network governance, since the defining characteristic of implementation is that it demands extensive co-ordination among an unusually wide range of actors'.

Evaluation: Having adopted and implemented a public policy, the key question is whether it is effective. While information generated through policy evaluations is valuable for policy analysts, politicians may be fearful of the outcomes if they are negative and therefore discredited by association. Evaluations can be formative or summative. In the former case, they are used to monitor the implementation of a programme and make adjustments in train. In the latter, they are used to assess the extent to which the programme's objectives have been met.

Stage 2: Engagement

The Ferris and Montrom model examines policy engagement under four broad categories: funding policy analysis and technical support; building

Table 2.3 Atlantic philanthropies—agenda-setting in Northern Ireland

References to Atlantic's themes in government policy documents	
Reconciliation	• Actively seek local agreement to reduce the number of 'peace walls' • Develop a Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Centre as part of the Maze/Long Kesh regeneration site • Ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015 • Substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015 • Promote a culture of tolerance, mutual respect and mutual understanding at every level of society, including initiatives to facilitate and encourage shared and integrated education and housing, social inclusion, and in particular community development and the advancement of women in public life • Promote the interests of the whole community towards the goals of reconciliation and economic renewal • The Northern Ireland Executive will ensure full implementation of the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy, and beyond that will commit to a continuing effort to eradicate sectarianism in all its forms • The Northern Ireland Executive will create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone
Human Rights	• The Stormont House Agreement notes that there is not at present consensus on a Bill of Rights, the parties commit to serving the people of Northern Ireland equally, and to act in accordance with the obligations on government to promote equality and respect and to prevent discrimination
Children and Young People:	• Deliver a range of measures to tackle poverty and social exclusion through the Delivering Social Change delivery framework. By co-ordinating actions between Departments, this framework aims to achieve a sustained long-term reduction in poverty and an improvement in children and young people's health, wellbeing and life opportunities • Publish and implement a Childcare Strategy with key actions to provide integrated and affordable childcare • Fulfil our commitments under the Child Poverty Act to reduce child poverty • To continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations • Prevention and evidence informed practice, and commissioning of services for children and young people

(*continued*)

Table 2.3 (continued)

References to Atlantic's themes in government policy documents	
Ageing	• Extend age discrimination legislation to the provision of goods, facilities and services • Adopt an Active Ageing Strategy that: promotes active independent living giving older people choice and control in their lives; the active participation of older people in all aspects of life; equal access to high quality health and social care services; supports older people to develop to the fullest of their potential through promoting education, training, leisure and arts opportunities; promote and protect the human rights of older people; and to uphold dignity and respect for older people in all areas of life; to promote equality, address inequality, challenge ageism and outlaw discrimination

knowledge communities; supporting advocacy; and public education. We consider these in some detail.

Funding analysis and technical support: Foundations can fund applied policy research and scholarship which will assist policymakers and practitioners. Policy analysis is useful at the early stage of the policy process (policy definition and agenda-setting), and technical support during the implementation stage. Funding formative and summative policy evaluations is key to understanding whether policies have achieved their intended objectives and any knowledge gaps in their outworking in practice. A useful role for foundations is to fund the development and monitoring of pilot programmes. Pilots can test the translation of policy ideas into practice, including issues of design and implementation—valuable for risk-averse politicians and officials. Pilots can also help to build a coalition of interests around a particular policy and inspire advocacy for systemic change.

Building Knowledge Communities: Foundations can create and maintain knowledge communities through individuals, organisations and past and current grantees. These communities can coalesce around issues of policy relevance to the foundation and could include workshops, seminars or policy-briefing sessions between academics, policy analysts, practitioners, officials and interested politicians. An example of this type of mechanism is that of 'all-party groups' in the Northern Ireland Assembly which provide a forum where Members of the Legislative Assembly and outside organisations and individuals can meet to discuss shared interests in a particular cause or subject (examples include the All Party Groups on Ethnic Minority Communities, International Development, and Children and Young People).

***Supporting Advocacy*:** Foundations can support advocacy in a number of ways, including the provision of financial assistance to legal non-profit advocacy organisations. One example of this is Atlantic Philanthropies' support for the Public Interest Litigation Support Project (PILS) which seeks to advance human rights and equality in Northern Ireland through the use of, and support for, public interest litigation. Public interest litigation is defined as the use of litigation or legal action which seeks to advance the cause of minority or disadvantaged groups or individuals, or which raises issues of broad public concern. Public interest litigation uses the law to create and sustain social change for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in society. It contrasts with other forms of litigation in that it aims to achieve outcomes for a number of people, not just the person involved in the case. These cases are often called test cases as they test out novel legal points (Public Interest Litigation Support Project 2015).

In fact, Atlantic Philanthropies has developed a very strong advocacy presence in its work, which it defines as follows:

> Public policy advocacy aims to bring about a change in public policy or the law, its interpretation or its application, typically with the objective of correcting a perceived injustice or achieving specific legislative, legal or other change. (Atlantic Philanthropies 2008: 3)

Atlantic Philanthropies acknowledges there is no single approach to advocating for social change but rather a mix of advocacy methods will be used depending on the programme. The advocacy toolkit adopted by Atlantic includes several options, from which a suitable mix is selected. The range of approaches includes the following:

- Research and Dissemination: credible and robust research to raise the profile of the problem and explain the impact of a policy or condition on individuals, communities or a region/country.
- Raising Awareness: increasing public consciousness about the nature and extent of the problem through: communications campaigns, media, speeches to influential audiences, public testimony before legislative bodies, regulatory bodies and commissions.
- Community Organising: helping those at the local level to organise on their own behalf to voice their concerns and promote their own interests.
- Grassroots Mobilisation: demonstrating broad-based public support for specific policy change by mobilising membership organisations,

coalitions and others to contact elected officials and their staff or to generate greater public awareness of an issue.

- Building Capacity: Supporting the development of the staff, infrastructure and membership of advocacy organisations. Providing core support over an extended period of time enables advocacy groups to build towards more effective efforts in the future.
- Policy Development: Developing policy options can aid change by providing advocates, legislators and others with credible suggestions for solving problems. A specific policy suggestion can give focus to a campaign for change and provide supporters with a goal to rally around. Grantee organisations could work with government to draft legislative proposals and to implement specific proposals.
- Lobbying: Support for legislative changes or balloting initiatives to support social change.
- Litigation: Taking legal action to achieve desired changes or fight undesired policies and practices. Litigation may be linked to other kinds of advocacy to ensure that court decisions are implemented vigorously.
- Electoral Activity: Encouraging more involvement in electoral activity by specific groups (e.g. women) and general voter mobilisation, educating the public on public interest issues.

(Atlantic Philanthropies 2008)

The specific advocacy mix and emphasis were different for each Atlantic objective, thematic area and geographical region and some of the approaches overlapped (lobbying and awareness-raising, for example, are mutually supportive). Clearly, some of these advocacy tools were more appropriate within particular themes and it was for each programme to decide how best to achieve their log frame outputs and outcomes using the best tools for the job. Beyond choosing the ‘right’ advocacy tools, the key question for Atlantic grantees was to ensure their advocacy efforts were effective in achieving social change.

***Public Education*:** Foundations support public education on policy issues by funding media campaigns particularly during election periods when politicians are more amenable to new agenda-setting items. Public education may also be supported through university research and schools based-teaching programmes. Age Northern Ireland, a non-profit organisation supporting older people, for example, waged a very successful public education campaign in the run-up to elections to the Northern Ireland

Assembly which they titled ‘Our High 5 Campaign’ and which set out the five highest policy priorities for older people: 1) tackle fuel poverty; 2) maximise pensioner income; 3) fundamental review of social care; and 5) tackle fear of crime. Age NI published the electoral pledges of all the political parties on these five priorities.

Stage 3: Funding

The way in which foundations deploy money, knowledge and connections will dictate the extent to which they can leverage change. This will involve decisions about the scope and duration of funding. Will funds be used to support the operating costs of non-profits or for specific advocacy campaigns? Over what duration will grantees be supported? At what point do foundations consider the job is complete? One example is whether it is considered sufficient to simply establish a public policy issue firmly on the agenda or is it necessary to oversee its full implementation and evaluation. Moreover, foundations will have to judge whether their work is more effective if they spread their resources over a large number of grantees, or if they are highly selective in whom they choose to fund. None of these are easy decisions and all require strategic thinking and direction on the part of foundations as to how to maximise policy leverage in the most efficient way possible. Inevitably, foundations must also consider the policy context within which they are operating and the risks and uncertainties associated with decision-making in fluid environments. Northern Ireland is one such context where Atlantic Philanthropies’ role in supporting peacebuilding was fraught with difficulties. The on-off nature of the devolved power-sharing government, the role of dissident paramilitary groups (republican and loyalist), the volatility surrounding legacy issues associated with the conflict such as flags, parades and dealing with the past, are some of the contextual variables which were outside the control of Atlantic Philanthropies and hence made decision making risky for Atlantic Philanthropies.

We offer a diagrammatic overview of peacebuilding in Northern Ireland which draws on the two strands of our discussions in this chapter and Chap. 1. This summarises how Atlantic Philanthropy positioned itself to engage in social justice change within a specific policy space identified by peacebuilding models (Fig. 2.4). We will draw on core elements of this framework to structure the detailed case studies which follow in the book.

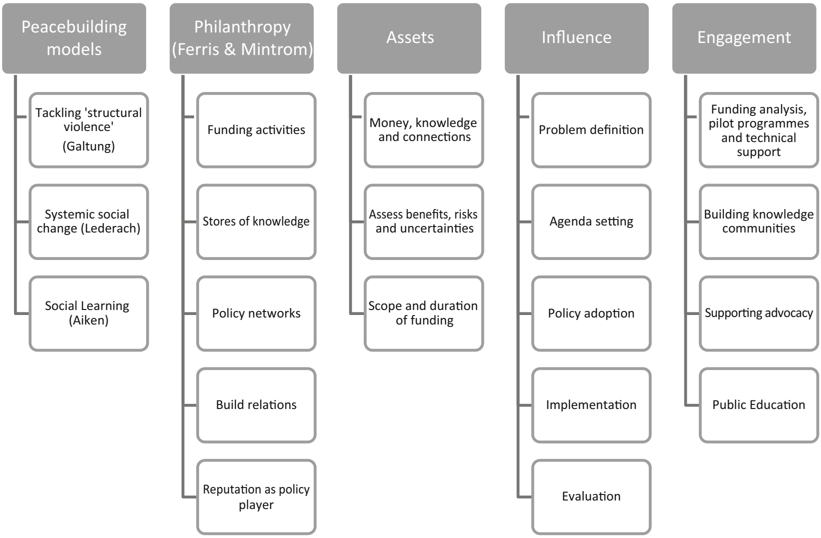
Peacebuilding models
Tackling 'structural violence' (Galtung)
Systemic social change (Lederach)
Social Learning (Aiken)
Philanthropy (Ferris & Mintrom)
Funding activities
Stores of knowledge
Policy networks
Build relations
Reputation as policy player
Assets
Money, knowledge and connections
Assess benefits, risks and uncertainties
Scope and duration of funding
Influence
Problem definition
Agenda setting
Policy adoption
Implementation
Evaluation
Engagement
Funding analysis, pilot programmes and technical support
Building knowledge communities
Supporting advocacy
Public Education

Fig. 2.4 Peacebuilding and philanthropy in Northern Ireland

EXTERNAL ACTORS

There are others external actors beyond philanthropy whose efforts have been central to peacebuilding in Northern Ireland. We know, of course, that the USA and Republic of Ireland were hugely influential in brokering agreements at critical points in the peace process (Guelke 2012; O'Donnell 2008; Smyth 2005). Key people and events included: Garret FitzGerald and the Anglo-Irish Agreement 1985; Albert Reynolds and the Joint Declaration, 1993; Bertie Ahern, Bill Clinton, George Mitchell and the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, 1998; and, more recently, the inter-party talks chaired by Richard Haass and Meghan O'Sullivan, which significantly informed the Stormont House Agreement, 2014.

The US, Irish and British governments have also provided significant financial aid to supplement and support the peace process. The British and Irish governments, in fact, established the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) as an independent international organisation in 1986. With contributions from the USA, the European Union, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, the total resources committed by the International Fund to date amounts to around £720 m supporting over 5800 projects across the island of Ireland. Its work currently includes funding a range of interventions that tackle segregation, promote reconciliation and integration in interface areas, and engaging with individuals and communities that have not previously, or only partially, participated in peacebuilding and community development activities (International Fund for Ireland 2015a). In a similar vein the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Dublin has provided, through its reconciliation fund, small grants to organisations working to further peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland, on a cross-border basis, and between Ireland and Britain. It has a yearly budget of €2.7 m and works under two thematic areas: (1) repairing those issues which lead to division, conflict, and barriers to a deeply reconciled and peaceful society; (2) building a strong civil society that encompasses all communities, through the continued implementation of the Agreements and promoting a rights-based society, political stability and respect for all (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2015).

Separately, the European Union is also a significant external actor. Since 1995, the EU has been providing substantial financial contributions (amounting to €1.3 bn) in support of the peace and reconciliation process in Northern Ireland, through four PEACE programmes representing a package of measures that complement the work of regional and national government policies such as *Together*: *Building a United Community* (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2013a). The overarching aim of the four programmes has been to reinforce progress towards reconciliation and a peaceful and stable society by promoting urban and rural regeneration, developing cross-border co-operation and extending social inclusion. A key feature of the European programmes is their delivery mechanism which has involved a range of local stakeholders in peace partnerships—the equivalent of level 3 (or grass-roots involvement) in Lederach's peacebuilding model (Chap. 1). District peace partnerships comprised local councillors, community/voluntary representatives, business and trade union interests, and statutory organizations, which approved action plans for local activities to advance the objectives of the PEACE programme (Hughes et al. 1998; Greer 2001). One high-profile physical manifestation of EU funding in Northern Ireland was the construction of the 'Peace Bridge' in Derry/Londonderry which attracted over €11 m from the European Regional Development Fund. Spanning the River Foyle, which divides the city into two polarised communities, the bridge has been hugely successfully both as a symbol of unity and, in physical terms, as a conduit between segregated spaces. A similar exercise, to promote a regenerated shared sports stadium at the former 360-acre Maze/Long Kesh prison site (where IRA hungers strikers were imprisoned), foundered when a Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Centre, which had secured EU financial backing of €14.6 m, failed to gain cross-community support. Unionist politicians accused nationalists and republicans of 'glorifying conflict' with their proposals for the site and attempting to build a 'shrine to terrorists', causing the EU to withdraw funding in 2013 (European Commission 2014). Such is the fragility of the ongoing peace process, a fragility best captured by the European Commissioner for Regional Policy as follows:

> Northern Ireland has come a long way in the past few years. Following the return of devolved institutions in May 2007, a divided community has managed to put its differences to one side and become partners in building a common and more prosperous future. However, as we all know, peace takes years to take root and genuine reconciliation can take even longer. It is a process that lasts generations. (Hahn 2014: 7)

At the time of writing, a fourth PEACE programme is under consideration (PEACE IV: 2014–2020 for €230 m) and looks likely to be endorsed by the EU. The proposals contained therein include funding support for interventions under four themes: shared education, children and young people, shared spaces and services and civil society. Philanthropic investment in Northern Ireland is very low. Other key foundations with a presence in the province include the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Barrow Cadbury and Esmee Fairbairn. Individual charitable giving is very small according to research by the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, with only 2 % of the survey population having made a legacy pledge (NICVA 2014). Research into high-net-worth individuals in Northern Ireland indicated modest sums of giving, between £10 k and £20 k over the previous year (Giving NI 2013).

The role of external actors in supporting ongoing peacebuilding is not therefore a new phenomenon in Northern Ireland. That said, the actors described above are other governments or state institutions offering significant and continuing support. This is quite different from the role played by philanthropy. We now move to consider detailed case studies of the work of Atlantic Philanthropies in Northern Ireland.

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CHAPTER 3

Shared Education Case Study

Problem Definition

The system of primary- and secondary-level education in Northern Ireland is, to the outside observer, a structural morass serving approximately 330,000 school children in 1180 schools during the school year 2014/2015 (DENI 2015). If, for example, one considers the post-primary sector where there are 208 schools with 142,553 pupils, there is a bewildering array of schools, influenced by the role played by churches in the management and delivery of education. The post-primary pupils cohort is disaggregated according to a number of variables: selective and non-selective schools (grammar and secondary schools); co-education and single-sex schools; controlled (de facto Protestant) schools and Catholic-maintained schools; integrated schools comprising Catholic and Protestant children, those of other faiths or none; and Irish-medium schools where the curriculum is taught through the Irish language. This complex fragmentation is also reflected in a range of school management structures. Controlled schools are under the management of the schools' board of governors and the employing authority (the Education Authority, which replaced five Education and Library Boards in April 2015). Maintained schools are under the management of the board of governors and the employing authority is the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), and each voluntary grammar school and integrated school is under the management of a board of governors.

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In November 2014, the Chief Inspector of Schools in Northern Ireland published her report on pre-school settings, schools and learning organisations for the period 2012–2014 (Education and Training Inspectorate 2014a). She identified a number of key challenges for education and training which included, inter alia, the need to:

- Improve outcomes for young people; almost 40 % of post-primary pupils do not achieve 5 GCSEs (or equivalents) at grades A*-C including English and mathematics, rising to 66 % for those entitled to free school meals.
- Improve outcomes in literacy and numeracy particularly at age 15 and for adults, an area in which Northern Ireland compares unfavourably with many other countries according to international studies.
- Reduce the variability in the life chances of children and young people, which is too dependent on whether they have access to a good pre-school, school, further education college or training provider.
- Build on the *Sharing in Education Programme*, which demonstrated that high-quality shared experiences contribute to better learning.

She concluded her report by stating that ‘the education system across Northern Ireland has unacceptable variations and persistent shortcomings, which need to be addressed if we are to improve our provision and outcomes from average to world-class’ (Education and Training Inspectorate 2014a: 3).

Atlantic Philanthropies developed an interest in the Northern Ireland education system as early as 1996, when it first defined the problem as one of segregated schools. In other words, its initial consideration was that it could assist in the process of peacebuilding through supporting the growth of integrated schools as a way of tackling segregation. Integrated education brings together in one school children, parents, teachers and governors from Catholic and Protestant traditions and those from other faiths or none. Pupils experience an education that gives them the opportunity to understand, respect and celebrate all cultural and religious traditions. Parental involvement is a central value of integrated education, with a high level of parental representation on boards of governors.

The origins of the integrated movement can be traced back to 1974, when a group of parents called All Children Together lobbied successfully for legislation which would allow existing schools to become integrated (Education (NI) Act 1977). Parents established the first planned integrated

Table 3.1 Segregated schools in Northern Ireland 2014/2015

School type	*Catholics (%)*	*Protestants (%)*	*Others[a] (%)*	*Total (%)*
		Primary schools		
Controlled	6.7	68.3	25.0	100
Maintained	96.1	1.1	2.8	100
Integrated	37.9	35.3	26.8	100
		Secondary (non-grammar)		
Controlled	3.1	81.4	15.5	100
Maintained	97.0	1.2	1.8	100
Integrated	35.6	47.2	17.2	100
		Secondary grammar		
Controlled	8.5	75.8	15.7	100
Voluntary Catholic	97.3	0.9	1.8	100
Voluntary Other	12.2	65.0	22.8	100

Source: Calculated from Department of Education NI School Statistics 2014/2015. http://www.deni.gov.uk/

[a]'Others' include: other Christians; non-Christians; and, no religion/not recorded

school (Lagan College) in Belfast in 1981. Integrated education was given a major fillip through the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 (article 64) which, for the first time, placed a statutory duty on the Department of Education Northern Ireland to 'encourage and facilitate' the development of integrated education. The Order also gave the Department the power to fund a central representative body to develop, support and promote integrated education in Northern Ireland—the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE was established 1987). There are now 62 integrated schools in Northern Ireland with an enrolment in 2014/2015 of 21,206 pupils or approximately 6.9 % of the overall school population (Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education 2015).

The description of the education system in Northern Ireland as 'segregated' is, in itself, contested since both maintained and controlled schools argue that they are open to all pupils, the latter being state schools (Gallagher 2004). De facto, however, pupil attendance profiles indicate a parallel system of schooling defined by religious affiliation.

As the DENI statistics (2014/2015) show (see Table 3.1):

- In the primary sector: 6.7 % of Catholics attend controlled primary schools; 1.1 % of Protestants attend maintained primary schools; and 5.7 % of all primary-school children attend integrated schools.

- In the secondary (non-grammar) sector: 3.1 % of Catholics attend controlled secondary schools; 1.2 % of Protestants attend maintained secondary schools; and 15 % of all secondary (non-grammar) pupils attend integrated schools.
- In the secondary (grammar) sector: 8.5 % of Catholics attend controlled grammar schools; and 0.9 % of Protestants attend voluntary Catholic grammar schools.
- Overall, 6.9 % of primary and post-primary pupils attend integrated schools.

Catholics are therefore much more willing to go to schools in the controlled sector than Protestants are to attend maintained schools. The greatest movement by Catholics is into controlled grammar schools (8.5 %) or voluntary grammar schools under 'other management' (12.2 %). Many young people in Northern Ireland never experience cross-community education until they attend university. The segregated school system has resulted in ethno-religious isolation which reinforces 'intra-sectoral bias, stereotyping and prejudice' (Hughes 2010: 829).

Beyond the most obvious fault line of segregation in primary and post-primary education in Northern Ireland, Atlantic Philanthropies explored additional weaknesses in terms of inequalities: access and performance inequalities (Borooah and Knox 2014). Pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, as defined by entitlement to free school meals (FSM), are much less likely to gain access to grammar schools. Examining the data for 2014/2015, for example, shows that although 26 % of all post-primary pupils were entitled to FSM, they were over-represented in non-grammar schools (37 % of all non-grammar-schools pupils are on FSM) and under-represented in grammar schools (where just 12 % of their pupils are on FSM)—see Fig. 3.1.

There are also performance inequalities between grammar and non-grammar schools which, over the years, have proved difficult to tackle. Pupils attending non-grammar schools consistently perform significantly worse than those attending grammar schools, although there was a small reduction in the performance gap in 2013/2014. That said, during that year, 94.5 % of all pupils attending grammar schools obtained five or more GCSEs at grades A*–C including English and Maths compared with 44 % of all non-grammar schools—a performance gap between the two different types of schools of 50.5 % (see Fig. 3.2).

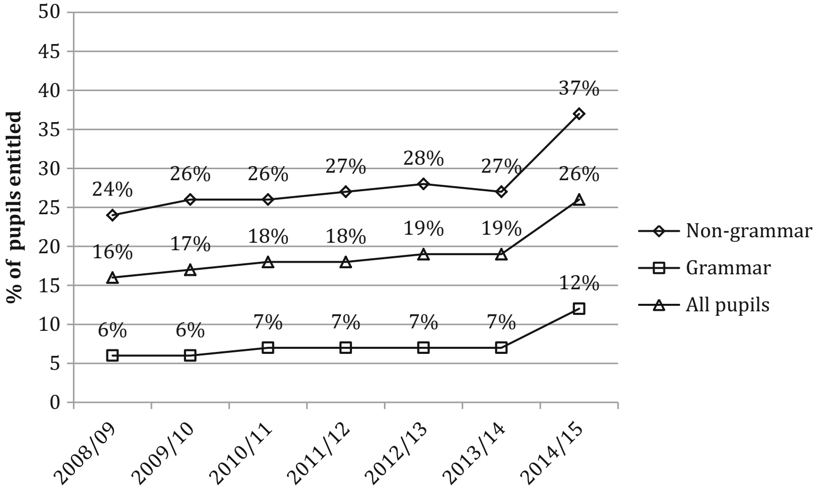

Fig. 3.1 Percentage of pupils entitled to FSM (*Source*: Calculated from DENI School Statistics 2014/2015 http://www.deni.gov.uk/)

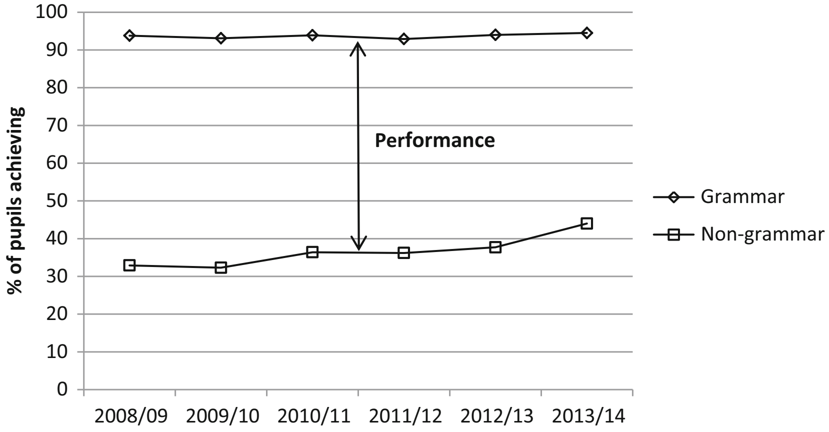

Fig. 3.2 Percentage of year 12 pupils achieving 5+ GCSE A*–C with English and Maths (*Source*: Calculated from DENI School Statistics 2014/2015 http://www.deni.gov.uk/)

Table 3.2 5+ GCSEs at grades A*–C including English and Maths

	All pupils (%)	*FSM pupils overall (%)*	*FSM pupils (grammar schools) (%)*	*FSM pupils (non-grammar) (%)*
2012/2013	60.9	33.9	85	23.8
2013/2014	65.2	38.7	87.3	28.9

Source: Calculated from DENI School Statistics 2014/2015. http://www.deni.gov.uk/

Linking these two forms of inequality offers further insights. Table 3.2 shows that in 2013/2014, for example, 65.2 % of all post-primary school pupils obtained five or more GCSEs at grades A*–C, including English and Maths. However, if one disaggregates the data further, only 38.7 % of pupils entitled to FSM obtained the same level of qualifications. Yet, 87.3 % of FSM pupils who managed to gain access to grammar schools obtained this standard compared to only 28.9 % in non-grammar schools. Hence, socially disadvantaged pupils face a double disadvantage: first, problems in gaining access to grammar schools and second, if they do not gain access, a *much* worse prospect of performing well at GCSE than others receiving FSM who do gain access to a grammar school. Disaggregating the data further (by gender) they show that a mere 19.2 % and 23.7 % of FSM male pupils attending non-grammar schools in 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 respectively obtained the requisite five or more GCSEs at grades A*–C, including English and Maths (the quality threshold standard set by Government for pupils at this stage in their education). In short, the education system fails about 80 % of these male pupils from the most socially disadvantaged backgrounds in Northern Ireland.

So, for Atlantic Philanthropies, working in the area of education reform as a means of contributing to peacebuilding through tackling structural inequalities seemed like an obvious intervention. Its starting point was to support the integrated education movement, yet despite providing financial assistance, the rate of growth in this sector proved disappointing. In absolute terms the number of pupils attending integrated education has risen from 14,140 in 2000/2001 to 21,956 in 2014/2015 (an increase of 7816 pupils). In relative terms this equates to an increase from 4 % of the school population to 6.5 % over a 14-year period (see Fig. 3.3).[1] Atlantic

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[1] The total school population numbers here include: pupils attending pre-school, nursery, primary, secondary, special, hospital and independent schools.

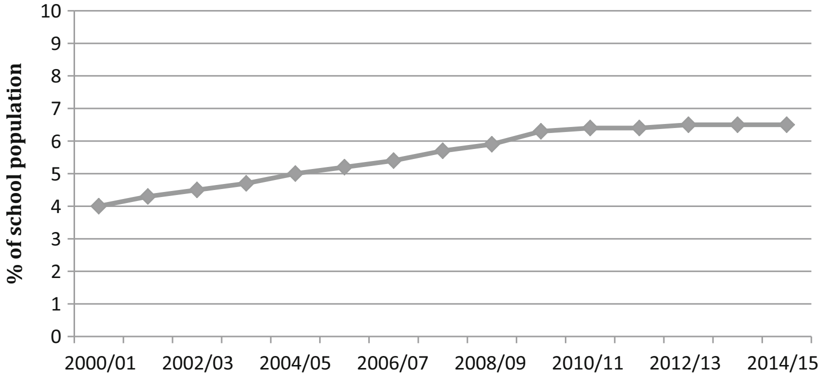

Fig. 3.3 Growth of integrated education (*Source*: Calculated from DENI School Statistics 2014/2015 http://www.deni.gov.uk/)

Philanthropies invested £8.46 m in integrated education for a 2.5 % increase in integrated education—other donors also invested in the sector.

There are several (contested) reasons as to why numbers of pupils attending integrated schools have not increased. Although the integrated movement points to opinion poll survey data in which people express support for integrated schools, this does not translate into parents sending their children to them. Advocates for integrated education claim this is because there are not enough places in integrated schools and parents are being turned away. In fact, an analysis of the statistics associated with integrated schools in 2013/2014 showed that the DENI had approved 3550 admissions/places across the 62 integrated schools (primary and post-primary). They received 3230 first-preference applications from parents for places at integrated schools—some 320 of approved places remained unfilled (or the sector is oversubscribed by 9 %). There is however pressure in particular areas, or for particular schools, due to parental preference.[2] There are also questions asked about the classification of pupils attending integrated schools. Critics argue the high numbers of pupils recorded as ‘other religions/religion not known’ is an attempt by the sector to comply with government requirements that there should be 30 % pupils from the minority community. Most post-primary controlled integrated schools are not meeting this target, yet there are some voluntary and controlled grammar schools (not categorised as integrated schools) which have a good mix of children from different community backgrounds. However, the most likely explanation as to why integrated schools have not attracted pupils in greater numbers is because of their educational performance. Factors such as declining pupil numbers and demographics have also impacted on this, but would have similarly affected other school types. The data on the performance of integrated schools show that Controlled Integrated schools are the poorest performing in the post-primary sector, if judged by the educational outcomes of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs including English and Maths. Grant-maintained integrated schools perform at a level comparable to non-selective secondary schools which, in turn, achieve significantly lower results than controlled or voluntary Catholic grammar schools (Knox and Borooah 2014).

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[2] In the primary sector: Forge Integrated Primary School, Glencraig Integrated Primary School, and Bridge Integrated Primary School are very popular schools. In the post-primary sector: Slemish College, Lagan College and Drumragh College are oversubscribed.

Agenda-Setting

Taking into account the slow growth in integrated education and the invidious problems of access and performance inequalities prevalent in the wider education system, Atlantic Philanthropies therefore looked for alternatives to the status quo. To work within a sector that attracted around 6.5 % of the school population was too limiting if the wider goal was to address structural inequalities. The prize for Atlantic Philanthropies was therefore much bigger than the integrated movement alone. This change in focus was reflected in its Reconciliation and Human Rights goals at the time, one of which was: ‘to support organisations working to enable children to attend integrated schools and to promote opportunities for integration in the mainstream education system’—hence supporting ‘integrated’ and ‘integrating’ education. One way to create a more inclusive education system was through cross-sectoral collaboration between schools in delivering the curriculum. Faced with falling school enrolments and issues about the future sustainability of some schools, the (then) Education Minister Caitríona Ruane pledged to reform what she described as ‘our outdated and unequal education system’ (Ruane 2007: 2).

A key part of the minister’s education reform agenda included the phasing in of a revised curriculum with a greater emphasis on skills and employability and the implementation of the Entitlement Framework, which expanded the range of subjects available to young people. The Entitlement Framework complements the revised curriculum by providing access to a wider range of relevant, high-quality courses for all pupils from age 14, and by ensuring a variety of courses are on offer, including technical and professional subjects. The Entitlement Framework required schools to provide access to a minimum of 24 courses at Key Stage 4 and a minimum of 27 courses for post-16 pupils. At least one-third of these courses must be general (academic) and at least one-third applied (vocational or professional/technical). Schools determine the remaining third at their discretion. Collaboration between schools and colleges is firmly rooted in the implementation of the Entitlement Framework.

Guidance from the DENI suggested that 'for most schools, some form of collaboration with other providers will be necessary to enable their pupils to have access to the full range of courses available through the Entitlement Framework. That collaboration may be with another school or cluster of schools, with a Further Education College or other training provider, or a combination of all of these' (DENI 2006: 3). Importantly, the DENI did not specify the form that collaborative arrangements should take, or how schools and school-managing authorities should work with other schools, further education colleges or training providers to develop and implement such arrangements.

Other policy documents at the time further emphasised the notion of collaboration between schools. The policy document titled *A Shared Future* (2005) made reference to the concept of collaboration as follows:

> The proposed pupil Entitlement Framework will provide young people in post-primary education with greater opportunities for sharing part of their learning and educational experiences with young people from different communities, and the opportunity to cross the traditional divide in educational provision. This could, for example, include schools sharing sports facilities and open opportunities to learn subjects not readily available within one particular school or sector. Local partnerships of schools and further education colleges will be key drivers in this process. (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2005: 25–6)

The Bain Report (2006), set up to examine funding of the education system and the strategic planning of the schools' estate, endorsed the potential of schools to make a significant contribution to a shared society. The report noted the distinction between 'integrated' and 'integrating' education. The former, it argued, represents a highly significant and distinctive approach to integrated education, but attracted only a small minority of the school population. The goal of a shared future and a commitment by all school sectors towards this, suggested to Bain, ‘a more pervasive and inclusive strategy, which focuses on the dynamic of integrating education across the school system’. The Bain report argued that the changing policy context (namely, the demographic downturn; the urgent need to develop the schools’ estate; the projected demand for school places through a system of viable schools; and the requirements of the curriculum) provided a new context of ‘purposeful focus, for schools to work in an integrated way by sharing and collaborating in the interests of their pupils’ (Bain 2006: 158).

Bain also set out the rationale for integrating education and improving collaboration and sharing beyond the role of promoting better community relations. The report noted three key interrelated factors for adopting such an approach:

- The educational case: access for pupils to the full range of the curriculum, to high-quality teaching, and to modern facilities.
- The social case: societal wellbeing by promoting a culture of tolerance, mutual understanding and interrelationship through significant, purposeful and regular engagement and interaction in learning.
- The economic case: through cost-effective provision that gives good value for money.

Bain further argued that a new opportunity existed to re-examine the approaches that might be used to promote integration in the education service. The report stated:

> Within the current legislation that obliges DENI to facilitate and encourage integrated education, it should make clear that, in discharging this duty, it is committed to facilitating and encouraging an inclusive strategy with a variety of approaches to integrating education within a framework of sustainable schools. (Bain 2006: 160)

In short, the policy context offered an opportunity for creative thinking and agenda-setting by external actors such as Atlantic Philanthropies and the IFI. The latter also saw education as a route to addressing its strategic objectives at the time: that is, helping to build and realise the vision of a shared future for the communities in Northern Ireland and both parts of the island, and facilitating more integration between the two communities (International Fund for Ireland 2006).

Atlantic Philanthropies commissioned Queen's University Belfast, School of Education, to consider the prospects for greater integration and options by incentivising schools to engage in cross-sectoral collaboration. The concept paper was positive in its assessment of the role which Atlantic could play in integrating education and recommended four possibilities:

- Creating a new mediating body with the role of dispensing funds to support initiatives aimed at promoting collaborative practice in schools.
- Support to secondary schools seeking specialist schools status.
- Pilot a collaboration project—funding relatively large-scale cross-community collaboration through a one-off project or opening up a grant application fund for interested third parties to apply; and
- Funding the construction of a new integrated teacher-training facility at Queen's University, Belfast. (Gallagher 2005)

Atlantic Philanthropies sought engagement with DENI in June 2006 for a response to its proposals to promote intercommunity collaboration and sharing. Specifically, it signalled its interest in working with the Department in three broad areas: building momentum for intercommunity collaboration and sharing through the Specialist School model; piloting a small number of models which demonstrate new ways of working towards promoting a more inclusive education system; and building a research and evidence base around new models, disseminating emerging lessons and highlighting impacts. The DENI was initially receptive to the idea of external support for collaborative learning.

Atlantic Philanthropies therefore chose to work with 12 post-primary specialist schools through an intervention titled the Shared Education Programme (SEP). Shared education refers to schools from different sectors working together in a sustained process, ranging from two or more schools making shared use of specialist facilities, through to coordinated timetabling, and pupils taking classes across a network of schools. The Ministerial Advisory Report on Shared Education (Connolly et al. 2013: xiii) defines it thus:

> Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and

> effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

Shared education is distinct from integrated education. The essential point is that shared education involves collaboration to improve educational outcomes while preserving community identity: pupils sit together in a classroom to study while remaining Catholic or Protestant pupils. Integrated education on the other hand has a specific focus on reconciliation outcomes, with children being educated together. The focus of shared education is therefore delivering core curriculum activities where teachers and pupils work together across schools to achieve higher-quality educational experiences. Shared education recognises that schools have interdependent relationships and promotes positive collaboration to support the common good. Ultimately it is about creating interdependencies between schools and making boundaries porous—it *isn't* about threatening anyone's identity or the creation of a Catholic/Protestant hybrid (Gallagher et al. 2010).

Specialist school pilots were launched in Northern Ireland during September 2006 by the DENI to build whole school improvement by learning and applying the lessons from those areas in which the school were already strong to other areas of the curriculum. The specialist schools were selected by Atlantic Philanthropies to lead the shared education partnerships because of their commitment to collaboration and excellence in key educational areas. The 12 post-primary specialist schools (for pupils aged 11–18) each had a designated specialism in one of the following areas: performing arts; information and communications technology (ICT); science; business and enterprise; music; and modern languages. Up to the intervention by Atlantic Philanthropies and the IFI, all 12 designated specialist schools engaged in relatively limited cross-community sharing and collaboration even though part of their *raison d'être* involved building relationships with other schools. DENI did not incentivise or actively encourage cross-community collaboration as part of the specialist schools initiative. Where collaboration existed, it tended to be with schools of their own management type. School principals felt that investment by Atlantic offered the potential to promote cross-community sharing.

The rationale for Atlantic moving to the implementation phase of a project aimed at promoting shared education within specialist schools is described in Atlantic Philanthropies' grant application form. Therein Atlantic notes that the purpose of the grant is:

> To incentivise and provide funds to support active collaboration between schools from different sectors. Critically, it will provide schools with opportunities and resources to increase the number of shared classes (Protestant and Catholics pupils being taught together) and will enable teachers, governors and parents from both communities to work collaboratively in delivering education provision. (Atlantic Philanthropies 2007: 3).

In April 2007 Atlantic Philanthropies approved grant-aid of £1.8 m to support a programme titled 'Promoting Shared Education within Specialist Schools in Northern Ireland.' The programme attracted match funding from the IFI (a total of £3.6 m over three years) for the purpose of incentivising and providing funds to support active collaboration between schools from different sectors (Protestant and Catholic). Atlantic saw this investment as complementing its ongoing support towards the growth of the integrated education sector.

Queen's University, Belfast formally launched the Shared Education Programme Northern Ireland in September 2007 for the 12 designated specialist schools and 48 partner schools, with target beneficiaries of over 2500 school pupils. The (then) Head of the School of Education explained the rationale of the programme thus:

> With the Sharing Education Programme our short term goals are to provide teachers and pupils with opportunities to engage with different traditions and learning cultures and to share access to academic excellence. In the long term, we hope to provide examples of best practice in cross sectoral educational initiatives that can be used by schools to foster reconciliation and partnership, and promote educational excellence. It is our young people who will be the main beneficiaries. (Gallagher 2007: 2)

The key activities under the programme were:

- **Delivering shared classes:** increasing the number of pupils experiencing shared learning with partner schools from different community backgrounds. Priority was given to increasing the number of shared classes that sustain pupil-to-pupil relationships and that result in the achievement of educational outcomes and qualifications.

- **Supporting teacher development to deliver shared education:** Educational experts trained teachers involved in the programme to lead by example. This was done through accredited training in the following: promoting leadership in the collaborative context; project planning and management; approaches to community relations; and dealing with diversity and learning from others.
- **Ensuring organisational learning and intercommunity collaboration among partner schools:** Schools received one-to-one mentoring support and a series of joint events were organised to allow for networking and the sharing of good practice, as well as to facilitate discussions on problem-solving and the development of new practice. In addition, dissemination events were organised to provide schools with the opportunity to share their learning with other schools and experts in the field.

The theory of change model associated with Atlantic's intervention is illustrated in Fig. 3.4.

Atlantic Philanthropies and the IFI augmented the Shared Education Programme with complementary initiatives in Fermanagh (through the

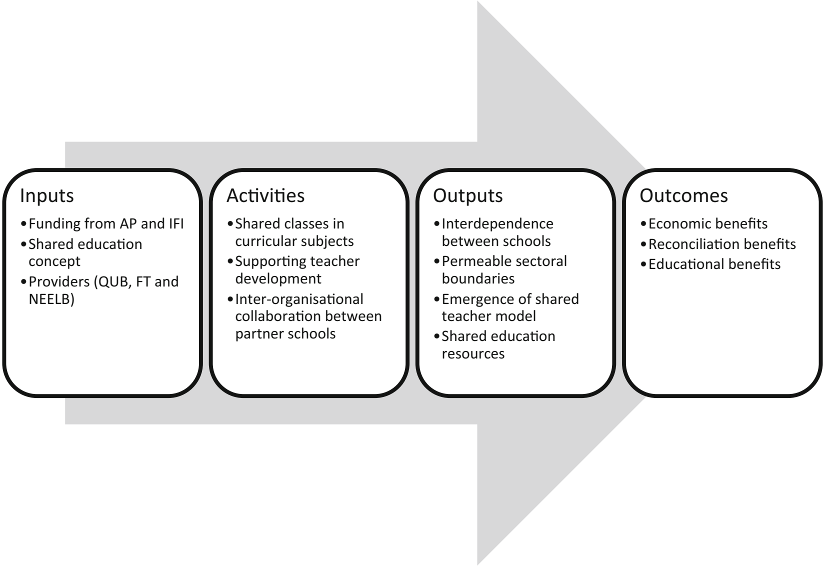
Inputs
• Funding from AP and IFI
• Shared education concept
• Providers (QUB, FT and NEELB)
Activities
• Shared classes in curricular subjects
• Supporting teacher development
• Inter-organisational collaboration between partner schools
Outputs
• Interdependence between schools
• Permeable sectoral boundaries
• Emergence of shared teacher model
• Shared education resources
Outcomes
• Economic benefits
• Reconciliation benefits
• Educational benefits

Fig. 3.4 Theory of change model: shared education

Fermanagh Trust) and in collaboration with the North Eastern Education Library Board (NEELB). Both programmes were launched in September 2009.The choice of providers meant that shared education was being delivered through the following: a university with a world-leading reputation for research in education (Queen's University, Belfast); an arms-length delivery body of DENI (the North Eastern Education and Library Board); and a voluntary organisation which had strong credentials in rural development (the Fermanagh Trust). The Fermanagh Sharing Education Programme was a three-year programme which also enabled schools (teachers, parents and pupils) to share resources, facilities and classes. Significantly, the majority of schools in the rural county of Fermanagh were involved and participated in sustained contact with pupils from 'the other community'. The work of the NEELB incentivised sharing amongst schools, focusing exclusively on primary schools with enrolment numbers below 105 pupils (the Bain threshold number for a viable primary school). Every pupil was encouraged to take part in activities with pupils from other schools in the area, including shared classes, extra-curricular activities and a series of summer schools.

Starting from a zero base, by 2012/2013 the overall programme involved 150 schools, 44 partnerships and 15,000 children on a yearly basis. The approach adopted by Atlantic Philanthropies and the IFI was to develop models of cross-sectoral collaboration and sharing which reflected bottom-up local 'solutions' that led to economic, educational and reconciliation/societal benefits for the key stakeholders involved (pupils, teachers, governors, parents and wider society). The work of the schools gathered momentum and attracted significant publicity. The approach taken was experimental (an attitude of 'let the flowers bloom') and offered freedom to teachers to unleash the potential for shared education. There was an acceptance that some would fail but that important lessons could be learned as a result.

Initial meetings and correspondence between the funders and the DENI demonstrate support for the scheme. Over time, however, the DENI began to show limited enthusiasm towards the Shared Education Programme and any possible future expansion. Key stakeholders in the programme were clearly disappointed and somewhat bewildered by the department's response. One interviewee outlines the interpretation of the department's reaction as follows:

> The most benign interpretation of DENI's response to the Shared Education Programme is that they don't want us queering their pitch; they want to be

> in control of any education change process. The official line is that specialist schools have been supported to do certain things and that Atlantic and IFI money is diverting schools from delivering on their core specialisms, hence funders will screw up the DENI specialist initiative. The malign interpretation is [that they think] this type of work had been done before, is not therefore needed, and that there isn't enough capacity in schools to do it. Because of that, it is a waste of money.[3]

With regard to the former (the benign interpretation), this was seen as 'a naïve analysis' because specialist schools were involved in many things beyond their specialisms. The fact that they were willing and able to become involved in the Shared Education Programme was simply illustrative of the type of schools they were—innovative and willing to embrace change. Interviewees expressed the hope that DENI would support the programme and saw it as a way of complementing the department's work: 'We want DENI to understand that what we are doing is entirely consistent with wider education objectives and we are certainly not trying to get in the way. What we are trying is to do things in a slightly different way—to push the policy envelope out a bit'.

In terms of the latter (the malign interpretation), the fact that other education stakeholders were supportive of the Shared Education Programme, seeing it as a creative initiative, would suggest that DENI's views, that 'it has all been done before' and regarding the limited capacity of schools, were not widely shared. Proponents of the programme robustly defend its added value and saw 'clear blue water' between the objectives of the specialist schools and the Atlantic/IFI programme. The pre-existing collaboration plans developed by the specialist schools were highly limited with no evidence of cross-sectoral collaboration. The Atlantic/IFI-funded plans were designed to develop additional curricular-focused activities, aimed at improving educational outcomes, in collaboration with schools from other sectors. The long-term goal was to create high quality contact networks across schools which would work towards education and reconciliation outcomes.

The DENI's response to the Shared Education Programme was however somewhat more nuanced than it was perceived to be. A senior DENI official argued that the department's objections were more to do with the timing of the Atlantic/IFI initiative, which placed an undue burden on specialist schools at the very stage when they were coming to terms with their new status.

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[3] A series of interviews were conducted with key stakeholders involved in the Shared Education Programme, who offered their views anonymously (see Knox 2012).

> While we (DENI) feel it (SEP) is a very worthwhile project and we would be encouraging schools to work together, we were concerned about the timing for the first cohort. Specialist schools in their formation had to identify a set of partners, the Atlantic/IFI Initiative as I understand it demanded another set of partners which were cross-sectoral. This we felt created an additional burden on the schools when they were already dealing with a major reform.

DENI also expressed concerns about schools receiving funding for activities which they were already being paid to carry out under their specialist status—double funding. Early feedback, it was claimed, from an Education and Training and Inspectorate report on Specialist Schools, indicated that inspectors were finding it difficult to disaggregate activities funded under each initiative. The IFI and Atlantic Philanthropies, on the other hand, were very clear about the additional benefits from shared education and pointed to the inadequacy of the Department of Education's data-monitoring system which was entirely activity-focused—an auditing process.

Policy Advocacy

Initial optimism from DENI officials towards shared education as a pilot programme evaporated. Views varied across senior officials but, in general, they adopted a negative attitude towards the concept. This was exhibited most clearly in the heavy-handed auditing approach they took to overseeing spending in SEP because departmental officials became the conduit for schools to receive funding under the programme.[4] While acting in the best interests of prudent public spending, the effect was to stifle creativity, innovation and risk-taking which were integral parts of the design of the SEP. Moreover, those officials who had a watching brief for shared education preferred instead their own in-house policies.

Up to 2010, the DENI allocated around £3.5 m per annum for their own policy on the promotion of equality and good community relations among children and young people in formal and non-formal education. The aim was as follows: to encourage greater cross-community contact and co-operation; to support and encourage mutual understanding and tolerance; to promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination; and to promote recognition of, and respect for, cultural diversity. Evidence suggests that much of this work has been of limited value because of the nature of the contact involved. Contact was not sustained over time and hence attitudinal change towards the 'other' community proved inadequate (O'Connor et al. 2002). Despite this finding in 2002 the policies continued until 2010, an example of evidence-adverse policymaking.

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[4] The International Fund for Ireland contracted the Department of Education to monitor and approve their funding of the Shared Education Programme, a decision that subsequently proved difficult to manage in practice as department audit officials became the monetary gatekeepers for a change process to which they lacked a formal commitment.

The DENI cut its budget in 2010/2011 to £1.1 m per year with the introduction of a new policy, Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED), a key aim of which was 'to equip children and young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to develop mutual understanding and recognition of, and respect for, difference' (DENI 2011: 3). While entirely laudable in its intention, the underpinning philosophy was based on a community relations model which had limited success and has been heavily criticised as an approach confined to 'pacifying' the two communities (see Chap. 1 for details). The policy, with much reduced resources, is a very blunt instrument and does little more than encourage schools to see how CRED might link into core areas of the curriculum and strengthen pre- and post-qualification training in the education workforce.

The resistance by DENI officials and the need to take shared education from an externally funded programme to the mainstream of education policy intensified and refocused the advocacy efforts of grantees. The Shared Education Programme had allowed the funders to operationalise the concept of shared education and gather evidence on the economic, education and reconciliation benefits of shared education. The aim of the advocacy campaign was therefore policy adoption—to create systemic change by mainstreaming shared education. Grantees also sensed that local politicians were more open to the idea of shared education than senior education officials, a position which informed the way in which they advocated—by circumventing reluctant bureaucrats and moving directly to influence elected representatives.

The advocacy approach was multifaceted. Shared education activists raised awareness through engaging with the media (newspaper articles, social media, television and radio interviews) and formal presentations to the Education Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly,[5] to the extent that shared education entered the lexicon of public debate on the future of the education system in Northern Ireland. This work included lobbying Education Committee members and making them aware of schools in their constituencies which were engaged in shared education, including some Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) whose children attended schools that were part of the SEP. The wider context of budget cuts emanating from a UK squeeze on public expenditure offered an opportunity to explore with politicians whether there were creative ways in which shared education might be used to tackle the problem of potential school closures. For MLAs representing constituencies where closures were a real possibility, school collaboration piqued their interest. There are no votes in school closures. Considerable effort was also invested in persuading political parties to incorporate shared education within their political manifestos in the run-up to local government, Northern Ireland Assembly and Westminster elections, so that it became party policy.

The three organisations involved in delivering the SEP (Queen's University, the Fermanagh Trust and the North Eastern Education and Library Board) established an advocacy coalition entitled the Shared Education Learning Forum (SELF). The aims of this body were to generate and share knowledge as well as facilitate collaborative working across the shared education programme, and to use the knowledge and evidence from the three programmes to support a common advocacy strategy which levered social change within the education system in Northern Ireland. This plan involved grass-roots mobilisation of those at the chalkface delivering and participating in shared education: principals, teachers, parents, governors and pupils, some of whom became significant policy advocates. A key resource in the implementation and raising the profile of shared education were teachers and hence an important aspect of the advocacy campaign was to build capacity in schools. Some of this took place informally with Queen's University organising events to support school staff in managing change through mentoring and networking, the sharing of practice, and facilitated discussions on problem solving and the development of 'next practice'. More formally, Queen's University offered a master's degree (MSc) in Collaborative Learning and the IFI supported a programme entitled CREDIT (or Classrooms Re-Imagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers Project). The latter involved the two teacher training colleges in Northern Ireland (St Mary's and Stranmillis) providing a range of professional development courses for teachers. The courses supported the development of teachers' skills and confidence to deal with issues of diversity, inclusion and community cohesion within the classroom and on a whole-school basis, particularly in specific curriculum areas such as Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) and Local and Global Citizenship.

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[5] Examples of this type of advocacy activity include: Gallagher's (2014) role as special advisor to the Education Committee; Knox and Borooah's (2014) evidence to the Education Committee inquiry into shared and integrated education; the engagement of school principals Mrs Barbara Ward (Cross and Passion College) and Mr Ian Williamson (Ballycastle High School) in the delivery of shared education, an example which was also presented to the same inquiry; the evidence given by Duffy et al. (2014) from Queen's University and Oxford University to the Education Committee on shared education; and the presentation made by McCusker and Ward (2014) from the Fermanagh Trust to the Education Committee on shared education.

The generation of research and the dissemination of findings played a key role in the advocacy campaign. The pilot-shared education projects delivered by Queen's University, the North Eastern Education and Library Board and the Fermanagh Trust allowed funders to gather evidence in schools on the economic, educational and reconciliation benefits of shared education and to use that evidence as an advocacy tool. Broadly, the research on shared education fell into three categories. The first of these was work on contact theory, which asserts that contact between different groups, provided that it meets certain conditions, can be effective in reducing prejudice and promoting more positive social attitudes—the reconciliation effects of shared education (Hughes 2010; Hughes et al. 2011, 2012). The second category was a body of research work on the benefits of networks and school collaboration, which highlighted the role of effective collaboration through shared education in school improvement (Duffy and Gallagher 2014, 2015; Hughes et al. 2010). The third category included research which explored the economic benefits and social justice/equality issues involved in the provision of shared education (Borooah and Knox 2013, 2014, 2015a, b), primarily emanating from the experience of shared education in Northern Ireland. Several scholars from this field have disseminated their work in other divided societies and comparative contexts (Israel/Palestine, Macedonia, India and charter schools in the USA). All of the above mentioned research was influential in convincing politicians in the Northern Ireland Assembly that shared education offered real potential for systemic change, not least in confronting the seemingly intractable problems which they had failed to address—segregated schools and significant inequalities in access and school performance. This was less true of a very sceptical body of senior officials in the DENI.

The research was also timely in that education budget cuts were forcing officials to look seriously at radical alternatives rather than acquiesce to the status quo. Change can be risky, particularly in this context, where it offered the prospect of a sectarian backlash from parents and pupils of the two main communities engaged in collaborative learning. While a small number of minor sectarian incidents occurred, they served merely to strengthen the resolve of those teachers and principals directly involved in managing the response. Education officials, risk-averse by nature, tacitly adopted a 'we told you so' attitude but explicitly were willing to let external funders carry the burden of risk and await the outcomes of shared education programmes, whilst still wedded to the much less threatening community relations model.

Policy Adoption

The strength of the advocacy campaign resulted in significant policy adoption dividends. These policy advocacy gains came in the form of shared education commitments made by the Northern Ireland Executive in the *Programme for Government 2011–2015* as follows:

- Significantly progress work on the plan for the Lisanelly Shared Education campus[6] as a key regeneration project.
- Establish a ministerial advisory group to explore and bring forward recommendations to the Minister of Education to advance shared education.
- Ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015.
- Substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015. (OFMDFM 2011)

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[6] The Lisanelly Shared Education campus is a 120-acre former army barracks site located in Omagh in the west of the province. It is being developed by the Minister of Education as a flagship project which will cater for six cross-sectoral schools, based on one site to optimise the use of capital resources and provide the highest standards of education facilities. It will cater for 3700 pupils and is the largest single investment in education facilities ever made in Northern Ireland with construction costs estimated to be in excess of £120 m. The six schools that will move on to the site are Arvalee School and Resource Centre; Loreto Grammar School; Omagh High School; Sacred Heart College; Omagh Academy; and the Christian Brothers Grammar School.

These Executive Government commitments were critical in terms of policy adoption, in that they became the blueprint for (reluctant) officials to implement. As with all commitments in the Programme for Government, an official was allocated direct responsibility for progress and delivery of the above, thereby becoming a 'senior responsible officer'—this was a useful accountability mechanism for recalcitrant civil servants, some of whom were still dragging their heels on shared education.

The First Minister at that time, Peter Robinson, also made an important speech which created political momentum when he described the education system in Northern Ireland as a 'benign form of apartheid which is fundamentally damaging to our society' and argued for a carefully planned and 'staged process of integration' (Robinson 2010: 1). The First Minister supported a single unified system of education and his speech stimulated a wider debate on education reforms. This came on the back of comments by the (then) Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Owen Paterson, who told Conservative Party members that the British taxpayer should not have to foot the bill for a system of parallel schools. He argued that separate schooling 'is a criminal waste of public money. We cannot go on bearing the cost of segregation and I don't see why the British taxpayer should go on subsidising segregation' (Paterson 2010: 4).

These two important statements by the Secretary of State and the First Minister opened the door for a political debate on the topic. On 22 November 2010 the Northern Ireland Assembly debated (under Private Members' business) the topic of integrated and shared education and, as a result of the debate, passed the following motion:

> This Assembly … believes that the current system of education is unsustainable, recognises the economic, educational and social benefits that can come from integrated and shared education; and calls on the Minister of Education to actively promote a system of integrated and shared education throughout Northern Ireland. (Hansard, Official Report 2010: 120)

During the debate in the Assembly reference was made by several MLAs to the Sharing Education Programme, as a successful model of sharing which the then Minister of Education, Caitríona Ruane, and her DENI should consider.

In light of the excess of school places and a reducing education budget, the Minister for Education initiated an area planning process of the schools estate to identify and develop a network of viable and sustainable schools 'of the right type, the right size, located in the right place and [which] have a focus on raising standards' (Department of Education Northern Ireland 2012: 4). The terms of reference for area planning issued to the Education and Library Boards and to the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), all of whom were charged with developing area plans, included the following:

- Identify realistic, innovative and creative solutions to address need, including opportunities for shared schooling on a cross sectoral basis;
- Maximise the use and sharing of the existing schools estate. (DENI 2012: 18)

In the body of the guidance on area planning, one of the factors that DENI suggested as helpful in developing coherent plans was 'a willingness to develop more opportunities for sharing of both curricular provision and infrastructure'. Notwithstanding the clear guidance issued to the Education Boards and CCMS, these groups ignored expressed grass-roots support for shared education in the resultant area plans (Knox 2013: 25). The evidence of the economic, educational and reconciliation benefits arising from shared education had clearly not permeated the system.

That said, the Minister of Education, in fulfilment of the programme for government commitment, set up an independent advisory group on how best to advance shared education in Northern Ireland, within the context of overall education policy and with the aim of improving educational outcomes for learners. Drawing, inter alia, on evidence from the Shared Education Programme, the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG 2013) report titled *Advancing Shared Education* concluded:

> Schools that work together in relation to the sharing of resources, expertise and good practice, and that bring their children together to engage in meaningful educational activities, have been shown to produce clear and measurable improvements in outcomes compared to those that do not. Similarly, there is overwhelming evidence internationally that when meaningful and sustained opportunities are provided for children and young people from different backgrounds to learn together then this can result in improved attitudes and relationships. (Connolly et al. 2013: xvi)

The report suggested three ways to move from shared education as an externally funded intervention to making it an integral part of delivering education in Northern Ireland. These required the implementation of the following:

- A statutory duty on the DENI to encourage and facilitate shared education in an Education Bill.
- The creation of a central unit to take lead responsibility on developing and driving forward a strategy on advancing shared education.
- A shared education premium as part of the revised funding formula.

The Advancing Shared Education report was hugely significant in moving shared education to the stage of policy adoption by the Minister and the DENI. When the Minister of Education endorsed the findings of the Advisory Group report, this copper-fastened support from officials. In the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Education Minister responded to the findings of the report by saying:

> Summing up the case for sharing, it is clear that sharing brings educational benefits and builds: respect for diversity and good relations; equality; and, a confident community. So my vision is one of education without barriers; good schools where children learn, grow and develop together, and schools where sharing is the accepted normality. Shared education can—and should—involve every type of school. (O'Dowd 2013: 4)

Soon after, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister produced a strategy document entitled: *Together*: *Building a United Community* (T:BUC) which outlined its vision of 'a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation' (OFMDFM 2013a: 3). To achieve this vision it identified four key priorities, one of which was a shared community—'to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone' (OFMDFM 2013a: 5). Importantly, the strategy committed to the creation of ten shared educational campuses based on the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus model. The strategy also offered a significant endorsement for shared education going forward:

> We believe that creating more opportunities for socially-mixed, shared education, with a view to achieving a full shared education system in Northern Ireland, is a crucial part of breaking the cycle of inter-generational educational under-achievement unemployment, and sectarianism; and

> improving good relations amongst and for our young people. This must also be considered within the context of the increasing diversity of our society, which is reflected within the school environment. Through this Strategy, we will enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational experience. (OFMDFM 2013a: 48)

T:BUC also recommended that all future policy and/or spending commitments should be screened to determine whether they promote sharing, further entrench division or are essentially neutral.

Along the way to policy adoption, there were of course advocacy challenges. We have already discussed the level of indifference or apathy encountered from DENI officials which sometimes verged on indulgence and condescension towards the funders. At times Atlantic Philanthropies interpreted this as the DENI adopting a 'do no harm' stance. 'Let the funders pursue the idealism of shared education and when their financial resources dry up, we will revert to the status quo'. Even as the policy tide turned in favour of shared education, officials were reluctant to allow shared education to become an integral part of the way in which core curriculum subjects were delivered, seeing it more as a distraction. Given their past experience of direct involvement in community relations initiatives, officials could not accept the increasing economic, reconciliation and educational benefits emerging from the research evidence. The minister was much more willing to see and accept the merits of shared education, after which officials followed suit. In addition, the integrated education movement launched a bitter attack on shared education feeling under threat from the concept. One critic, for example, described shared education as 'segregation with a smiley mask' (McEvoy 2015: 7) while another claimed it was 'an expensive diversion in the current economic climate which invests in separate schooling rather than tackling what is a de facto segregated system' (Smith 2014: 4). The regional newspaper (the *Belfast Telegraph*), a long-term supporter of integrated education, has been scathing in its criticism, typical of which is this editorial:

> Whatever people's views on education, and whether in this day and age we should have State and Catholic schools, it is obvious that this new, soft and touchy-feely world of shared education is little more than a sham that is supported by elements in academia and powerful benefactors. Shared education is a fine-sounding concept, but it can mean as much or as little as people want it to mean. Even the proposed shared campuses will do little

> more than underline the divisions, whereas integrated education provides what it claims to offer, namely the education of children in the classroom together … Northern Ireland seems incapable in so many ways of moving on from its divisions, and the fad of shared education will not solve the problem of our children being divided. (*Belfast Telegraph* 2015: 23)

The argument from the integrated movement is essentially that shared education does not dismantle the architecture of separate schools and, as a consequence, institutionalises segregation. What this fails to recognise is that parents have opted (in the main) not to send their children to integrated schools, based on a preference for higher performing schools and one route to a more reconciled society is for children to learn together while still retaining their separate identities. Moreover, the Catholic-maintained school system has a high reputation for performance in secondary schools, and at primary-school level parents opt to send their children to local schools for convenience. Since many areas are residentially segregated, this simply reinforces a parallel system of education. While some schools involved in shared education may eventually move to fully integrated schools, many are not yet ready for such a move. Hence, shared education focuses on educational attainment with parental buy-in and may result organically, and over time, in integration for some schools.

Policy Implementation

A key element in mainstreaming shared education was Atlantic Philanthropies' move to partner with government under the Delivering Social Change (DSC) framework launched by the First Minister in March 2012. Specifically this initiative is designed to tackle multi-generational poverty and to improve children's health, wellbeing, educational and life opportunities, thereby breaking the long-term cycle of multi-generational problems. Delivering Social Change involves a small number of cross-cutting strategic themes which aim to make a significant difference and is additional to existing work within government departments. Atlantic Philanthropies advocated successfully for a Shared Education Signature Project (SESP) under this initiative, with the following aims:

1. To scale-up the level of shared education across Northern Ireland, drawing on the experience of the SEP which has been running since 2007.

2. To mainstream shared education using a monetary shared education incentive which could become part of the revised funding formula for schools in the future.
3. To improve education and reconciliation outcomes in schools working collaboratively.
   (OFMDFM 2013b)

This is a £25 m project being delivered over a four-year period (2014/2015–2017/2018) with combined funding from three sources: Atlantic Philanthropies (£10 m); the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (£10 m); and, the DENI (£5 m). Significantly, this was the first time that the DENI had made a financial commitment to shared education. The programme is targeted at 65 % of all schools in Northern Ireland (approximately 760 schools from nursery to post-primary levels), ranging from schools which previously had irregular cross-community contact with each other (e.g. sporting events, joint school trips), through to those with extensive collaboration arrangements in place (e.g. joint curriculum arrangements, shared teaching, combined staff development days). The remaining 35 % of schools who have been working in isolation, sometimes by dint of their rural geography and/or location in single-identity areas, will be targeted by a European Peace IV initiative, due to launch in Autumn 2015, of which shared education is one component (with an estimated budget of €45 m).

The SESP is informed by the learning from Atlantic's previous SEP pilot projects and hence its implementation takes into account on-the-ground practicalities (e.g. joint timetabling, ensuring community parental support, preparing children for shared classes, and so on). Schools applying to become part of the SESP were therefore advised in the development of their collaborative programmes to consider the following:

- Schools are at differing starting points on their journey to embedding Shared Education. It is important, therefore, that schools clearly identify the baseline both within individual schools and of the partnership.
- High quality programmes provide opportunities for shared curricular learning experiences which directly support the delivery of the curriculum.
- The professional development of teachers in order to improve the quality of sharing is important. Schools need to consider professional

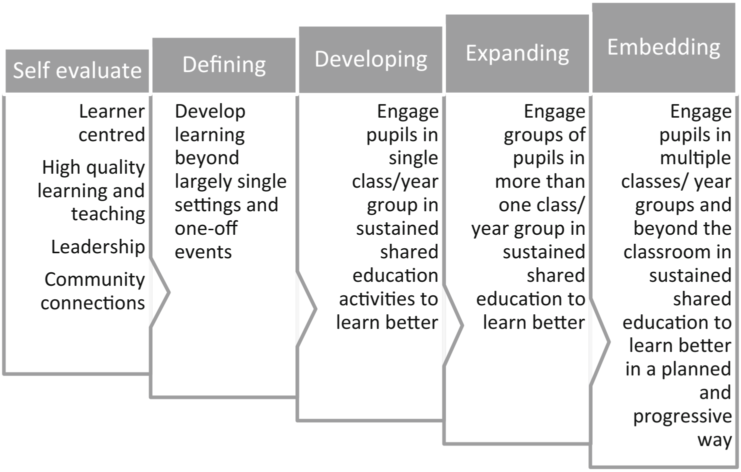
Self evaluate
Learner centred
High quality learning and teaching
Leadership
Community connections
Defining
Develop learning beyond largely single settings and one-off events
Developing
Engage pupils in single class/year group in sustained shared education activities to learn better
Expanding
Engage groups of pupils in more than one class/ year group in sustained shared education to learn better
Embedding
Engage pupils in multiple classes/ year groups and beyond the classroom in sustained shared education to learn better in a planned and progressive way

Fig. 3.5 ETI shared education self-evaluation framework

> development opportunities which support the development of leadership approaches to sharing and collaboration.
>
> - Programmes should provide active encouragement for the development of support networks including parents, Boards of Governors and opportunities to engage with diverse voices within the local and wider community.
> - The aim in developing the programme should be for the extent, frequency, and continuity of meaningful shared contact between peer groups within the partnership to increase within the funded period. (Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards 2015: 8)

This advice was aimed at establishing where schools located themselves (as a baseline measurement) on a self-assessment shared education framework devised by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) (see Fig. 3.5). Thereafter, through a series of interventions the aim is to embed shared education across a spectrum which ranges from defining, through developing and expanding, to embedding shared education (Education and Training Inspectorate 2014b).[7]

[7] At the time of writing (September 2015) some 300 schools are participating in the Shared Education Signature project.

Typically at the 'defining stage', schools identified the need to develop learning beyond predominantly single settings and one-off events and for pupils to be included more fully in the learning environment through experiential and meaningful shared learning. Typically at the 'embedding stage,' partnership schools engaged pupils in multiple classes/year groups, and beyond the classroom, in sustained shared education so as to learn better in a planned and progressive way.

At the same time as the implementation of the SESP, the DENI launched a consultation document entitled: *Sharing Works: a Policy for Shared Education* (DENI 2015). This draft policy document brings together several aspects of the underpinning work conducted by Atlantic Philanthropies through its Shared Education Programme: the research evidence base, ways to embed and sustain shared education and proposals to legislate for collaborative learning.

The policy document summarises and endorses the evidence base (generated largely through the work of Atlantic Philanthropies) as follows:

> I. The social case—improving societal well-being by promoting a culture of mutual understanding through significant, purposeful and regular engagement and interaction in learning between pupils from different community backgrounds and between schools and their communities. As a society emerging from conflict, building a strong and shared community is a key objective for government. Improving attitudes amongst young people is critical to achieving this objective. Against the background of a segregated education system, shared education is a crucial way to break down barriers, nurture and improve community relations.
>
> II. The education case—improving access for learners to a wider choice of subjects encompassing the full range of the curriculum; increasing access to specialist teaching and to modern facilities; and facilitating the sharing of ideas and good practice between education providers. It is also clear that participation enables pupils to develop a greater sense of their own identity and a capacity to articulate their views and opinions with a better understanding and confidence in the accuracy of what they say.
>
> III. The economic case—making more effective and efficient use of limited resources to improve value for money. (DENI 2015: 5)

Going forward, the Minister and DENI set out the policy aims for shared education as follows:

> To encourage and facilitate collaborative working across educational providers, on a cross sectoral basis, to deliver educational and social benefits to learners, promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion. (DENI 2015: 13)

The DENI also set out its intentions on the implementation of the Sharing Works policy. These included the Minister's pledge to bring forward a Shared Education Bill which will provide a statutory definition of shared education and provide a power to encourage and facilitate shared education. This is a hugely significant commitment and demonstrates that shared education has moved from the margins of the policy debate, funded by external stakeholders, to become a statutory commitment by DENI. Also significant is the Minister's intention to embed shared education into how DENI delivers education policy in Northern Ireland. The policy document *Sharing Works* points out:

> Whilst a significant number of pilot projects have taken place with external funding support, the Department wants, in the longer term, to see shared education not as an 'add on' or optional enrichment activity but as a normal and common experience for all young people firmly embedded within the ethos of each school. Consequently, DENI will use the learning from both the Delivering Social Change and Peace IV projects to determine how best to support educational establishments in offering shared education in the longer term from 2018 onwards. (DENI 2015: 17)

The proposed Shared Education Bill offers a definition of shared education as: 'the education together of (a) those of different religious belief or political opinion, and (b) those who are experiencing significant socio-economic deprivation and those who are not, which is secured by the working together and co-operation of two or more relevant providers.' The Bill also proposes that named bodies[8] are given the statutory power to 'encourage and facilitate shared education' (Shared Education Bill, 9/12/2014 12:20:9].

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[8] The named bodies are: the Department of Education Northern Ireland; the Education Authority; the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS); the Youth Council for Northern Ireland; and the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment.

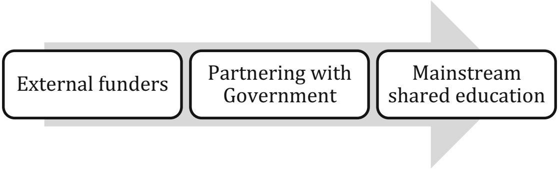

Fig. 3.6 Mainstreaming shared education

So, how did the work of Atlantic Philanthropies progress shared education in Northern Ireland? Through the conceptual lens of problem definition, agenda setting, policy advocacy, adoption and implementation, we have attempted to show how a key external stakeholder moved from funding interventions through working in partnership with government to mainstreaming shared education (see Fig. 3.6). The policy journey was bumpy, unpredictable and fraught with difficulties in gaining departmental buy-in. As external funders, Atlantic Philanthropies and the IFI were much more willing than statutory bodies to take risks—taking an attitude of ‘let the flowers bloom’, They do not reprimand principals, teachers or schools for ‘failures’ but appreciated the creativity and innovation involved, some of which inevitably failed. Through pilot work with schools, conducted in the shared education programme, they did the ‘heavy lifting’ so that the government could come in on the back of this and learn from their work. These pilots encouraged innovation, creativity and imagination among teachers, inspiring them to do things that they had never tried before. School principals offered real leadership within their schools when it would have been easier to acquiesce to the status quo. Change that goes to the heart of how pupils are educated in Northern Ireland is sensitive; it risks parental backlash and opprobrium from school managing authorities, who were at best neutral on shared education from the outset and, at worst, perceived it as threatening their ethos. External funders also brought huge resources in the form of research and evidence-gathering, as they invested in robust data-gathering and analysis well beyond the sometimes formulaic requirements of monitoring and evaluation.

Atlantic Philanthropies’ strategy on shared education involved building capacity and momentum from the bottom up, through direct engagement with schools as the delivery agents, as opposed to the school managing authorities and the Department of Education. Through a critical mass of involved schools, Atlantic Philanthropies built a case for shared education that could not be ignored based on the assumption that systemic change and mainstreaming does not happen unless rooted in the wider school community (parents, teachers, governors and pupils). The change process was not sequential and the focus on educational outcomes took on a more prominent role as the shared education programme evolved. To have involved DENI at the outset would have been counterproductive. Better to present them with evidence of pilot work on the ground and encourage grantees and participants to advocate for change—the most powerful advocates in the process became school principals in schools where shared education operated. Yet challenges remain.

Cairney (2012: 34–5), for example, highlights problems associated with policy implementation. Having both policy and legislation on shared education in place has been a huge achievement for Atlantic Philanthropies and the IFI, but there can be an ‘implementation gap’—the difference between the expectations of policy-makers and the actual policy outcomes. Cairney (citing Hogwood and Gunn 1984) attributes implementation failure to three main factors: *bad execution*, when a policy is not carried out as intended; *bad policy*, when it is carried out but fails to have the desired effect; and *bad luck*, when it is carried out correctly but is undermined by factors beyond the control of the policymakers. For external funders, handing over their shared education ‘baby’ has been difficult, and its adoptive parents (the Education Authority) may not exhibit the same ‘tenderness’, but this is the price of mainstreaming. There is a concern that officials simply see shared education as ‘yet another initiative’ in a congested policy arena that is constantly shifting and do not have the same consuming passion for change as external stakeholders. That said, Atlantic Philanthropies and the IFI consider shared education to have been a significant success in that it has created a sustainable systemic change in education, for so long a ‘wicked’ and intractable issue in Northern Ireland and a stumbling block to peacebuilding.

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CHAPTER 4

Shared Spaces and Services

Problem Definition

In Chap. 3 we explored the concept of shared education. In this chapter we consider the idea of shared spaces or, put differently, the concept of contested spaces in which communities ‘claim’ territory. In fact, one of the difficulties in creating the conditions for shared education is the polarisation of space and (social) housing in Northern Ireland. In a damning indictment of the peace process, a consultation document written in 2003 and aimed at developing a policy on ‘a shared future’, noted that: violence at interfaces between communities continued to affect lives, property, business and public services; there had been little change in the extent of intercommunity friendship patterns; and people’s lives continued to be shaped by community division (Office of the Minister and Deputy First Minister 2003). In addition, the Community Relations Council stated (in 2009) that around 90 % of children attended either Protestant (controlled) or Catholic (maintained) schools; more than 70 % of social housing estates were 90 % single-community occupied; and interface barriers between communities, or so called peace walls, had multiplied in the Belfast area alone there were 88 security and segregation barriers (Community Relations Council 2009).

Despite the fact that the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement (1998: 18) called for ‘the promotion of a culture of tolerance at every level of society, including initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education and mixed housing’, little had changed. In the (2005) policy document

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A Shared Future, the tone of the Westminster (direct rule) government of that time was both normative and emphatic:

> Separate but equal is not an option. Parallel living and the provision of parallel services are unsustainable both morally and economically.… No one is arguing for an artificially homogeneous Northern Ireland and no one will be asked to suppress or give up their chosen identity. However, the costs of a divided society, whilst recognising, of course, the very real fears of people around safety and security considerations, are abundantly clear … (OFMDFM 2005: 15).

To illustrate the consequences of segregation, an empirical study was commissioned by the (direct rule) government to consider the financial cost of the Northern Ireland divide (Deloitte Consulting 2007). The research concluded that an additional £1.5 bn per annum was being spent on public services as compared to a similar region where such segregation did not exist. Set within the context of a £10.5 bn devolved budget this is a major drain on public resources.

A more recent analysis of residential segregation is available from the 2011 census data, which captured patterns of housing in the (then) 582 local government wards. The data showed that the percentage of single identity wards (or those with 80 % + of one religion) had declined from 55 % to 37 % which, at face value, is positive news; however, the research cautioned against assuming that mixed wards were integrated—they can be self-segregated at street level (Shuttleworth and Lloyd 2013 reported in Nolan 2014). Overall, Shuttleworth and Lloyd (2013: 58) show from their work on the 2011 census data that there has been ‘a small but clear decrease in residential segregation during the first decade of the 21st century’.

Policy commitments by the devolved government to create a shared society are contained in the documents *Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities* (Department of Justice 2012) and *Together: Building a United Community* (T:BUC) (OFMDFM 2013a). The former document, issued by the Department of Justice, recognised that the segregation could not be tackled through addressing community safety concerns alone. It argued that ‘change is most likely to progress where it comes from within communities, but communities should be facilitated to see the benefit of such change … shared spaces and wider investment in employment and services accessible to all are key parts in reducing the impact and number of interfaces over time’ (Department of Justice 2012: 28).

The policy document T:BUC points out that because of the make-up and demography of Northern Ireland society, young people can grow up without substantive opportunities to meet someone from a different tradition, cultural background or political opinion. It notes: ‘the segregation in housing and our education system, physical divisions and invisible lines of separation that exist in both urban and rural settings can all act as barriers to meaningful sharing experiences’ (OFMDFM 2013b: 34). Shirlow and Murtagh (2006: 90) described a number of social factors which impacted on the nature of segregation in Northern Ireland—in particular, interface communities where Catholic and Protestant communities abutted. Few people worked and travelled in areas dominated by the ‘other’ community for fear of being attacked. In some cases people wanted to ‘support’ their own community by spending money therein—shopping elsewhere could be seen as being disloyal. In addition, ‘there is a real sense of prejudice and a desire to reduce the potential for contact with the “other” community’. People therefore feel safe living in their ‘own’ communities, which have become self-sufficient through duplicated public services (schools, leisure centres, health clinics, and so on). This, in turn, leads to a reluctance to shop and work outside their immediate areas. Their economic circumstances, since there is a high incidence of social deprivation in interface communities, will significantly limit their capacity to move to mixed areas. People have also developed strong neighbourhood and family bonds within segregated communities and may be reluctant to sever these kinship connections. Since the whole *raison d’être* for many of the political parties is based on ethno-national divisions, any blurring of these boundaries could negatively impact on their support base.

Yet, people continuously express a preference for living in more mixed communities (Knox 2011). In the most recent Northern Ireland Life and Times survey,[1] respondents were asked ‘if you had a choice, would you prefer to live in a neighbourhood with people of only your own religion, or in a mixed-religion neighbourhood?’ Some 70 % expressed a preference for a mixed area, with only 25 % preferring an ‘own religion’ area (Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey results 2014). To facilitate an expressed preference for a shared society, T:BUC argued that tackling segregation should include:

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[1] The 2014 Northern Ireland Life and Times survey sample size was 1210 respondents aged 18 or over selected using systematic random sampling from the Postcode Address File (PAF) and the data were collected between September and December 2014.

- Building capacity across the community and developing social capital within society which requires continued investment by Government and community partners. This investment in building relationships and community infrastructure is vital in ensuring that individuals, groups and organisations seeking to tackle segregation are well equipped to do so.
- Addressing fears and lack of trust within and between sections of society is fundamental to building a shared, reconciled and united community, and empowering people to build relationships that will transcend barriers and tackle segregation.
- The need for more co-ordinated and shared service delivery models. In working towards our vision of a united community, we are convinced that by developing opportunities for shared service provision and by enhancing those opportunities already available, we can change the dynamic of our society by facilitating reconciliation and promoting greater sharing between all sections of our community.

(OFMDFM 2013a: 65, 78, and 83)

Well before the publication of the policy documents *Building Safer*, *Shared and Confident Communities* and T:BUC, Atlantic Philanthropies had recognised the need for community-based investment as a potential model of peacebuilding in Northern Ireland. At the heart of their interventions were the three issues identified above: building social capital, particularly in the marginalised communities which had suffered most from political violence and social deprivation; tackling fears and lack of trust, primarily in those areas which manifest the worst extremes of distrust—interface communities; and the real need for high-quality shared services in areas which had been neglected by statutory organisations during the conflict and where duplicate public service provision and under-investment abounded. In short, Atlantic's social justice mandate was to work in those areas which were the most socially deprived and exhibited the worst features of segregation, or using Aiken's framework (from Chap. 1), 'to ameliorate structural inadequacies'. These featured writ large at interface communities.

Agenda-Setting

One of the ways in which Atlantic Philanthropies contributed to setting the policy agenda was to offer evidence that existing government policies to tackle multifaceted problems in disadvantaged areas were failing. In June 2003, the government (under Direct Rule ministers) launched a policy document entitled *People and Place: a Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal* (Department for Social Development 2003). This long-term (over-ten-year) strategy targeted those communities throughout Northern Ireland suffering the highest levels of deprivation. Neighbourhood renewal is a cross-government strategy, led by the Department for Social Development, and aims to bring together the work of all government departments in partnership with local people to tackle disadvantage and deprivation in all aspects of everyday life. The purpose of the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme was therefore to reduce the social and economic inequalities that characterise the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland. It aimed to do so by making a long-term commitment to communities to work in partnership with the Department for Social Development to identify and prioritise needs and co-ordinate interventions designed to address the underlying causes of poverty. The programme had four key elements:

- Community renewal: to develop confident communities that are capable of and committed to improving the quality of life in the most deprived neighbourhoods.
- Economic renewal: to develop economic activity in the most deprived neighbourhoods and connect them to the wider urban economy.
- Social renewal: to improve social conditions for the people who live in the most deprived neighbourhoods through better co-ordinated public services and the creation of safer environments.
- Physical renewal: to help create attractive, safe sustainable environments in the most deprived neighbourhoods.

In a seven-year period (2003–2010) some £140 m was spent on the neighbourhood renewal programme to improve social, economic and physical conditions. In addition, there was a £77.5 m spend in 2008–2011 on urban regeneration projects which included the transformation of the city centre of Derry/Londonderry, the building of the new Peace Bridge over the river Foyle, the Belfast Streets Ahead project (implemented to transform Belfast City Centre) and major public realm improvements (Northern Ireland Executive 2011a: 17).

These resources were targeted using specified selection criteria. Neighbourhoods in the most deprived 10 % of wards across Northern Ireland were identified using multiple deprivation measures.[2] Following extensive consultation, this resulted in a total of 36 areas, and a population of approximately 280,000 (one person in six in Northern Ireland), being targeted for intervention. The areas included: 15 in Belfast, six in the north -west (including four in the city of Derry/Londonderry) and 15 in other towns and cities across Northern Ireland. Was this government intervention successful for those living in socially deprived areas?

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[2] The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (2010) provides information on seven types or 'domains' of deprivation and an overall multiple deprivation measure

A limited range of data are available to build a picture of changes in the quality of life over time between those living in neighbourhood renewal areas (NRAs) and the rest of Northern Ireland (non-NRAs). The basket of indicators could be more comprehensive in depicting what constitutes 'quality of life', but we are limited to the available data over the timeframe relevant to this book. Six key indicators were selected (in no order of importance) as follows:

(a) Education: The percentage of pupils achieving five GCSE A*–C grades, including English and Maths in the respective areas (neighbourhood renewal areas and non-neighbourhood renewal areas).
(b) Social welfare 1: Disability Living Allowance recipients as a percentage of the population in the respective areas.
(c) Social welfare 2: Jobseeker's Allowance recipients as a percentage of those eligible to work in the respective areas. The Neighbourhood Renewal Programme refers to these two social welfare indicators as measures of 'worklessness'.
(d) Mental health: Suicides per 100,000 population in the respective areas.
(e) Health: Life expectancy (males) per 100,000 population in the respective areas.
(f) Crime: Recorded crime (offences) as percentage of the population in respective areas.

The data available were limited by the method used, that of collation of information from official sources using neighbourhood renewal areas as the unit of analysis. Hence the results were built from the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS) database, developed by the

comprising a weighted combination of the seven domains as follows: Income Deprivation 25 %; Employment Deprivation 25 %; Health Deprivation and Disability 15 %; Education Skills and Training Deprivation 15 %; Proximity to Services 10 %; Living Environment 5 %; and, Crime and Disorder 5 %.

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). In selecting these measures we have attempted to be consistent with the outcome indicators for the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme, which officials categorise as education, worklessness, health and crime (Department for Social Development 2011: 138).

Our findings show that aside from educational performance, the quality of life of those living in neighbourhood renewal areas was declining relative to non-neighbourhood renewal areas as judged by the above indicators (Knox 2015b). In terms of educational performance there has been a marginal improvement since 2007/2008 in both NRAs and non-NRAs but less than 1 % reduction in the performance gap over that period. The number of Disability Living Allowance recipients has grown in both areas since 1998 but the numbers receiving DLA has also widened between NRAs and non-NRAs. The number of those receiving Jobseeker's Allowance have increased in both areas but the gap has widened by almost 1 %. The largest difference in NRAs and non-NRAs since 1999 is the number of suicides recorded in the former. The difference in life expectancy for males living in NRAs relative to non-NRAs continues to increase, some 6.1 years more for those living in the latter. Although overall there has been a decreasing trend in recorded crime (offences) since 1998, the performance gap between areas has increased between NRAs and non-NRAs. It is of course true to say that a more comprehensive basket of indicators would help to inform this analysis, and some of the data (e.g., education performance) have not been collated in the presented format over a sufficiently long period of time. In short, however, there has been no peace dividend for those living in the most deprived areas of Northern Ireland. In fact their quality of life appears to be declining further vis-à-vis their non-NRA neighbours. Government policies have therefore been failing those in marginalised areas, including those interface communities most impacted by the conflict and which are highly segregated in their composition.

To illustrate the impact of these statistics in practice, one interviewee from an interface case study area (Suffolk and Lenadoon, which we will examine in detail below) said:

> We suffer from very high levels of unemployment and low skills. Without jobs the areas become rich breeding ground for dissident republicans and loyalist paramilitaries. People in interface areas feel that their communities haven't changed at all since the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and there is no delivery by government. So, for example, people see a drug dealer in

> their street and the police are not coming into the area and they say 'there's a boy over there (paramilitary) who can sort out this problem'… The peace dividend is not impacting on people here and they do not feel politicians are representing their interests … things are getting worse. People in Suffolk argue they have no school or youth club now and houses are for sale. This makes social justice issues are really important. As for bigger political issues such as devolution—frankly people don't care. They care about how quickly the police come when they call them, if they come at all.

It is hardly surprising in such circumstances that the issue of peacebuilding in the face of fundamental social and economic problems is seen as marginal. Social justice gains, however, are more likely to be achieved collectively rather than separately since divided societies exacerbate the core problems facing interface communities.

Atlantic Philanthropies' second key contribution to agenda-setting was therefore to highlight issues of poverty, social disadvantage and segregation at interface communities and propose an intervention model in these areas. If their interventions proved effective in interfaces communities, as the *locus extremis*, then they could work anywhere in Northern Ireland. In identifying potential intervention sites, Atlantic drew on the research work of a prominent voluntary organisation working in this area. The Belfast Interface Project (BIP) is a voluntary body set up in 1995 to identify the major issues of concern to interface communities in Belfast and assist in finding effective means of addressing these issues. According to BIP (2012) there were 65 interfaces in Belfast alone, which they defined as 'any boundary line between a predominantly Protestant/unionist area and a Catholic area'. They clustered interfaces into 13 different groupings of separate but related instances of defensively used space within Belfast (Belfast Interface Project 2012). The Department of Justice, on the other hand, counts only those structures which have been erected by statutory organisations to separate the communities for their safety and indicate that there are 53 across Northern Ireland (Nolan 2014). Separately, the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) indicates that there are 100 'peace' walls or physical barriers dividing communities and has put in place a programme of support for communities that 'have expressed their willingness and readiness to begin building levels of trust required before starting the process of engaging with statutory authorities about removing barriers' (International Fund for Ireland 2015b: 11).

In a study of segregation in Belfast, Shirlow and Murtagh (2006: 58) note that interfaces 'both divorce and regulate intercommunity relationships, and in so doing they compress space into sites that become notable places of violence and resistance'. They argue that interface areas vary in form and style—some are denoted by physical barriers, some by flags, emblems and wall murals but all will most certainly be known and understood by those who live within segregated communities. Such is the pervasiveness of these barriers that it is difficult to estimate the numbers of them which exist, as outlined above. The (former) Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council explains the perverse rationale for their existence as follows:

> At the end of the day, an interface is where two groups of people meet, face to face—but never as friends. The message of interfaces is a stark one of 'us' and 'them'… Interfaces are the hard evidence that conflict is not really over yet. In fact most of what we call interfaces are the direct result of political battles and the violence that arose from them. The logic of interfaces is that 'we' hold out against 'them'. Any change in the map is a victory for one side or the other. (Morrow 2008: 1–3)

Social geographers criticise academics for ignoring segregated communities as an important element of any academic analysis in support of peace-building efforts in Northern Ireland:

> In a sense they (segregated communities) do not display the 'rationality' that academics require to provide corroboration to them or to espouse their cause. Only groups with a 'progressive' perspective, such as those who promote bourgeois notions of community relations, have tended to be deemed worthy of examination … In recent times the choice of 'safe' groups to study has led to a failure to appreciate that territorial disagreements are accompanied by forms of spatial confinement, closure and violence. (Shirlow and Murtagh 2006: 172)

That said, several academic studies have highlighted the significant policy costs of living in an interface community (Boal 1969; Poole and Doherty 1996; Murtagh 2002; Belfast Interface Project 2005). These costs include: higher levels of socio-economic deprivation, political violence and killings; lack of investment potential due to instability; poorer quality of life for residents; an exodus from the areas for those who can afford such an option; loss of community capacity to reinvest in improvement; and duplication of facilities and services to provide for two separate communities. Jarman (2006, 2008) summarised ways in which interface community workers have responded to interface violence, and attempts to draw lessons of good practice from this which could be shared. He noted the importance of ongoing communication within and between the communities and key statutory organisations, in particular at times of tension and conflict. He highlighted the significance of developing personal relationships with people from 'the other side', and building and sustaining trust through mechanisms such as cross-community networks. Most importantly, however, Jarman drew attention to the work of young people as follows:

> Many community activists noted the prominent role played by young people in sustaining tensions at interfaces. They also highlighted the importance of encouraging young people to take more responsibility to become part of the solution rather than seeing them simply as a problem. (Jarman 2006: 42)

The correlation between interface areas and high levels of social deprivation can be seen in Table 4.1, which examines the 13 interface clusters in Belfast, locates them (approximately, given their spread) into electoral wards and then identifies the social deprivation ranking of these areas using the multiple deprivation index. This relationship is confirmed in research conducted by Gormley-Heenan et al. (2013) on peace walls which suggests there is a correlation between peace walls and the local communities' ability to access services, their lower levels of educational attainment and their high levels of unemployment.

Atlantic Philanthropies' theory of change in addressing the issues of shared spaces and services therefore began by targeting interface communities where deprivation, segregation and poor-quality (duplicate) public services were most evident. A key element in this change process is to directly involve interface communities in identifying their common needs and ensure their ownership of, and commitment to, the process of change. This aspect of the theory of change adopted by Atlantic Philanthropies draws on the 'contact hypothesis', which argues that there are four conditions for successful contact between members of opposing groups: equal status between the groups, intergroup co-operation, common or superordinate goals and support from relevant authorities (Allport 1954). The superordinate goal in this case is that both communities living in interface areas suffer similar levels of social deprivation and poor public services. Tackling these issues collectively offers the prospect of establishing trust and creates a stronger cross-community advocacy platform to create systemic change. The theory of change adopted by Atlantic Philanthropies is set out in Fig. 4.1.

Table 4.1 Interface clusters and social deprivation

Interface clusters in Belfast	*Interface areas*	*Electoral ward locations*	*Specific ward*	*Multiple deprivation ranking (2010)*[a]
Cluster 1	Suffolk-Lenadoon	Stewartstown Road (Carnanmore Park)	Collin Glen	13
Cluster 2	Upper Springfield Road	Springfield Road (Springmartin Road)	Highfield	78
Cluster 3	Fall-Shankill	Cupar Way	Shankill	4
Cluster 4	The Village-Westlink	Glenmachan Street	Blackstaff	42
Cluster 5	Inner Ring	Carrick Hill (Millfield and Frederick Street)	Falls, Dunclug, New Lodge	2
Cluster 6	Duncairn Gardens	Duncairn Gardens	Duncairn	14
Cluster 7	Limestone Road-Alexandra Park	Limestone Road (Newington Street)	Water Works	16
Cluster 8	Lower Oldpark-Manor Road	Manor Street Rosapenna Street	Crumlin	6
Cluster 9	Crumlin Road-Ardoyne-Glenbryn	Woodvale (Mountainview Parade and Ardoyne Road)	Glencairn	31
Cluster 10	Ligoniel	Squires Hill	Legoniel	56
Cluster 11	Whitewell Road-Longlands	Longlands Road	Valley	94
Cluster 12	Short Strand-Inner East	Mountpottinger Road	Ballymacarrett	18
Cluster 13	Ormeau Road and the Markets	Vernon Street	Shaftesbury	22

Calculated using data from: BIP Cluster Interface Project and NINIS multiple deprivation measures (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency)

[a] The multiple deprivation ranking shows: 1 = most deprived electoral ward in Northern Ireland through to 582 = least socially deprived electoral ward in Northern Ireland

POLICY INTERVENTIONS

Atlantic Philanthropies adopted a two-stage approach to shared spaces and services. The first stage involved the selection of, and work with, one interface community (Suffolk and Lenadoon), after due diligence work, as a microcosm of the wider problem. As an external stakeholder, drawing on the lessons learned from this in-depth work collaboration, Atlantic Philanthropies then moved to partner with government (the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister) in a much wider Contested Space/Interface Programme.

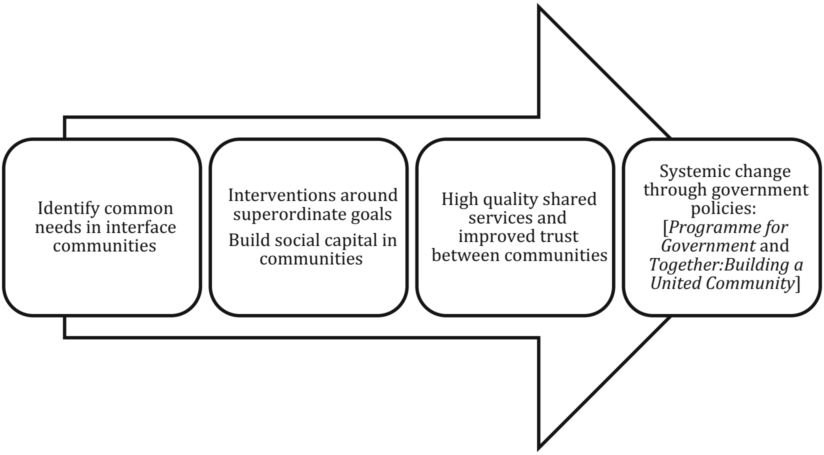
Identify common needs in interface communities
Interventions around superordinate goals
Build social capital in communities
High quality shared services and improved trust between communities
Systemic change through government policies: [*Programme for Government* and *Together:Building a United Community*]

Fig. 4.1 Theory of change: shared spaces and services

STAGE 1: SUFFOLK AND LENADOON INTERFACE GROUP (SLIG)

The Lenadoon Estate is a public sector housing scheme with over 9000 residents situated on the outskirts of West Belfast, on the boundary between Belfast and Lisburn City Councils. The estate was built during the mid-1960s, just before the outbreak of the conflict. Housing tenure was originally mixed-religion, but, as civil unrest spread, the nature and development of the estate suffered significantly from population shift. A largely Protestant population living in the lower part of the estate (Lenadoon Avenue and Horn Drive) moved out during the early 1970s and their homes were filled with Catholics fleeing sectarian strife from other parts of Belfast. These population shifts created a fragmented community with a common adversary—sectarian violence. A Lenadoon community worker described the evolving situation thus:

> As a result of the conflict many local people were killed and scores more injured in incidents in the area. Hundreds of local people were imprisoned and this placed a heavy burden on the community … Despite this adversity, people showed a strong attachment to the area and a determination to work collectively to improve the estate and challenge the neglect of successive governments and statutory bodies. (Lenadoon Community Forum 2003: 5)

As Lenadoon became the refuge of Catholics from other parts of Belfast, Protestant families living on the estate were forced to either move out because of sectarianism and intimidation or shift to the Suffolk estate (at the lower end of Lenadoon and the south side of the Stewartstown Road), which became an enclave for Protestants living in West Belfast. As Catholic families grew in numbers on the Lenadoon estate, Suffolk became the repository for Protestants who had chosen to remain—in effect, a small commune of public houses with around 1000 , surrounded on all sides by their Catholics neighbours.

This managed 'security solution' in the early 1970s created an interface area between Lenadoon and Suffolk estates (the boundary of which is Stewartstown Road) which endures to the present day and iseuphemistically known as 'the peace line'. One Lenadoon resident at the time described it thus:

> By 1976–7, most Protestant residents in Lenadoon had moved across the Stewartstown Road into Suffolk, while their houses had been resettled by Catholic families burnt or intimidated out of other parts of Belfast. And that's when the Road became the permanent interface, the peace line. And for most Catholics this road had become somewhere you didn't cross, if you could avoid [it]. ((Hall 2007: 12)

Both the Suffolk and Lenadoon estates suffer from significant economic disadvantage, as indicated by their location on the multiple deprivation index (Table 4.1, ranked thirteenth most deprived ward out of 582 wards in Northern Ireland). Community development groups evolved in both areas to tackle social disadvantage and became affiliated to their respective umbrella groups. Lenadoon Community Forum was established in 1992 to co-ordinate the community development needs of some 20 member groups on the estate. Suffolk Community Forum was set up in 1994 'to work towards creating a stable, secure and confident community in Suffolk' (Insight Consulting 2006: 3). Both forums subsequently sought to co-operate in areas of common interest. The spirit of the early joint meetings in 1995/1996 was to discuss 'things we think we have in common, the difficulties between us and how we can be better neighbours' (O'Halloran and McIntyre 1999: 5).

From these early informal meetings, as trust developed, a formally constituted Suffolk and Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG) was established in 1999. An important aspect of building trust was recognition by SLIG that both communities faced common problems. The British government reduced and eventually closed community employment schemes (ACE projects) on both sides of the interface; poverty presented itself as a real issue for the two estates; and (SLIG) established protocols to deal with issues (parades, interface violence) during periods of heightened tensions.

The journey towards greater co-operation between Suffolk and Lenadoon encountered a number of setbacks. Wider political problems (the Drumcree parades, the deaths of the Quinn children in Ballymoney) played out in the form of community interface violence within Suffolk and Lenadoon. There were ongoing problems over disputed land and territory. Catholics in Lenadoon pointed to an increasing need for social housing and the existence of vacant publicly owned land available in Suffolk. Residents in Suffolk however perceived this as ‘their land’ which should only be used to enhance housing or community facilities for Protestants. Community activists involved in SLIG also risked a backlash from within their own communities for moving at a pace of shared working inconsistent with the wishes of the majority of people living in both areas. To summarise the evolution of SLIG, researchers involved in interface work in Belfast noted two key points. First, although violence subsided in areas such as West Belfast (and Northern Ireland more generally), this was not tantamount to ‘peace’; rather it emphasised the significant amount of work to be done within communities coming out of years of conflict (the move from negative to positive peace). Second, joint development that results in real and meaningful intercommunity work can be a ‘very slow and frustrating process’ (O’Halloran and McIntyre 1999: 27).

The International Fund for Ireland financed an initial project in 2001 under the auspices of SLIG which supported youth and community work in both areas for a three-year period. The project, specifically aimed at conflict management, was conceived as a diversionary programme on a single-identity/community basis, which sought to draw young people away from the interface and direct their energies into productive or recreational activities. The work was crucially important in terms of reducing interface tension and violence. The IFI reinvested for an additional three-year period, which enabled SLIG to employ staff and implement cross-community activities. At the same time, a regeneration project on the peace line (Stewartstown Road) was initiated by the Suffolk Community Group, which identified a semi-derelict building owned by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive as the basis for a joint project. SLIG jointly applied for funding to create a shared space on the site and developed a mixed-use building of 1000 m^2 with retail, office and community space. Such was the success of this venture that a second phase was completed, including a modern childcare facility attracting parents and toddlers from both Suffolk and Lenadoon estates. The residents attribute little of this to support from government in Northern Ireland. As one Lenadoon resident put it:

> The civil service gave us no amount of hassle, putting us through endless hoops and obstacles. They openly called our initiative a ‘white elephant’, questioned what was in it for Lenadoon or Suffolk, and passed the opinion that it wouldn’t be used, it would just stand idle … I remember after we had applied for further funding to develop the project into its second phase, a representative from the Belfast Regeneration Office said at a meeting: ‘you’ve cured the interface, so why would you need more funding?’ As if it was some sort of disease to be ‘cured’! (cited in Hall 2007: 28)

In January 2007, as a direct result of its ongoing collaborative work, SLIG attracted a major investment of £2 m over three years from Atlantic Philanthropies for the implementation of a cross-community SLIG peacebuilding plan to support community-based reconciliation between, and social change in the Suffolk and Lenadoon communities through the promotion of shared services, facilities and public spaces by local people.

Specifically the joint plan comprised four key strands:

(a) Peacebuilding activities: these included shared pre-school provision, transformation of the controlled (Protestant) Suffolk Primary School into an integrated school, a health and women’s development project, a cultural initiative, youth activities and sports development schemes.
(b) Joint advocacy: lobbying government agencies on a joint community basis to address the social and economic needs of Suffolk and Lenadoon and the legacy of the conflict.
(c) Building capacity for peacebuilding: this was to be achieved through community leadership and through widening and deepening the basis of community self-help beyond the established activists who constituted the respective community forums.
(d) Developing shared spaces: by targeting derelict land and premises which could be reclaimed or refurbished as joint community facilities owned and managed by local people from the two communities.

The implementation of the joint peacebuilding plan encountered some difficulties, not least because one of the conditions for successful contact was breached; that of equal status between the groups by dint of disproportionate numbers in the Suffolk (n = 1000) and Lenadoon (n = 9000) communities. Suffolk was drawing from a much smaller pool and true proportionality resulted in unequal numbers in groups from each community. Better, project staff argued, to work in single-identity groups and then encourage a natural progression to mixed events rather than promote the activity as a shared event in the first instance. Atlantic Philanthropies feared foot-dragging in progressing to cross-community work and pushed SLIG to tackle the more difficult cross-community activities quickly.

Staff delivering activities on the ground also encountered some resistance from gatekeepers in each community 'who feel threatened by our work'—people with vested interests in maintaining separateness, who felt that SLIG would be competing against them in the future for limited public funding. Hardliners also attempted to stymie their work in both subtle and overt ways, discouraging young people from participating through their own sectarian attitudes. SLIG staff argued that, despite their best efforts, some of the events attracted fewer numbers than they would have liked due to the lack of a shared space venue. SLIG offices on the Stewartstown Road is perceived as a neutral site but has limited facilities to deliver activities—these consist of a foyer and meeting room which were never intended for running programmes. Using other venues outside the area meant the need for buses and more difficult logistical arrangements.

While a whole range of activities were delivered under the four strands of the joint plan above, there were several 'key moment' experiences or turning points that provide an insight into the success of SLIG's work. The cross-community band (Upper Falls Protestant Flute Band and the Gleann Collann Irish Pipe Band) is one such turning point, now operating under the designation 'brothers in bands'. Both bands played at the launch of SLIG's five-year strategy (September 2008), met regularly and were invited to perform at a Business in the Community event in Hillsborough Castle (February 2009). Given the symbolism associated with bands in Northern Ireland this was a huge step forward which demanded much courage on the part of those involved, some of whom suffered criticisms from within their own communities. The potential for positively influencing young people who see band members as role models in their communities is enormous. If bands are willing to share major cultural events then it takes the sectarianism out of marching, which has long been perceived as reciprocal coat-trailing events by each community. This was very sensitive work but the wider spin-offs were significant. There had been discussions between Suffolk representatives and the West Belfast Partnership Board, the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and West Belfast Safer Neighbourhoods 'to take the perceived sectarianism out of the band competition and move to joint stewarding'. As one interviewee put it:

> The Ulster Defence Association (UDA) throughout Belfast is at a turning point. They need to decide where they are going from here. We have being trying to encourage them by the progress that we have made in Suffolk to come in to the community development process—to move away from the war footing. They are struggling with leadership issues in Sandy Row and the Ormeau Road. If they are willing to use the experience of Suffolk they can show the government that they are serious and this approach could be rolled out across the Province.

The use of sport as a cross-community medium is well known, but SLIG workers were imaginative in their approaches to participation in sports activities. Some examples included interface soccer tournaments involving community youth groups from across all interfaces in Belfast and midnight street soccer which targeted 14–17 year olds after 9.00 p.m. as a diversionary programme. Using of 'circle time activities' to support the personal and social development of young people in Suffolk Primary School; emphasising relationship-building amongst youth; giving senior citizens the opportunity to reminisce about their past and reflect on the future; these were just some of the creative ways in which SLIG staff went about their tasks. They pushed the boundaries of their work in a way which sometimes challenged SLIG's management committee. As one interviewee put it, 'we are moving ahead of the management committee who sometimes feel constrained by their own communities. It's okay for them to agree to things wearing their SLIG hat but much more difficult when they have to go back to their own forums and sell it.'

SLIG workers involved in the area of health and women's development described how they had built the confidence of participants on their programmes through personal development courses. Whilst lack of childcare facilities made it difficult to attract larger numbers, as the popularity of their activities grew (particularly exercise classes marketed as 'bums and tums'!), the shared space venue in SLIG's office was no longer big enough. They moved these classes to Suffolk Community Centre, a move which offer an example of the potential for cross-community participation in perceived single-identity venues. A SLIG worker takes up the story:

> Although we lost some participants as a result of the move to Suffolk Community Centre through fear, importantly others did go down there which was a huge step because they had never been in the centre before. Equally in the Health Fare programme, women from Suffolk felt comfortable enough to walk through the Lenadoon estate. I thought this was fantastic.

SLIG Policy Advocacy

Policy advocacy work took place through a number of mechanisms. A description of each of these follows:

***Strategic Advisory Panel*:** SLIG established a Strategic Advisory Panel comprising 13 key statutory and voluntary organisations (e.g., Northern Ireland Housing Executive, the police, Belfast City Council, Belfast Education and Library Board, Belfast Interface Project) which met for the first time in October 2008 and held quarterly meetings thereafter. The panel worked to ensure joined-up government in the Suffolk-Lenadoon area. Encouraging signs of progress followed on a number of issues. SLIG developed a working relationship with the Equality Commission and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust in order to create pre-employment training as a route into ring-fenced jobs in Suffolk and Lenadoon. SLIG also joined the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's Shared Neighbourhood Programme[3] and the latter invited SLIG to mentor (on a subcontract, funded basis) other interface areas across Northern Ireland. Belfast City Council and the Office of the Minister and Deputy First Minister also invited visitors to Suffolk and Lenadoon as a showcase project—these included a high-profile EU Presidential delegation (led by Hans Gurt) and accompanied by Jim Nicholson (MEP) and Northern Ireland's two junior ministers. As one interviewee put it:

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[3] The Northern Ireland Housing Executive launched the Shared Neighbourhood Programme in August 2008 as a three-year pilot programme. The programme provided grants to enable community organisations to celebrate diversity and bring together people from all backgrounds who live in these areas.

> SLIG has now developed a reputation as being at the cutting edge of peacebuilding work. Our name is recognised out there and we are getting buy-in from the most resistant in the two communities. Our work is also attracting other organisations—for example, the Rural Development Council has been with us (or we with them) a number of times—'imitation is the highest form of flattery'.

The Interface Working Group: This group was set up in 2007 by the Northern Ireland Office and hosted through the Community Relations Council. The Operations Manager of SLIG was invited to join the group, which works in collaboration with key agencies and government departments to explore the future of existing interfaces and avoid the potential for new ones in Belfast. A key output from the work of the group was a policy document entitled *Towards Sustainable Security: Interface Barriers and the Legacy of Segregation in Belfast* (Community Relations Council 2009). The report listed Suffolk and Lenadoon as a cluster interface area in Belfast which offered 'a common platform for engagement on how, when and whether barriers can be removed or altered' (Community Relations Council 2009: 6). The document also promoted the development of a wider strategy which would involve removing existing barriers, preventing the construction of new barriers and, importantly, the regeneration of interface areas across Belfast, as follows:

> Many interface areas have remained depressed and deprived due to the perception of such areas as dangerous and violent and concerns for safety and security. Among the consequences of this has been a lack of desire to live in interface areas, thus facilitating an air of dereliction, and a limited willingness to invest in interface areas, which has impacted on opportunities for employment and wider economic regeneration. (Community Relations Council 2009: 9)

The Interface Working Group stressed that statutory organisations should adopt a common and concerted approach to any local regeneration plans, and include an investment role for the private sector, coming out of the process of community engagement.

***Joint advocacy—building capacity*:** A key aspect of the Suffolk and Lenadoon peacebuilding plan involved building joint advocacy capacity skills, on the basis that there are obvious strengths in working together rather than separately. This approach also acknowledged that there were common social and economic problems which impacted on both communities, and that there was merit in adopting a collective approach to addressing these issues. The two key issues that best illustrate how the two communities jointly advocated are the Suffolk Primary School and Glen Community Complex. Glen Community Complex, the base for Lenadoon Community Forum, was in a serious state of disrepair and needed to be replaced. Suffolk (controlled/Protestant) Primary School was under threat of closure as a result of declining enrolments. At the outset there was a clear perception that these were single-identity issues, but SLIG members jointly advocated and lobbied key decision-makers. Despite concerted efforts to save Suffolk Primary School or transform it into a community facility, the Education Minister closed it in August 2009 owing to declining demographics and an enrolment of only 21 pupils. Notwithstanding the disappointment, one SLIG member pointed out:

> We would not have had a snowball's chance in hell of being at the table with key statutories to influence decisions on the school site if we hadn't the support of Atlantic Philanthropies. If we had the support from statutories during transformation that we now have, I think the decision on the school could well have been different. We have definitely increased our influence with statutory bodies.

The Glen Community Complex, on the other hand, was a significant advocacy success story. SLIG submitted a jointly agreed application to the Special European Programmes Body for PEACE III funding under its initiative Creating Shared Public Spaces, the objective of which is 'to regenerate urban, rural and border areas that appear derelict, segregated, under-used, threatening, and/or unwelcoming and transform them into shared spaces.' The SLIG application attracted a cocktail of funding (Department of Social Development and EU funds, as well as support from Atlantic Philanthropies). The Minister for Social Development opened the £4.5 m new Glen Community Complex in October 2014, which includes a large multi-functional hall which can be used for sports, drama, and concerts, and meeting rooms. Importantly, the complex offers support services for both communities: crèche facilities, an after-school club, healthy living programmes, education and training, family support, counselling and youth services. Glen Community Parent Youth Group, Lenadoon Community Forum, Lenadoon Women's Group and the Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group provide the support services.

Contentious issues: A key element in building capacity to advocate for social change in Suffolk and Lenadoon was to widen the network of those involved in the process and to confront those issues that most divided the two communities (shared spaces, community safety and housing). SLIG enlarged its management committee to bring in outside expertise, but also recognised the value of wider community engagement on contentious issues. Such (housing, parades, policing) are the sensitivities around these matters that they were 'parked' until a level of confidence and trust had been established and the SLIG project had taken root. In November 2008 a contentious issues' residential was held and facilitated by Community Dialogue. One interviewee described the potential for 'a train crash', indicative of the nervousness before the event. In fact, this turned out to be a very successful convening.

Part of the success could be ascribed to the fact that SLIG deliberately invited community representatives who had never engaged in dialogue with those from 'the other side', some of whom were hostile to cross-community work of any kind (and in one case had paramilitary 'connections'). One of the Suffolk participants described it in this way:

> You know the media characterisation of 'Orange Lil' [a loyalist caricature]—well Suffolk's Orange Lil was at the residential. She is the only person I know who openly says: 'I was born a bigot, am proud to be a bigot, and will die a bigot and will never sit in the same room as them ones [Catholics] 'cause they burned me out of my house when I was in Lenadoon'. We deliberately billed the event as 'contentious issues' because we knew it would attract hardliners spoiling for a fight but it didn't happen and there is a commitment to continue what we started. This is a huge shift.

Tackling contentious issues in this way led to the use of conciliatory language and a willingness to seek compromise.

Local services advocacy: There were also initiatives in which SLIG's programme staff built local advocacy capacity. These included the following examples:

- SLIG were represented, through the Health and Women's Development Worker, on the Health and Well-being subcommittee of the West Belfast Partnership Board.
- SLIG's youth staff developed a working relationship with Co-Operation Ireland to deliver a cross-border youth participation

project (Suffolk, Lenadoon and Finglas, Dublin) aimed at building positive relationships and images of young people by addressing common issues.
- One of SLIG's sports staff became a director in the Belfast Community Sports Development Network, a platform that promotes cross-community sports programmes across Belfast.
- SLIG staff conducted or led research on health, youth issues, sports, social mapping, community attitudes to peacebuilding, and housing demand all of which were used to advocate for public policy intervention or change in these areas.

The Operations Manager described the way in which SLIG sought to advocate as follows:

> For SLIG one of the key things is to try to position ourselves so that we can influence public policy. That involves several approaches: using the work of staff on the ground, getting a presence on key groups like the Interface Working Group, and building a good working relationship with the Community Relations Council and Belfast City Council who use SLIG as [a] showcase project and with whom we are very willing to co-operate when they bring visitors to see our work. We want people to know who we are here. All of this shows that we are an organisation with a serious message and not some wee disorganised community group.

Atlantic Philanthropies described the Suffolk-Lenadoon peacebuilding plan as 'an advocacy in-action project'. In other words, delivering a programme of activities on the ground became the basis for advocating for social change. It was clear as the SLIG project unfolded that the day-to-day issues faced by residents of Suffolk and Lenadoon were less about the interface per se and were more concerned with endemic social deprivation, chronic unemployment, inadequate or underfunded public housing stock and the long-term sustainability of their communities. One of SLIG's staff described it in this way:

> I know a wee girl on the Suffolk estate who is struggling to put £5 in the electric meter—that is her major concern and it is not an isolated example. For her it is not about trying to tackle reconciliation goals, about trying to be reconciled with Brenda from, say, Horn Drive. What matters to these people are their daily existence and the welfare of their kids. If we forget about their basic needs then the goals of peacebuilding become too abstract in their lives.

The success of SLIG has therefore been in identifying the common problems that face both communities and trying, through a process of regeneration, to address these issues collectively and realistically. The neglect of statutory organisations in interface areas is clear to see, not least because these are volatile areas in which public-sector workers have sometimes felt threatened and intimidated during the conflict. SLIG's efforts have helped to create a culture of self-help and cross-community endeavour. As one SLIG interviewee described it:

> Regeneration is the foundation of our work. If we had started in 1996 talking about peacebuilding and reconciliation SLIG's work would never have got off the ground, but we deliberately didn't. We talked about economic development, regeneration, longer term community sustainability, and bringing services into the area. Peacebuilding has to have substance—I don't think there are many working people in interface areas who are 'fluffy' and want to hug one another. We have always based our work here on bringing real practical benefits into the two communities which impact on the quality of people's lives through shared services and tangible assets.

The SLIG initiative created a presence and confidence amongst the hard-to-reach and resistant groups in both communities through a very visible programme of activities in health and women's development, youth, sport, pre-school provision and cultural activities. Without these it would have been impossible to advocate for social justice goals. Peacebuilding is much too amorphous for people in deprived communities to grapple with and may well have connotations of political engineering which could be counterproductive.

While the SLIG model had gained policy traction, it remained small-scale and critics were able to argue it was context-specific and lacked transferability given the difficult work and resources involved. Because it did not offer a 'one-size-fits all' approach, nor did it claim to do this, its potential for wider policy leverage remains limited. As in the case study of shared education (outlined in Chap. 3) it became necessary to scale up the learning from SLIG. In other words, Atlantic Philanthropies needed to mainstream the lessons of SLIG and were more likely to be able to do this as a partner with Government than an external funder. As one interviewee put it: 'SLIG punches above its weight with the statutories who see it as an authentic organic model. The challenge is to move them beyond the platitudes of nodding and smiling their approval to a financial commitment and mainstreaming policy'. This opportunity presented itself in the form of the Contested Spaces/Interface Programme, to which we now turn.

Stage 2: Contested Spaces/Interface Programme

The First Minister and Deputy First Minister launched the Contested Spaces/Interface Programme 2011–2015 in March 2011 (Cherry and Knox 2014; Knox and McWilliams 2015). Its key aim was to promote and improve relations between and across disadvantaged contested spaces/interface communities. The initiative afforded these communities opportunities to shape and influence how children and youth services were provided in a way that encouraged reconciliation, increased participation of communities in policymaking and contributed to better outcomes for children, young people and families.

The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and Atlantic Philanthropies jointly funded the programme. It was a £4 m four-year programme in which each funder made a 50 % contribution. To be eligible to participate in the programme, groups had to form a consortium which included at least one community organisation from each side of the contested space/interface. Groups also had to be engaged in activities within the top 20 % of the most deprived wards as measured by the 2010 multiple deprivation measures. In short, this partnership between Atlantic Philanthropies and government offered the opportunity to take the policy learning from SLIG and apply it at the level of Northern Ireland.

The Contested Spaces/Interface Programme focused on four areas of support:

(a) Early years and parenting programmes that concentrated on young people, children and parents living in contested space/interface communities.
(b) Shared spaces programmes targeted and delivered through schools operating in contested space/interface communities.
(c) Interface youth engagement programmes aimed at young adults, including those not currently engaging with youth providers.
(d) Shared neighbourhood programmes targeted at families living in contested space/interface communities.

Interventions across these four areas involved funding nine projects over two phases with budgets ranging from £250 k to £820 k. A summary of the projects is set out here, under the relevant thematic headings, outlining lessons for peacebuilding in the most segregated and socially deprived areas of Northern Ireland.

INTERVENTIONS AND ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

1) **Early years and parenting programmes:**
Active Respectful Communities (ARC): Led by the voluntary group Community Relations in Schools (CRIS), this project worked with children and parents from six schools in the Ardoyne and Shankill communities of Belfast. The key focus areas for the programme were: early years and parenting, community relations education linked into the curriculum and focused residential programmes for families.
Aspire: A partnership between Currie Primary School and Holy Family Primary School (inner North Belfast) which provided shared services that increased parental engagement and skills for supporting their children's learning, improved educational outcomes for children engaged in the programme, and raised the aspirations of parents and children. This was delivered through partner organisations such as Barnardo's, PIPS Suicide Awareness and Parenting NI.
Faces and Spaces: This project was based on an Early Years approach to good relations and operated through community-led and shared partnerships in five interface areas (Falls Road/Shankill Road; Castlederg/Newtownstewart; Waterside/Cityside; Ballymena; Short Strand/East Belfast). The project was based around the well-established and highly successful Media Initiative for Children, Respecting Difference Programme.
South Armagh Childcare Consortium (SACC): This was led by the South Armagh Childcare Consortium (a multi-agency partnership made up of a range of statutory and community agencies) that focused on young families and children living in rural South Armagh—Bessbrook, Derrymore, Crossmaglen and Creggan. The programme delivered a cross-community after-school project, the media initiative for children Respecting Difference, the Incredible Years Parenting Programme and summer schemes.

These four projects resulted in a number of successful outcomes:

(i) Cross-community engagement: working with early-years and primary-school children on a cross-community basis offered not only the opportunity for substantive improvement in the formative education of young children but also allowed for direct engagement with their parents. Parents engaged in structured professional courses which developed their children's social, emotional and cognitive skills through parent and child interactive reading, strengthened parenting skills in preventing and treating behavioural problems in young children and taught positive parenting for those with mental health issues. Through these cross-community courses the common bond of improving the life chances of the participants' children superseded traditional sectarian boundaries. As one project co-ordinator noted:

> We were overwhelmed by the response from parents for the Incredible Years School Readiness Programme. The uptake for programmes increased this year and a number of parents who were on the periphery took the plunge and took part. This is part of building up trust between parents in both communities and for some people it takes longer than others. Parents regularly talk about what they have in common as opposed to what divides them. They have the same issues—concerns about money, drugs, alcohol abuse, debt and so on.

(ii) Hard-to-reach groups and controversial issues: Engagement was particularly noteworthy amongst men, often seen as a 'hard-to-reach' group for parenting courses. Cross-community parental engagement is particularly strong where the focus of interaction is the child. A momentum built up through residential events, as men became more comfortable in a non-threatening environment and were prepared not only to address parenting issues but those concerned with improving the communities in which they lived, and this inevitably led to tackling controversial issues. One male participant, who is an ex-republican prisoner, said of the residential experience, 'I was initially apprehensive talking about difficult interface issues but felt supported and safe on the residential because I had encountered other participants on a parenting course. Anything that was ever wrong was put right in those three days'.

(iii) Collaborative networks and advocacy: Given the number of schools involved in the Contested Spaces/Interface Programme, an advocacy coalition developed involving parents, teachers, school governors, locally elected councillors and statutory organisations, some of which were referring children directly to these projects. Building strong collaborative links embedded the work in the community, widened its appeal and provided powerful advocates to lobby on its behalf. There were examples of projects mobilising parents in a collective way who would not otherwise speak out, encouraging them to demand better shared services in their areas and improvements in the quality of their lives. The work of the schools transcended the territoriality that characterises interface areas. The projects gave parents with low self-esteem confidence in their ability to make a better life for themselves and their children. This new-found confidence was, in turn, used to advocate for better public services in the neglected areas in which they lived, and those participants whose voices had not formerly been expressed politically applied pressure for resources to improve their quality of life. They lobbied MLAs on the steps of Stormont, councillors and officials with influence. As one parent noted: 'I am here to support my child in what the schools are trying to do'. Projects also developed a stock of advocacy materials to disseminate their work and create policy change, examples of which were the publications: *Engaging Whole School Communities: Good Practice in Shared Education* and *Buddy Up*: *a Whole School Community Resource*. The Department of Education NI subsequently used both these publications across all schools. This quotation from one parent captures their newfound ability to make a difference:

> Parents and grandparents have gathered dozens of letters of support. Neither ARC or school staff attended or met with any of these community groups and local businesses. Instead groups of parents arranged meetings with community groups and handed over a portfolio pack of documents and media including the DVD of the schools working together. Based on this alone, full endorsement and support has been received across the community divide.

2) **Shared spaces programmes targeted and delivered through schools:**
Foyle Contested Space: A partnership of three post-primary and five primary schools in Derry/Londonderry established to widen the scope of shared education. This included the shared delivery of curriculum activities at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding [PDMU] and Learning for Life and Work [LLW]), provision of shared teacher training, and issues of common concern in sexual health, internet/mobile phone safety and alcohol awareness.
Spaces to Be: Playboard NI: Spaces to Be was an outcomes-focused, diversity-in-play-project targeted at children in middle childhood. The project was led and delivered by Playboard NI.

It operated within four primary schools located in East Belfast (St Matthew's and Nettlefield Primary Schools) and Newtownstewart (St Patrick's and the Model Primary Schools).

These two projects resulted in a number of successful outcomes:

(iv) Shared Curriculum Focus: A strong collaborative network of cross-community primary and post-primary schools has developed directly through the work of these projects. At the centre of this collaboration is the delivery of core aspects of the curriculum. In primary schools, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) is being delivered on a shared basis with the potential to broaden the shared model to other curricular areas, particularly science, engineering, technology and Maths (STEM), ICT, literacy and numeracy. In post-primary schools this involved shared the provision of Learning for Life and Work (LLW) and a focus on improving literacy and numeracy. A shared curriculum focus has created interdependence between schools, who work together to improve educational outcomes.

(v) Policy transfer: Beyond the confines of the schools the Foyle project built very strong relationships with wider statutory and NGO support organisations which supported the work of teachers and parents. The selected theme of 'healthy relationships' provided the medium through which this engagement took place—its focus was how to ensure that young people are not making choices that could be dangerous or pose a risk to their health, particularly in terms of developing physical and sexual relations. The project identified a number of groups that were best placed to present information to parents, including: the police, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), ChildLine, local medical experts and Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP). As one PSNI officer pointed out:

> The schools have taken very brave steps by asking us to deliver lessons on, in some cases, a weekly basis… And we have seen them in a shared education environment where we have introduced ourselves as police, and where we have discussed the role of the police officer within our community … Well it's definitely having an impact in relation to anti-social behaviour and anti-community behaviour.

(vi) Advocacy gains: The Foyle project engaged officials from the Education and Training Inspectorate to identify elements of the

PDMU and LLW curriculum that could be delivered on a shared basis across Northern Ireland, utilising their statutory expertise to do this. The Department of Justice (DoJ) has a policy commitment to improve community safety by tackling anti-social behaviour. The project engaged with officials from DoJ in order to demonstrate how aspects of the Foyle model, if mainstreamed, could assist the department in meeting this important objective.

3) **Interface youth engagement programmes:**
Achieving Personal Potential (APP): This was led by Shankill Women's Centre (Belfast) with partner organisations that worked in North Belfast. The aim of the project was to provide opportunities for young people to build relationships through team-building activities, drama, music, personal development, arts and crafts, and educational homework and revision workshops.
Communities Unite in Reconciling and Building Societies (CURBS): The CURBS programme, based in Craigavon, was managed by Craigavon Intercultural Partnership (CIP) which delivered the programme in conjunction with local partners. The programme was based around five key phases: Step Up, Step In, Step Forward, Step Beyond and Step Out. Step Up involved collaborative partner engagement and Step In included a range of cross-community and cross-cultural activities based around sport, arts and media.

These two projects resulted in a number of successful outcomes:

(vii) Capacity-building: The APP project involved a network of cross-community organisations working across the patchwork of interface areas that is North Belfast. The strength of this network was mutual learning (ideas, practice and resources) and reciprocity of support between the various groups. Joint working between youth leaders enhanced the capacity of the groups to deliver cross-community activities to young people which was sustained beyond the life of the project. The CURBS projects resulted in ten different public agencies and seven youth clubs co-operating to address youth-related issues under the projects' leadership. There is a strong working relationship between youth clubs and youth leaders and a willingness to encourage the participation of young people from their areas in cross-community projects. One touchstone example of working with statutory bodies is that it is now normal for the PSNI neighbourhood team to drop in on youth clubs, be welcomed and have the opportunity to present their messages—something which would not formerly have happened in nationalist or republican areas.

(viii) Addressing educational underachievement: One particular issue of note is educational underachievement, particularly amongst Protestant boys in socially deprived areas. An after-schools homework club and the provision of tutoring for the selection test (11+ transfer test) proved to be a very unifying provision in the APP project. Participants on this programme met twice weekly (during term time) for 1 h of homework/revision space followed by 1 h of structured activities in music, dance, drama, arts and craft, personal development and cultural awareness. As one participant noted: 'I love coming to APP because I've met loads of new friends and we get to do lots of activities. I'm also going into 1st year (of post-primary school) and I needed extra help with homework and I love the leaders'. In the summer months APP put on transfer test support days, which were a resounding success, evidenced from feedback provided by parents and children alike.

> The transfer test support days were a resounding success. To date it has been the single best way to engage both the participants and parents, and it was also a great opportunity to gauge feedback through evaluation sheets. We were pleasantly surprised by the interest expressed for places on these support days and even throughout the registration process we had parents calling to register their child for the following year (children who were only in Primary 5). We also received many great reports after the kids had taken the tests to say how much more confident they were and also telling us some of the great outcomes they were getting on results day.

(ix) Media as a mechanism for youth engagement: The use of media projects has been a particularly successful mechanism in engaging young people and has multiple benefits: young people understand and enjoy using media and are media-savvy, yet most have had few, if any, opportunities to work in this area. Hence, interest levels were high. The skills involved in producing, editing and participating as interviewers or interviewees developed self-confidence in young people and promoted creativity. Young people appeared more willing to discuss cross-community issues on camera, which offered a medium to de-personalise controversial topics and provided a platform for objective debate. Common issues which affect young people (e.g., binge-drinking) also provide the opportunity for cross-community debate, which breaks down barriers.

4) **Shared neighbourhood programme targeted at interface families: Waterside Partnership—Parents and Communities Together (PACT):** This project was led by Action for Children in partnership with a range of community associations/groups in the Waterside area of Derry/Londonderry. The project was delivered in three socially deprived areas. PACT provided support to very young children and their parents. Its main elements were an eight-week group work programme and individual support to parents/families at home.

The cumulative impact of this project has been as follows:

(x) High-intensity support: This project provided intensive support to low numbers of participants, and high-impact activities aimed at the most vulnerable people and families living in highly marginalised, poor, segregated communities in Derry/Londonderry. For example, all parents who registered on the PACT programme received up to four home visits prior to the group work element commencing and then one visit per fortnight during the groupwork. Participants may have been referred from statutory or voluntary organisations (including social services, health visitors and teachers) with prior experience of their circumstances. The result of this high-intensity work was the opportunity to develop and maintain very strong and positive working relationships between parents and their children through the group aspect of the project but also via regular home and community visits. Parents also met in community venues out of their 'comfort zone' and often in neighbouring communities which they were, at times, totally unfamiliar with. Their common desire was to want the best for themselves as parents, their families and children. The often divisive feature of religious affiliation was reduced to near-insignificance in their quest to achieve this.

The common thread running through all of these nine projects is that they worked with a range of participants (around 13,800 distinct participants as opposed to repeat users), from nursery-school children, through young adults, to parents in interface areas blighted by poverty and sectarianism. The participants in the projects were those for whom the peace process has offered a limited legacy, not least in the poor level of public services available to them. Participants built strong relationships around common issues that impacted on them collectively. They established a level of interdependence in tackling problems which straddled interface areas and found a combined voice. The key question is: how were the lessons from this programme used to inform wider policy developments?

Policy Adoption

The learning from SLIG and the Contested Space programmes feature significantly in the Government's strategic policy T:BUC. There are clear linkages to several of the headline actions identified in T:BUC: the establishment of ten shared education campuses; the United Youth Programme; a programme of cross-community sporting events; removing interface barriers; rollout out of a 'buddy scheme' in nursery and primary schools; and shared summer schools. Indeed, the T:BUC strategy makes explicit reference to the work carried out under the Contested Space Programme, noting that 'a very helpful model of change has emerged (through this programme) that could potentially inform future interventions involving interface areas where there are contested spaces' (OFMDFM 2013a: 61). In addition, Fergus Devitt (then) Director of the Good Relations Division in Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Ministers commented: 'there has been significant learning from the Contested Space/Interface Programme which helped in the design of the Together: Building a United Community strategy. There is real potential to scale up some of the models which the programme pilot tested in difficult interface areas'. The specific issues that have now been adopted as government policy are outlined in Table 4.2 and Fig. 4.2.

In summary, this two-stage intervention approach by Atlantic Philanthropies to promote shared spaces and services has demonstrated, once again, the organisation's move from the role of external provider to working in partnership with government. As with shared education policy (discussed in Chap. 3), the case study in this chapter demonstrates the progression from pilot work in a micro-interface community within Suffolk and Lenadoon to scaling up the model in collaboration with the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. While the level of influence on the government's flagship policy T:BUC has been important, its implementation is still at the early stages. The two Atlantic-funded programmes (SELF and Contested Space) outlined here provided a foundation which has influenced, to some extent, emerging government policy. That said, the concept of area-based peacebuilding is a broadly conceived approach and could be criticised as trying to tackle too many deep-rooted structural problems simultaneously. This, in turn, means that a targeted and

Table 4.2 Mapping policy adoption

T:BUC commitments	*Learning from SLIG and contested space programmes*
Roll out a 'buddy scheme' in publicly run nursery and primary schools	ARC's experience of Holy Cross and Edenderry Nursery Schools in operating a buddy scheme and associated resources
Provide primary and post-primary anti-sectarianism resources and ensure that teachers are trained, equipped and supported to deliver an effective anti-sectarianism module	ARC involvement in training on the CREDIT programme ARC training resources pack Foyle Contested Space on primary and post-primary teachers' experience of tackling both sensitive and politically contentious issues
Enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational experience	Use of Foyle Contested Space's expertise in providing 'normalised' shared education delivery across eight primary and post-primary schools Foyle Contested Space's wider network of experience in Shared Education Programme experience
Create ten Shared Educational Campuses	
Improve attitudes amongst our young people and build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations	SLIG's youth engagement programmes Faces and Spaces pre-school education which explores diversity and work with parents on interdependence and inclusion Early intervention, parenting skills and negotiation of shared spaces in a polarised community Spaces to Be: Alternative (complementary) model of cross-community work with children through the informal medium of play
Develop an intercommunity youth programme to tackle sectarianism Develop a summer camps/summer schools with a focus on sport and developmental activities Develop significant programmes of cross-community sporting events which will focus in reconciliation through sport and be based at community level	CURBS—Collaborative network building between youth providers and statutory organisations. Effective use of sports, arts and the media in cross-community work APP's partnering with Belfast Community Sports Development Network (BCSDN) to deliver multi-sports as one of the options for structured activities. Also partnering with the 174Trust on their Game of 3 Halves event which promoted cross-community relationship building through football/rugby/Gaelic tournaments SLIG's successful sports programmes
Focus on a more inter-generational approach to building good relations	Aspire Targeted interventions to help parents and children by external agencies with a focus on common needs PACT Intensive work with parents who are highly vulnerable SLIG's storytelling activities with older people

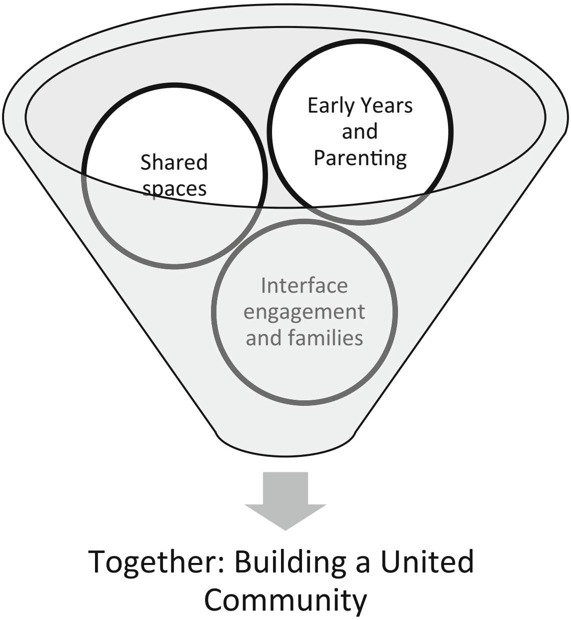
Shared spaces
Early Years and Parenting
Interface engagement and families
Together: Building a United Community

Fig. 4.2 From external interventions towards government policy

coherent advocacy strategy is difficult to develop and realise—too many organisations are pursuing diverse activities and are thus unable to take a strategic direction of travel. It is also worth noting that the Northern Ireland government has a relatively poor record of high-quality implementation at scale, even where this is underpinned by robust evidence-based pilot work. The difficult sites for these programmes convinced officials that there had been neglect by government during the conflict, often linked to security concerns about their own staff working in these areas, but also because the voice of these communities had not been heard. There will, of course, be issues arising from the implementation of T:BUC, not least the resources available to deliver on its commitments and the ability of government departments to work collaboratively on cross-cutting thematic policies.

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CHAPTER 5

Community Restorative Justice

Problem Definition

Paramilitaries in republican areas of Northern Ireland assumed the role of community ‘police’ from the very beginning of the ‘Troubles’ in what they described as the absence of a legitimate police service (Munck 1988; Kennedy 1995). Not only did they see the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) as an instrument of the British state which they did not recognise in Northern Ireland, but pointed to its religious composition (disproportionately Protestant) and its treatment of the minority community (Hamilton and Moore 1995; O’Rawe and Moore 1997). They cited cases such as that of Robert Hamill, beaten to death by a loyalist mob, an event which was witnessed by police who allegedly failed to intervene. They claimed RUC collusion with loyalist paramilitaries, most notably in killings of high-profile nationalist/republican figures such as human rights lawyer Rosemary Nelson and solicitor Pat Finucane, and accused the police of exploiting young petty offenders in return for intelligence information gathering (Rolston 2000). In contrast, within the loyalist communities, the RUC was seen as legitimate but ineffectual, part of a system of criminal justice which could not react quickly enough and exact the retribution deemed appropriate by victims of crime. Conversely, Conway (1997) pointed to a significant difference in policing loyalist areas. He suggested that loyalists were more involved in policing their own paramilitary organisations, focusing on matters such as settling internal disputes and identifying informers. Young people involved in anti-social crime, rather than

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being marginalised (as in republican communities), were often persuaded to either ‘join up’ or at the very least contribute part of the proceeds of their criminal activity to the paramilitaries.

The origins of informal community ‘justice’ in contemporary Northern Ireland evolved in the early 1970s within Catholic working-class communities, where citizens’ defence committees were set up to protect Catholic enclaves from loyalist attacks. As the security forces (the then RUC) withdrew from barricaded areas, local defence associations emerged to deal with petty crime within the community. Increasingly paramilitary organisations became active in policing their own areas. Paramilitary groups saw themselves as community protectors; their actions were aimed ostensibly at maintaining ‘law and order’ through tackling petty crime such as car theft, joyriding, burglary and drug dealing. Silke (1998) described the spectrum of activities or ‘punishment’ scale ‘administered’ by the paramilitaries.[1] House- or shop-breakers were compelled to reimburse their victims and return stolen goods. In cases involving children, the IRA approached the parents and requested greater parental control. In situations where an alleged offender refused to co-operate or had ignored previous warnings, they were liable for ‘suitable punishment’. This usually involved shooting or beating the individual anywhere in the leg—so-called ‘kneecapping’. For those ‘too young to be kneecapped’, ‘punishments’ included curfewing, tar and feathering, being tied up, being publicly painted and punishment of the individual’s parents. Individuals suspected of informing were dealt with most severely and their ‘punishment’ depended on the type of information passed to the security forces. In some cases they were kneecapped, but usually they were shot dead. In loyalist areas, paramilitaries from the early 1970s assumed a similar policing role in their communities and used many of the methods adopted by republicans. Although the system made claims to carry out investigations into incidents before an individual was punished, effectively it ignored due process, and the protection of the human rights of the accused was in doubt. Kennedy (1995: 67) described the system as a barbaric range of punitive measures against individuals ‘who violate some community norm as defined by the paramilitary grouping’.

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[1] The word ‘punishment’ is used here in inverted commas to indicate that victims of paramilitary attacks had not been convicted by the courts of any offence, were not afforded due process, and had their legal rights ignored. To be ‘punished’ implies that they were guilty. Paramilitaries could not legitimately assume the role of judge and enforcer.

Perpetrators exacted community 'justice' using pickaxe handles, hockey and hurley sticks, baseball bats, steel rods and hammers. Other forms of 'punishment' included dropping heavy concrete blocks on limbs and using power tools on bones. Surgeons in the fracture clinic at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast, for example, reported that 'following the cessation of violence there has been an increase in the level of injuries occurring in those undergoing paramilitary punishment' (Nolan et al. 2000). Their study of treating victims showed that those who had been shot with pistols, resulting in open injuries, suffered much less damage to soft tissue and bones than those who had been beaten. The reality is that it is 'better' to be shot than beaten.

The nature of these incidents is best illustrated by the account of one victim:

> I was accused by the paramilitaries of doing a burglary, which I didn't do. They didn't believe me. So they said they had a witness to identify me. They came back for me and took me to the Markets (an area in Belfast). They held me from eight o'clock until half eleven, continually beating me with sticks, punching me, kicking me, just laying into me, left, right and centre, asking questions, 'Did you do that burglary?', 'No I didn't do it'. They didn't believe me so they just laid into me and beat me bad. They said to me at the end of it that they were taking me outside and giving me two bullets, one in each ankle. So I cracked up. I was taken outside with a hood over my head. My arms were tied behind my back. They brought me down an alley, told me to spread-eagle on the ground. I heard them saying to each other 'there's something wrong'—the gun had jammed. So they told me to get up. They grabbed hold of me, brought me into a flat, got me to lean over a table and three or four of them beat me with sewer rods from behind. They lifted me because I couldn't walk, took me outside again, kicked and beat me before heading off. As they were going I shouted out 'You Provie bastards, I didn't do fuck all'. One of them came back and said 'Shut your mouth, you hooding wee bastard' and gave me another good kicking. After that, the ambulance came and took me away for treatment. (Knox 2003: 24)

McEvoy (1999) cited three principal reasons for this level of paramilitary control within both republican and loyalist communities. First, particularly in republican areas, there was the absence of an adequate policing service. The RUC, and latterly Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), had no legitimacy among republicans, and their communities would not normally involve the police in dealing with crimes in their areas. Second, levels of 'anti-social behaviour' and petty crime were rising, particularly in working-class areas. Without a legitimate police force, communities turned to paramilitaries to secure a prompt, visible and, in their view effective response to crime in their areas. Third, the formal criminal justice system was perceived in these communities as slow, ineffectual and soft on crime. Communities, whilst distancing themselves from the excesses of ‘punishment’ beatings and shootings, saw the intervention of paramilitaries as community ‘police’ responding to the needs of their areas. Yet the operation of informal justice has resulted in some horrific ‘mistakes’ where due process was ignored and summary justice meted out. John Brown, an 80-year-old Belfast senior citizen, was shot in the knees and ankles by an IRA gang who mistakenly identified him as a convicted paedophile. They subsequently apologised for their actions.

Yet, ‘punishing’ mainly young people is tacitly or explicitly supported by communities, described by two interviewees as follows:

> The RUC don’t come into our areas so we have to look to the republican movement for policing. Because we don’t have cells to lock offenders up, the system evolved from there. In the 1970s they dropped breezeblocks on them and nobody complained. As a matter of fact, I don’t think they are doing enough to them now.
>
> No person will go to the RUC. They will either go to representatives of Sinn Féin, community representatives or members of the IRA to actually get it dealt with. If somebody’s caught joyriding in the area, they’re going to face the courts, probably get out on bail, more likely get a suspended sentence, and they’re free to go out again, start joyriding, terrorising the community again. If they go through the informal system, action will be taken immediately, whether it’s exiling, their legs broke or kneecapped. That’s tackling the problem, getting to its core. (Knox and Monaghan 2001: 30)

Paramilitaries claimed to be responding to popular pressure and, in turn, engaged in swift and violent ‘punishments’ carried out without regard for the human rights of the victim or due legal process. The system became self-perpetuating and reinforcing. It satisfied the desire on the part of communities for ‘justice’ and reinforced the dominant role of paramilitaries who wished to exert social control in their areas. This culture of violence also meant that communities were afraid to speak out against such activities. When young people in these areas became involved in criminal behaviour they were more likely to encounter paramilitaries than the police. Some saw this as a challenge and part of a subculture of bravado among their peer group. Rarely, however, could they match the weaponry or force of organised paramilitary 'punishment' gangs who administered the informal criminal justice system under the guise of community 'police'.

Two key responses have been discernible across the range of statutory and non-statutory organisations to the problem of 'punishment' beatings and shootings by the paramilitaries. The first of these, most characteristic of statutory organisations, has been minimisation of, and indifference to, the problem, or what Conway described as 'reactive containment' (Conway 1994: 99). Paramilitary 'punishment' beatings and shootings were but one component of what had become known in Northern Ireland as 'an acceptable level of violence' or an 'imperfect peace' (Mowlam 1999). This response was informed by a number of factors. Those subjected to beatings and shootings tended not to engender sympathy either from the police or, more often, the communities within which they resided. In the case of the former, the police claimed that those attacked were usually involved in 'anti-social behaviour' (car theft, joyriding, burglary, drug dealing and so on) and had a criminal record, and were therefore reluctant to report the crime lest they were investigated. There was also fear of reprisal from paramilitaries should communities co-operate with the police. As one senior police officer pointed out, 'We are unfortunately in a Catch 22 situation … if they refuse to make a witness statement, then in fact the PSNI is at a loss in many regards, unless we have the forensic evidence or unless they're caught in the act' (interview with Police Chief Superintendent).

Communities on the other hand felt they had little option but to tacitly or explicitly support the actions of paramilitaries. They were unwilling and/or reluctant to go to the police, felt threatened or terrorised by crimes perpetrated in their areas and responded accordingly. 'People want instant justice. They are not prepared to wait on the rules of evidence, on long processes of the court—they feel: "we are the victims and we want something done about it now". The paramilitaries respond to this' (Knox 2002: 170). In sum, the police felt limited in their response, communities demanded protection from crime in their areas and those attacked were fearful of paramilitary reprisal.

The police, in turn, were accused by republicans of demoralising communities by manipulating those involved in anti-social behaviour and thus undermining the 'republican struggle'. 'The police have employed anti-social elements as informers in return for immunity from prosecution. This has allowed anti-social activity to escalate' (McGuinness 1999: 16). The Northern Ireland Office's (NIO) response was to see 'punishment' beatings and shootings more within a general framework of crime prevention and community safety which sought to address the causes of anti-social behaviour. They did not commit resources directly to the problem and didn't think they had made any impact upon it (interview with an NIO official ceasefires, Belfast Agreement etc). Their interest in the issue appeared to peak, perhaps predictably, when it became inextricably linked with the political agenda of the day.

Agenda-Setting

After 30 years of paramilitary control, the legitimacy of the informal 'justice' practices, described above, came under scrutiny as wider political progress developed in Northern Ireland. During the negotiations in the run-up to the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement 1998 all parties involved had to sign up to the Mitchell principles of democracy and non-violence. One principle urged that 'punishment' killings and beatings stop and parties take effective steps to prevent such actions. The negotiators noted:

> We join the governments, religious leaders and many others in condemning 'punishment' killings and beatings. They contribute to the fear that those who have used violence to pursue political objectives in the past will do so again in the future. Such actions have no place in a lawful society. (Mitchell et al. 1996: paragraph 20)

The outcome of the multi-party talks was the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement 1998 in which all participants reaffirmed their 'total and absolute commitment to exclusively democratic and peaceful means of resolving differences on political issues, and our opposition to any threat of force by others for any political purpose' (Belfast [Good Friday] Agreement: section 4:1, 1998). Over 19 months later, in advance of devolution, Sinn Féin stated the importance of the political process in making conflict a thing of the past and emphasised their opposition to the use of force and 'punishment' attacks (Sinn Féin statement: 16 November 1999).

Immediately this put pressure on political parties associated with republicanism and loyalism (Sinn Féin and the Progressive Unionist Party) to find and support alternative ways of 'policing' their communities. CRJ schemes provided a mechanism for doing this. The whole notion of restorative justice developed from attempts to mediate or reconcile victim–offender relations in Canada and the United States in the early 1970s. Its aim is to respond to crime in a more constructive way than through the use of conventional justice approaches. As part of the review of the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland (2000), restorative justice was defined as:

> A more inclusive approach to dealing with the effects of the crime, which concentrates on restoring and repairing the relationship between the offender, the victim, and the community at large, and which typically includes reparative elements towards the victim and/or the community. (Criminal Justice Review Group 2000, paragraph 1)

Alternative community 'policing' arrangements were therefore explored, drawing on international experience. In republican communities, the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders (NIACRO) approached Sinn Féin to investigate ways in which non-violent alternatives might be found to tackle community crime. The NIACRO model operationalised CRJ in a scheme which contained several key elements. A community liaison team made up of trained volunteers, who commanded respect, received and investigated complaints of anti-social behaviour from the community. Complaints were dealt with through informal mediation and cautions issued. More complex cases were sent to a mediation service to reach an agreed solution. The ultimate sanction was a community boycott or 'the right of the community to refuse to have persons living in its midst who consistently and seriously flout the norms of a tolerable behaviour as codified in a community charter' (Auld et al. 1997: 12). Atlantic Philanthropies did not support this model.

Loyalists developed a parallel scheme aimed at tackling anti-social behaviour. In loyalist areas punitive sanctions carried out by paramilitaries were categorised into three broad groups: internal disciplinary matters within their own paramilitary membership; anti-social behaviour in the community; and feuds between paramilitary groupings involved in the sale of drugs. Intervention under the Alternatives Programme was linked exclusively to anti-social behaviour. Both types of community restorative justice schemes, the loyalist Greater Shankill Alternatives Programme (NIA) and the republican Community Restorative Justice Scheme (CRJI)[2] received support funding from Atlantic Philanthropies. Such support was seen as contentious and high risk, but Atlantic recognised its potential in leading communities away from using violence as a means to resolve conflict, at

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[2] These schemes are now referred to as Northern Ireland Alternatives and Community Restorative Justice Ireland.

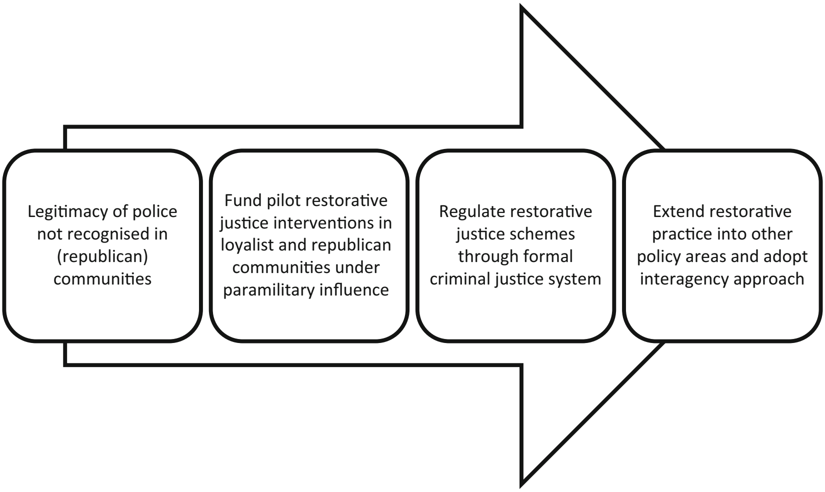
Legitimacy of police not recognised in (republican) communities
Fund pilot restorative justice interventions in loyalist and republican communities under paramilitary influence
Regulate restorative justice schemes through formal criminal justice system
Extend restorative practice into other policy areas and adopt interagency approach

Fig. 5.1 Theory of change—community restorative justice

a time when no statutory bodies were willing to provide financial backing for such schemes. The early work supported by Atlantic (1999–2005) in community restorative justice therefore sought to replace paramilitary 'punishment' violence, threats and exclusion with the promotion of non-violent alternatives in targeted loyalist and republican communities—see Atlantic's theory of change (Fig. 5.1). These unregulated community restorative justice schemes operated from the late 1990s onwards, with positive results reported by those involved (Winston and Watters 2006).

An external evaluation of Atlantic's invention during this period (1999–2005) was conducted by an international expert in restorative justice who found, inter alia, the following:

- The programmes prevented nearly 500 cases of paramilitary beatings and shootings. NIA and CRJI caused a significant drop in the number of beatings and shootings compared to neighbourhood areas outside their catchment population.
- The acceptance of community restorative justice solutions by armed groups increased significantly.
- Community leaders felt that the projects had become essential community assets.

- Potential limitations of NIA and CRJI were caused by: perceived paramilitary links, political criticism, inadequate resourcing and increasing demands for their services. (Mika 2007)

The report concluded:

> CRJI and NIA are important catalysts for developing community and local organisational capacities and local peace-building, by creating and promoting non-violent responses to crime and anti-social behavior … Both projects contributed to increasing tolerance in local areas for marginalised members of the community, including delinquent youth and former combatants … NIA and CRJI projects are having a measurable and significant impact. Although faced with a variety of challenges, the models work … Without the support of Atlantic Philanthropies, the community-based projects would have been unable to prevent some 500 instances of punishment and exclusion. (Mika 2007: iii)

Mika's findings on community-based schemes in Northern Ireland were however completely at odds with those of Garret FitzGerald, former Fine Gael Taoiseach (Republic of Ireland), who was vitriolic in his criticism of republican restorative justice. He argued that Sinn Féin had established CRJI and cited the following as evidence that the party was attempting to maintain control of communities by replacing the IRA with a new kind of viligantism (FitzGerald 2006: 14):

- CRJI's director of training is one of the convicted murderers of two British army corporals at the time of an IRA funeral. Recently, having witnessed the beating of a nationalist by a bunch of republican thugs, he failed to give evidence of this attack to the police.
- In 2004, Sinn Féin's Caitriona Ruane made it quite explicit that the local CRJI groups then being established were being set up by her party 'to offer a viable alternative to the PSNI'. These local groups refuse to deal with the PSNI and leaflets issued by some of them show that half of those involved in their operation are former active members of the IRA.
- Several nationalist families have reported that CRJI members have been involved with the IRA in attempts to intimidate family members into leaving Northern Ireland. Moreover, the Director of the Rape Crisis Centre stated that the CRJI has 'threatened women and

attempted to cover up crimes committed by those with IRA, Sinn Féin or CRJ connections. Allowing such people power is like letting the lunatics run the asylum' cited by (FitzGerald, 2006).

- Finally, the McCartney sisters have told MPs at Westminster that people associated with the murder of their brother are involved in CRJ schemes and that the CRJI is a paramilitary front used to intimidate the local population and to protect criminals with an IRA background.

What was perhaps interesting about the intervention of the former Fine Gael Taoiseach in the debate was the currency of restorative justice in the Republic of Ireland at the time of his comments. In an Oireachtas Committee Report published in January 2007 there were recommendations to develop a statutory-based restorative justice programme for adult offenders in the Irish criminal justice system following 'highly successful' pilot projects in Nenagh and Tallaght (Houses of Oireachtas 2007).

Criticisms of CRJ schemes were not confined to Garret FitzGerald. Criminal Justice Inspection NI noted in 2007 that:

- They are a front for paramilitary organisations, which help to maintain control over their communities.
- They rely on coercion (actual and implied) to force clients to take part in restorative justice.
- They infringe the rights of the client by denying him/her due process.
- They expose the client to double jeopardy, since the state may still be obliged to take the offender to court. (Criminal Justice Inspection 2007b: 3)

Pressures for Change

This unregulated system of restorative justice came under both general and legal pressures to adopt government regulation—put starkly, reform or be marginalised. The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement (1998: 22) argued that the police service must be 'capable of winning public confidence and acceptance, delivering a policing service in constructive and inclusive partnerships with the community at all levels, and with maximum delegation of authority and responsibility'. The follow-on political agreement at

St Andrews (October 2006) reasserted the need for accountable policing by arguing ‘we have consistently said that support for policing and the rule of law should be extended to every part of the community. We believe that all parties share this objective’ (Agreement at St Andrews 2006: section 5). As confidence in the PSNI grew and the police gave their support to the principle of restorative justice, albeit with strict conditions, the pressure for change mounted.

There were also legal pressures on the government to regulate community restorative justice. The Human Rights Act 1998 was received with limited enthusiasm in Northern Ireland but the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement placed human rights at the centre of the political agenda. The Agreement went much further than the European Convention on Human Rights, recognising that Northern Ireland should be founded on the ‘principles of full respect for, and equality of, civil, political, social and cultural rights’, as well as ‘freedom from discrimination for all citizens’ (The Agreement 1998 para. (v)). There followed two reports detailing how human rights should be implemented in practice. The Patten Report on policing reforms and the Criminal Justice Review were extensive documents recognising past institutional failings and recommending how human rights in Northern Ireland might be better protected in the future (Patten 1999; Criminal Justice Review Group 2000). Even though these ‘additional’ measures were not strictly legally binding obligations, the introduction of human-rights-friendly policies was both necessary and desirable to translate rhetorical respect into concrete observance (O’Cinneide 2006).

However, it was these two reports (more so the latter) that really thrust CRJ onto the political agenda. The Criminal Justice Review acknowledged firm support for the restorative schemes but also highlighted the need for a protocol to be put in place. The review recommended that existing republican and loyalist restorative justice initiatives should become a central part of the formal process for juveniles, driven by the courts, based in law and subject to the full range of human rights protection (Criminal Justice Review Group 2000: 421).

Another key important source of pressure for change came from the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC) which reported to the government on activity by paramilitary groups. The IMC lent its support to the principle of community schemes which operated ‘accountably and to acceptable standards’, which it defined as schemes which fully respect human rights, that act in a way which is proportionate, legal and accountable, and where the interventions are both necessary and are based on the best information. The IMC elaborated further:

> Community restorative justice must never be a cover for the paramilitary groups, whereby they are able to continue to exercise an unhealthy influence under a more respectable label. The schemes must be open as well as accountable, including by having procedures for individual complaints, arrangements to ensure that only suitable people are employed, oversight and external inspection and an unambiguous relationship with the criminal justice system as a whole. As they develop, the schemes must be increasingly associated with the agencies of the official criminal justice system, including the police. There can never be any question of alternative or parallel justice systems. (Independent Monitoring Commission 2006, s2.10)

The IMC raised two key concerns. The first related to people known for their involvement in community restorative justice schemes (sometimes with paramilitary connections) who have tried to exert improper pressure on individuals, whether victims, alleged offenders or members of their families. The second concern raised by the IMC related to the type and seriousness of some of the offences, which fell well outside the scope of ordinary restorative justice schemes (e.g., violent offences against the person and sexual offences). Here the IMC argued that individuals may be subjected to threats or to improper pressure, and so deprived of their human rights and access to justice; and some who are entirely innocent may be unfairly pilloried and have no recourse to justice.

Policy Adoption

As a result of the recommendations from the Criminal Justice Review, the (then) Minister of State for the NIO, David Hanson, published (after two attempts at consultation) the *Protocol for Community restorative Justice Schemes* (Northern Ireland Office 2007). In launching the protocol, the minister emphasised that it contained stringent safeguards to protect the rights of both victim and offenders, and police would be at the centre of the process. He claimed it ‘put in place a structure which will provide for effective engagement between community-based schemes and the criminal justice system in dealing with low level offending. The high standards set out in the protocol are non-negotiable’ (Hanson 2007: 2). The protocol applied to all cases where schemes dealt with criminal offences. These cases had to be passed via the police to the Public Prosecution Service, who could refer suitable low-level offences back to schemes to be dealt with in accordance with the protocol. The protocol followed the precise headings of the Criminal Justice Review recommendations referred to above and included the following principles:

> - Schemes must recognise that statutory responsibility for the investigation of crime rests with the police and that the only forum which can determine guilt or innocence, where this is at issue, is a court of law.
> - There should be a clear understanding that the initial response to crime is to notify the police. It would, however, be open to the police and other criminal justice agencies to be flexible in their response and to work with a community-based group in dealing with offenders, whether after adjudication in court or as part of a diversionary or restorative approach.
> - In the event that a community-based group wishes itself to address certain types of minor offending/offenders or nuisance type behaviour, it would only do so in a consensual basis involving agreement of all parties including victims, those responsible for the behaviour in question, parents and others who might be affected.
> - In the event that an individual fails to follow a course of action previously agreed with any community-based organisation, the individual cannot be compelled or coerced to do so and there can be no sanction against the person.
> - All criminal behaviour remains liable to investigation and appropriate action by the police. This means that any group or structures organised by the community should include provision for full co-operation and communication with the police.
>
> (Northern Ireland Office 2007)

Not surprisingly, republican communities found this protocol totally unacceptable. The role of the police was central to reporting, investigating and applying sanctions at the community level. For republicans, at that time (2007), this was simply unworkable. The police, on the other hand, argued that they needed to know the nature of the crime, who the offender was, and that (s)he was being dealt with by the scheme. If not, the offender was left open to double jeopardy. Acutely aware, however, of the need to satisfy standards by which its schemes should operate, republicans developed their own code of practice, setting standards pertaining to participants, the community and outlining fundamental concepts of restorative justice, without reference to the police in their documentation (Community Restorative Justice 1999). The NIO protocol included an accreditation process whereby each community restorative justice scheme had to confirm its willingness to adhere to the protocol to Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI), an independent statutory body with responsibility for inspecting all aspects of the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland (apart from the judiciary). Accreditation of schemes, under the terms of the protocol, is a two-stage process. Schemes must first be the subject of a pre-accreditation inspection by the Chief Inspector of CJINI and, secondly, a panel must determine the suitability of individuals to work on activities governed by the protocol.

If, after inspection, the inspectorate was satisfied that the standards set out in the protocol were being met, the scheme became accredited by the NIO. Schemes that received accreditation became eligible for government resources (the carrot); those schemes which did not apply or were turned down did not receive government funding nor engage formally with the criminal justice system (the stick). The latter could continue with their unregulated work and providing they did nothing illegal, the government was in no position to discontinue their work.

Garret FitzGerald, former Fine Gael Taoiseach, and, as we have seen, an ardent opponent of restorative justice schemes in republican areas, also criticised the protocol. First, he asserted that the protocol was too weak in recommending that community-based schemes ‘will communicate promptly to a dedicated police officer the details of the offence, the offender and the victim’, arguing that this did not demand anything other than written communication between CRJI and the PSNI—no real engagement. Second, he was critical that the ‘independent, external, complaints mechanism’ was to be provided by the Probation Board—a non-statutory body lacking the kind of investigatory powers of the Police Ombudsman. Third, the vetting process for those considered suitable to work on restorative projects because of the 1998 Belfast (Good Friday) ‘is designed to enable local IRA activists to continue in a new guise their past intimidation of local communities, whose leaders are currently afraid to speak out against what the British government is now seeking to impose on their areas’ (FitzGerald 2006: 14).

Loyalist Restorative Justice Schemes

Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland reports were key documents in moving restorative justice schemes from the margins to the mainstream of the criminal justice system. The loyalist Northern Ireland Alternatives schemes (NIA)[3] were quick to avail of the opportunity to achieve formal accreditation, given their ongoing co-operation with the PSNI, and sought an inspection in March 2007. The methodology used by the inspectors was to gather both primary and secondary research data. They read extensive documentation: case files, policy documents, training materials, management committee minutes and annual reports and accounts. They also interviewed staff and volunteers, clients of the schemes (both young offenders and victims), parents of the children participating in the schemes and a wide range of other interested parties, including local politicians, PSNI officers, probation officers and schoolteachers with experience of working with the schemes.

The CJINI inspection report noted the role played by the schemes in reducing 'punishment' beatings through alternative means of dealing with low-level offending and also pointed out that criminal justice work now forms only part of their activities:

> It became evident to Inspectors that the schemes were not primarily filling a gap in the justice system but gaps in the provision of social services, youth work, community health and housing advice. All these services, like the justice system, are felt to serve these communities poorly because they have distanced themselves from them. (Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland 2007a: 6)

The report concluded that the loyalist schemes 'worked to a high standard with difficult young people in their communities' and recommended that Northern Ireland Alternatives be accredited, subject to agreement on conditions identified by the inspection team. What is interesting from the perspective of Atlantic Philanthropies is that the inspection did not see public funding to support these schemes coming necessarily from the criminal justice system (or at least not exclusively) although they played a valuable role in relation to criminal justice broadly defined. The Inspection saw the schemes:

> … first and foremost as a community resource dedicated to working with difficult youngsters, either diverting them away from crime in the first place or helping them to draw them out of criminal and anti-social behaviour if they are engaging in it, while at the same time working with the victims of such behaviour to restore a sense of well-being to the community. (Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland 2007a: 18)

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[3] There are five separate entities in total which operate as a family: Northern Ireland Alternatives; East Belfast Alternatives, Greater Shankill Alternatives, North Belfast Alternatives and North Down Impact.

Fears that community restorative justice schemes were a front for paramilitary organisations or that people were forced into taking part in restorative justice by paramilitaries were addressed in the course of the inspections by CJINI. The inspectors found no evidence that there was any such problem in relation to NIA or its schemes. In addition, there was no evidence of the schemes being driven by paramilitaries and every indication to the contrary. The report concluded that NIA 'did not provide an alternative policing or judicial system. Most of the work undertaken by the schemes relates to community development' (Criminal Justice Inspection 2007a: 20)—see Box 5.1 Vignette: Northern Ireland Alternatives. The inspectors supported accreditation. As such, the inspectorate suggested NIA should be eligible for funding or payment for services from such diverse sources as local councils, community safety partnerships, social services, the education board, the Housing Executive and the Youth Justice Agency, as well as other charitable sources from Europe, but that their core funding should come from the Department for Social Development.

Box 5.1 Vignette: Northern Ireland Alternatives

This example illustrates the range of organisations with which NIA interact in the course of their daily activities. Here, their Shankill office is working with a disruptive young person and his family, a case involving complex needs, referred to them by the PSNI, Youth Conference Service and Social Services. Each of these bodies provides a valuable service to this family but does so discretely. In addition, because of the young person's anti-social behaviour and criminality, there have been threats made against him at the family home, located in a social housing estate, which has spilled over into an issue for the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). The role played by NIA is to co-ordinate or connect the services available to this family at the centre of this case. NIA works intensively (one-on-one) with the young person to help him think about the hurt and harm that he is causing to his family and the wider community. They are also in contact with his school, where there is conflict involving this young person, offering advice, help and urging tolerance of the difficult circumstances in which his family find themselves. In addition, NIA provides support to the mother in parenting skills and counselling to help her cope, as well as counselling to the young person via prevention/diversionary group work as a way of helping him re-integrate back into the community. Given his anti-social behaviour and criminality, he has been threatened by ‘the community’ and NIA is involved in negotiating with paramilitaries to assuage calls on them to ‘deal with this’. As a result of his behaviour, the young person had to be placed in hostel accommodation as a stop-gap until his re-entry back into the community could be safely guaranteed. NIAs work with hostel staff to support him when he is removed from his family.

This example illustrates not only the range of public agencies involved in just one case but how NIA ‘acts as the community lynchpin holding all of these services together in a holistic way to ensure that the young person and his family are the key concern and how best to meet their complex needs’. A particular issue in this case, for example, was NIA’s role, via the Mediation and Community Support (MACS) Service partnered with the NIHE, in negotiating that the family was not ‘put out’. Complex family problems do not present themselves in neat public departmental packages. NIA helps to co-ordinate the services available and keep the focus on those most vulnerable. This type of work does not easily fit into regular office hours.

NIA gave an example where one of their staff was attending a residential training session and received a phone call at 3.00 a.m. from an anxious parent saying that her son hadn’t come home. She was worried about his safety given his friendship circle, and asked for assistance. The staff member spent the remainder of the night/early morning liaising with police and a duty social worker to resolve the problem. The family concerned had formed a trust relationship with NIA and hence the organisation was the first point of contact because it knew the circumstances. This can create a dependency culture, a problem which NIA are aware of and as a result they work with families to build their capacity to tackle issues unassisted.

In August 2007 (then) Northern Ireland Secretary of State, Shaun Woodward, announced the first community restorative justice schemes which had taken a significant step forward in achieving accreditation under new protocol arrangements. Welcoming the accreditations, the Secretary of State said:

> I am delighted to announce the first accreditations under the new Protocol arrangements and see this as a significant step forward for those schemes that have demonstrated their commitment to fully operate the Protocol.

> The Protocol undoubtedly embraces the pivotal role for the police in the process and includes stringent safeguards to protect the rights of both victims and offenders. It will give the public confidence that community based restorative justice schemes can have a full part to play in addressing low-level crime. (Woodward 2007: 1)

A follow-up report was conducted by CJINI in February 2010 and endorsed the earlier positive evaluation. The inspectors concluded that they 'had heard unanimous support for the work of NIA and the contribution the organisation was making in helping the lives of people living within some of the most socially deprived loyalist areas of Greater Belfast and North Down'. As a result of NIA's willingness to engage with statutory agencies they had earned 'real respect and a desire to increase the level of partnership working' (Criminal Justice Inspection 2010: 14).

Republican Restorative Justice Schemes

Republican restorative schemes struggled with the accreditation process and failed to achieve the same recognition as NIA. However, the wider political environment was beginning to change in the early 2000s, a move which would make republican schemes more amenable to incorporation in the mainstream. The St Andrews Agreement (2006) led to the establishment of a power-sharing Executive and the restoration of devolved power-sharing government. Very quickly thereafter Sinn Féin joined the Northern Ireland Policing Board (June 2007) for the first time since it had been established in 2001. The role of the board is to hold the PSNI to account through the Chief Constable for the delivery of effective and impartial policing. Sinn Féin's members had backed their leadership's proposal to get involved in policing on the condition that a power-sharing executive was established. With power-sharing in place and Sinn Féin participating in the Policing Board, there was no reason why restorative justice schemes in republican areas should not be co-operating fully with the PSNI, which had been one of the key stumbling blocks to the accreditation process.

A pre-inspection report conducted by CJINI in May 2007 found that although the republican schemes were engaged in work that was valued by their communities, there were improvements that needed to be made before the schemes would be ready for accreditation. In October 2007, the Criminal Justice Inspectorate completed a pre-inspection report of republican schemes in Belfast and the north-west, which operate under the auspices of Community Restorative Justice Ireland (CRJI), in the first stage of the accreditation process. The inspectorate's involvement in this initial process was significant and helped by the fact that in January 2007 Sinn Féin publicly recognised the PSNI. The report covered two sets of CRJI schemes, four in Derry and four in West Belfast, and essentially described the state of readiness of the schemes for accreditation. The frame of reference used by the Criminal Justice Inspectors was based on observations emanating from the Independent Monitoring Commission, which suggested community restorative justice could be considered in one of two ways:

> a) Restorative justice is part of the difficult process of transition from a world where violence and threats were the norm and the writ of agencies of the criminal law did not effectively run—it is therefore a passing phase.
> b) Restorative justice represents a deliberate tactic on behalf of the paramilitaries to find new means of exerting their control now that violence or other crude threats are less open to them. It is by this means that they can prolong a situation where people turn to them rather than to the forces of the law. (Independent Monitoring Commission Eight Report—February 2006: 5)

In deciding whether or not to recommend progress towards accreditation, the inspectors collected evidence on which of these two interpretations applied to CRJI schemes. The inspectors observed communities organising themselves to resolve internal disputes (including offences) without recourse to the agencies of the state, which reflected their negative experiences of policing over a long period of time. People in republican areas covered by CRJI were tackling problems which they perceived the state as unable or unwilling to help with. The inspection report came down on the more positive view of the Independent Commission (above)—that 'the schemes are still in transition but the direction of travel is positive'. The inspectors concluded:

> The fact that, for historical reasons, the schemes do not normally pass information to the police means that they are not at present operating in accordance with the Protocol. That apart, our finding is that the work of the schemes is lawful and that (though they are not without their critics) they make a positive contribution to the welfare of their communities. The police concur with that view. (Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland 2007b: 31)

The report recommended that the CRJI schemes should be considered for accreditation as soon as they were ready to declare that they were complying with the protocol, and set out several suggestions as to how they might do this. The inspectors also noted the need for funding 'to enable CRJI to train staff to work to the standard required by the Protocol and to improve their record keeping and the secure storage of their files'. Atlantic provided CRJI with interim support to implement the recommendations of the Criminal Justice Inspection pre-inspection report.

A further inspection took place in June 2008 to determine CRJI's accreditation status. The inspectors found that the schemes were operating lawfully and non-coercively, were respecting human rights and beginning to develop a constructive relationship with the PSNI. All ten schemes operated by CRJI were accredited as a result (July 2008). However, in a follow-up inspection involving an examination of case files, CJINI found that since securing accreditation, only one case had been referred by CRJI to the PSNI under the government protocol, which highlighted a need for the current protocol to be reviewed. Despite this, the inspectors found a number of positive developments had occurred in the three years since its last inspection. 'CRJI has become an important part of the voluntary and community sector landscape in parts of Northern Ireland and are integrating their activities as part of local community safety networks' (Criminal Justice Inspection 2011: 13)—see Box 5.2 Vignette: Community Restorative Justice Ireland.

The most recent inspection of republican schemes showed a trend of continuous improvement. In 2014 CJINI assessed the suitability for accreditation of a further two CRJI schemes operating in North Belfast and in South and East Belfast and recommended their accreditation. The inspectors found that the schemes were providing a valuable and distinctive community work function moving away from direct mediation. While paramilitary structures were gone (although the continuing existence of IRA structures has been questioned recently [September 2015]), policing was not yet fully integrated in these areas, and CRJI formed an important

Box 5.2 Vignette: Community Restorative Justice Ireland

CRJI was contacted by Social Services to assist in a case where a young person was acting violently towards his mother. Although several public agencies were aware of the problem, including the victim's doctor, there was no clear advice about how best to respond. CRJI became involved and as a result of an inter-agency meeting encouraged the mother to make a statement which resulted in a non-molestation/exclusion order against her son. The victim made the statement in the office of CRJI but such was the extent of the reported violence that the staff involved deemed it necessary to involve a specialist unit of the PSNI. A CRJI staff member, counsellor and local police officer accompanied the victim to the specialist unit only to find that the official on duty was reluctant to take a statement. The official suggested that because it was 3.30 p.m. it would be better to commence the process the following morning. Those accompanying the victim objected at the highest level arguing that this was tantamount to requesting that 'the mother should go back home and get a fresh black eye and we will do this in the morning'. CRJI offered this as anecdote as an example of their role in helping and supporting victims to come forward to the PSNI and their role building confidence in the community as to the service those coming forward will receive.

Another example cited involved a murder case where a man was beaten to death. A family contacted CRJI to say that they thought their son had been involved in the incident. CRJI offered support for the family during this ordeal. The family was advised by CRJI staff to engage a solicitor and present their son to the police. As a result, two people were arrested including the young person in question although the second suspect was later released. The family of the released man, in turn, contacted CRJI claiming that an armed group was becoming involved and they were fearful for their son's safety. CRJI met with this family and established that their son had not been directly involved in the incident but would act a key prosecution witness in the court proceedings. CRJI communicated this back to those threatening this young person and the threat was lifted. What is interesting here is that CRJI are working to support the families of the victim and the alleged perpetrator. CRJI, for example, will do prison visits and on one of these, their representative was asked for advice on a request by an alleged perpetrator to write a letter to the victim's family. These are complex issues but ones which CRJI feel it is important to be involved in so as to offer support to members of the community. This example is illustrative of what CRJI sees as its wider role in building community confidence in policing through 'engagement around serious criminality and establishing a trust relationship with the PSNI'.

CRJI references a speech given by Justice Minister David Ford (7 June 2010) in which he said 'you can't separate offending behaviour from housing, neither can you separate it from health, nor from social care, nor from education, nor from training and employment'.

In short, NIA and CRJI play a key role in 'joining up the dots' at community level amongst people most affected by or involved in criminality, anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood disputes and threats from armed groups.

bridge between the community and the PSNI. This was sometimes at significant reputational and personal risk, yet it came at a relatively low financial cost (Criminal Justice Inspection NI 2014).

Policy Implementation

The role played by Atlantic Philanthropies in supporting both republican and loyalist community restorative justice schemes was acknowledged in the Criminal Justice Inspection reports, specifically in terms of decreased level of 'punishment' beatings and shootings (see Fig. 5.2). The transformative nature of the schemes operated through CRJI and NIA, whilst recognised by most statutory agencies on the ground, did not however translate into public funding at policy level. The NIO refused to fund these bodies' work until they signed up to the protocol. Atlantic's ongoing support for both schemes was based on the understanding that it would only invest further if there was a clear financial commitment from government and, ultimately, mainstream funding for the work of community restorative justice bodies.

Atlantic persistently pressed the NIO, as well as government bodies and agencies, to match-fund its investment and secured an attractive package of support for NIA. They did so against a backdrop of the NIO Minister's (David Hanson) rather surprising admission that there was no budget for community restorative justice activities, despite leading on the development of the protocol. Atlantic's perseverance eventually paid off in the form of a government funding cocktail. This included 1:1 match-funding from the NIHE and PSNI for the first £100 k of Atlantic's grant and the same match-funding arrangements for the remainder of the grant from the NIO and its agencies. This was a hugely significant development both

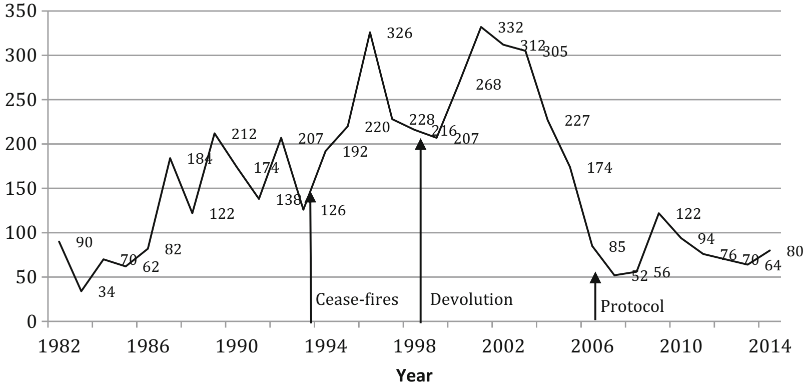

Fig. 5.2 Paramilitary-style attacks

in symbolic and functional terms since it was the first time the NIO had provided core support to community restorative justice schemes. Given the financial backing secured for loyalist NIA, it offered future possibilities for republican organisations to become involved when they became accredited.

NIA and CRJI now deliver a range of core services for statutory organisations, which includes: intensive youth support programmes; family and community support; victim support; action for community transformation (ACT); a schools programme (PACT); detached youth work (Street-by-Street model); mediation and community support (MACS); mediation/restorative conferencing; Belfast Outreach Project; community assistance panels (CAPS); counselling; and training and development. The range of funders supporting NIA and CRJI provides evidence of their credibility with statutory and voluntary organisations and the sustainability of their work.[4]

The largest funder of the schemes is the Department for Social Development's Neighbourhood Renewal Programme within which NIA and CRJI provide a large range of support services, which include the following: youth prevention programmes; intensive youth support for young people involved in anti-social behaviour; family support; parental support;

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[4] Funders include the Department for Social Development; the Northern Ireland Housing Executive; the Police Service of Northern Ireland; Department of Justice; Probation Board; Belfast Health and Social Care Trust; Youth Justice Agency; and Community Foundation Northern Ireland.

youth and adult training/personal development programmes; schools work; bonfire work; interface initiatives; mediation; development of volunteer pools; delivery of volunteer hours; training programmes; and victim support. These services illustrate both the flexibility and breadth of reach of the schemes' activities.

Funders' views of the schemes (in interviews) ranged from effusive in their praise through to supportive of the work they do, based on the principle that 'communities should sit at the heart of community safety'. These perceptions were informed by the schemes' modus operandi. NIA and CRJI are able to do the following: exercise enormous flexibility; take calculated risks; be more imaginative and creative without the spectre of public sector audit; accumulate an in-depth knowledge of what is happening on the ground, which is less accessible for statutory organisations; and, importantly, work outside of normal office hours, when anti-social behaviour is most likely to occur.

NIA and CRJI have perhaps 'undersold' their services, in particular by failing to estimate the savings and positive externalities, benefiting the wider justice family of organisations, which result from the schemes' preventative/diversionary work. Both NIA and CRJI argue that their work preventing or diverting young people from engaging in criminal activities has led to significant savings to the formal criminal justice system, which would otherwise spend about £30 k per capita processing cases through the police and courts. One interviewee from a statutory body described this by way of example:

> NIA or CRJI staff on the ground can intervene at a local level with teenagers hanging out in a seemingly threatening way outside the homes of senior citizens and stop them drinking and generally making a nuisance of themselves. As a result, there is no need to call the police; it lowers the fear of crime amongst residents; people feel safer in their homes; and stability will improve regeneration efforts. How do you put a monetary figure on this work which is done without any fanfare by NIA and CRJI? After all, it takes £77,000 per year to house someone in prison for one year.

Another example given to illustrate the preventative work of CRJI and NIA was the observation that both organisations were stopping young men from being on the receiving end of paramilitary shootings and beatings. This has clear benefits for the potential victim but, as importantly, it ensures community stability and confidence which would be lost if overt paramilitary activity manifested itself – as this would create a sense that the PSNI was unable to police the community ('back to the bad old days').

A partnership relationship has emerged between the restorative justice schemes and statutory bodies over time. With the devolution of policing and justice powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Minister for Justice has placed a strong emphasis on partnership working. In the consultation document *Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities: a New Community Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland* (2011), the Department of Justice (DoJ) commits to continuing its work with the third sector and its intention 'to explore its role in the delivery of community safety solutions at a strategic and local level' (pp. 34–5). Importantly, the DoJ notes:

> We will consider how voluntary and community support groups can deliver value for money solutions, and move away from top down solutions to support community-led schemes … We will consider how to continue to lever funding from other partners to ensure value for money and how to pool resources across boundaries to meet shared goals. (Department of Justice 2011: 35)

This indicates a partnership relationship between the DoJ and the other bodies involved, rather than its acting as a commissioner of services between government and schemes such as NIA and CRJI.

Some funders (such as NIHE and the PSNI) already refer to NIA and CRJI as 'partners' in performing their own roles and acknowledge that they can do things which statutory bodies would find difficult. As one Assistant Chief Constable said, 'we cannot work without these guys'. An example provided by the PSNI is that in one area of Belfast (unnamed to protect the source of information) there had been four murders, and a restorative practice organisation was able to assist in facilitating access to witnesses and the production of witness statements – these proved invaluable to the police. The PSNI have argued that they now have strong reciprocal relationships with NIA and CRJI which go well beyond the mere provision of services. The CRJI view of the police was best reflected in their 2011–2012 annual report, which said:

> There has been substantive evidence of how much the police value and rely on specific, and also, more generic interventions … Formal feedback, from both the PSNI and the Northern Ireland Policing Board, has recorded the increasingly positive trend in relationships between CRJI and policing …The relationship

> is not superficial or cosy—rather it is based on pragmatic, honest dialogue … Within the PSNI, local District Commanders have requested increased CRJI activity in their areas … (cited in Criminal Justice Inspection NI 2014: 17)

It is clear that the political context in Northern Ireland has since the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and, with that, restorative justice schemes have moved on from their original mission of providing an alternative option for young people who 'came to the attention' of paramilitaries because of anti-social behaviour. Such schemes now work in partnership with many statutory organisations using their restorative practice skills in other public policy areas where mediation is required (e.g., education and neighbourhood disputes). What is also clear is that as political stability has become embedded, mutilations, torture, beatings and exiling can no longer come within the purview of an 'acceptable level of violence' or be seen as part of the imperfections of the peace process. The support from and endorsement of Atlantic Philanthropies have played an important part

Table 5.1 Community-based restorative justice schemes—the transition

Informal 'Justice' (1970–mid 1990s)	*Community restorative justice (1994–2006)*	*Regulated community restorative justice (2007 onwards)*
Absence of legitimate policing service in loyalist and republican areas; Paramilitary organisations 'police' their own communities; Tariff system of 'punishment' operates; Due process ignored and no protection for rights of alleged perpetrators	Non-violent alternative schemes set up: *Northern Ireland Alternatives* (loyalist) and *Community Restorative Justice* (nationalist) schemes operate outside government/police control; Loyalists 'co-operate' with police; republicans eschew RUC/PSNI schemes funded by Atlantic Philanthropies	Government produces protocol (2007) to accredit community-based schemes; New regulated schemes can deal only with low-level offences referred to them by Public Prosecution Service; Schemes required to operate in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in their interaction with young victims and offenders; NIA and CRJI receive accreditation (2007 and 2008, respectively) from Criminal Justice Inspection; Schemes provide restorative services to a range of statutory organisations

in ‘normalising’ restorative justice schemes and making them an integral part of the formal criminal justice scheme—the transition is set out in Table 5.1.

There are however limitations to the assessment of impact through examining statistics showing a decline in paramilitary-style attacks (Fig. 5.2 above), not least because of our inability to isolate cause-and-effect variables in the restorative justice schemes and establish the counterfactual position—in the absence of the schemes, beatings and shootings could have been a lot higher. The level of ‘punishment’ attacks may be influenced by extraneous factors, positively and negatively, over which restorative justice activists have no control. The paramilitary ceasefires of August and October 1994 witnessed a significant decrease in the number of shootings, which reached their lowest recorded level, but beatings simultaneously increased to their highest recorded level, hence the spike in Fig. 5.2. This was a technical cop-out by paramilitaries who could claim they were not breaking the conditions of the ceasefires—instead of shooting those involved in anti-social behaviour, they beat them. The introduction of restorative justice programmes seemed to have had a short-term effect on the overall level of paramilitary attacks but numbers increased to the highest recorded levels in 2001. Since then, the trend has been downward, although the problem has not been eradicated, as loyalist paramilitaries now involved in drug dealing resort to their old punitive tactics and dissident republicans still engage in these barbaric activities.

The loyalist turf feud between factional paramilitary groups in the Shankill (Belfast) in 2000, for example, probably resulted in a number of ‘housekeeping’ attacks by paramilitaries. During that period, wider political developments in the peace process were in trouble. The Northern Ireland Assembly was indefinitely suspended in October 2002 for the fourth time since devolution (December 1999) due to ‘a lack of trust and loss of confidence on both sides of the community’ according to the Secretary of State (Reid 2002: 201). This stemmed from concerns about Sinn Féin’s commitment to exclusively democratic and non-violent means and accusations by each community that the other did not endorse the full operation and implementation of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. Developments in the wider political landscape such as police reforms and the changes in the criminal justice system have therefore impacted on the continuance or otherwise of ‘punishment’ attacks. It is also unrealistic to expect restorative justice schemes in isolation to tackle the systemic causes of anti-social behaviour: poverty, unemployment, urban decay and the wider social, political and economic milieu in which community violence exists. Disentangling the evidence emerging from the good work of restorative justice schemes in a context of significant political reform is problematic. Proving a cause and effect relationship between restorative justice and declining paramilitary-style attacks is equally difficult. At the very least, the schemes supported wider political changes and Atlantic Philanthropies' role was pivotal in making restorative justice an integral part of the formal criminal justice system.

In writing this chapter there is a temptation to apply greater retrospective rationality to the end product than existed on the journey to secure formal acceptance of the restorative justice system. Atlantic programme executives, at the time, were highly attuned to the criticism that they attracted by supporting these community groups (NAI and CRJI). They did however take a calculated risk that the end goal of significantly reducing paramilitary beatings and shootings justified their actions. What is different about this case study is that Atlantic was much more interventionist here than in other projects, where it tended to select NGOs with a good track record in their field and leave them to deliver the tasks in hand. While Atlantic fully supported those organisations with which it worked on restorative justice, it had to trust that its inevitable engagement with paramilitary groups was a risk worth taking. It is of course easy to write about this with hindsight and given the successful outcomes. At the time, however, this demanded a steely nerve by Atlantic, particularly when restorative justice came under significant criticism from government. Atlantic believed, for example, that the government's motive in introducing the protocol was to close CRJ groups down, in the knowledge that the protocol would present compliance problems, rather than a genuine attempt to introduce openness and accountability. When the protocol was agreed and the government opened up the possibility of the NAI and CRJI receiving funding, Atlantic Philanthropies pushed hard for the groups to take this route, despite their reservations and preference to be funded independently by external benefactors instead. Atlantic's insistence that this source of funding would be reduced and eventually end 'forced the hand' of the groups and government to seek a long-term sustainable solution, as the latter became increasingly convinced of the merits of restorative practice. Atlantic programme executives therefore played a much more overt role than they had in their other projects, by advocating for systemic change in this field and, at the same time, supporting the community groups involved. To apply a priori a logic model to what unfolded is to perhaps imply a degree of pre-planning and carefully thought-out stages of development which did not exist in practice. The most obvious features of this case study are the following: the hands-on role played by Atlantic Philanthropies because of the high risk factors; Atlantic's reaction to events on the ground; its much greater intervention with the groups which it supported, as compared to its level of involvement in other projects; a stronger lead on Atlantic's own motives; and, Atlantic firm steer on moving from its role as an external funder to pushing the government and public sector organisations to fund restorative justice as a valuable service.

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CHAPTER 6

Human Rights-Based Approach

Problem Definition

The case studies outlined in Chaps. 3, 4, and 5 could be broadly described as reconciliation approaches to peacebuilding, involving the following: bottom-up human dynamics and relationship-building; the creation of trust as a prerequisite to working together and breaking down barriers; and the importance of processes as much, or more than, the eventual product (the 'how' as much as, or at least before, the 'what') (Bland 2002). The Northern Ireland peacebuilding model has been hailed as a success and shared with other conflict countries for the purposes of comparative learning (see examples in Wilson 2010). Critics of a reconciliation approach, however, may be concerned that it allows relationship-building to predominate over the challenge function, ignores power differentials between those being reconciled and neglects the role of the state in creating or maintaining divisions (McVeigh 2002; Lamb 2010).

A complementary model is a human rights-based approach, the aim of which is to both challenge and hold government and public bodies to account for their commitments to 'rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity' as set out in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement 1998 and their obligations under subsequent agreements at St Andrews (2006), Hillsborough Castle (2010) and the Stormont House Agreement (2014). Human rights work is primarily about addressing governments; it focuses on issues of accountability; it is informed by law and legally imposed frameworks; it is a mixture of 'soft' and 'hard' law; and it relies greatly

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on international concepts, standards, and campaigning (Harvey 2001). There have been tensions between advocates of these two approaches. Human rights work could be, and is often, described by its critics as too legalistic, too state-centric, and too focused on international principles to successfully affect local realities and divisions. Law is almost by definition (particularly for those used to the common law tradition) seen as a confrontational and adversarial tool. For many, this is a positive attribute—in that the law redresses alienation and mediates conflict so that worse (violent) responses are not resorted to.[1] Reconciliation advocates privilege conciliation/mediation over legal processes. They argue that working with marginalised and disempowered groups cannot be rushed and needs to be taken at their pace. This is particularly true where people become involved in initiatives for the first time. While the basic concepts of rights are simple and easy to grasp, the language can be seen as legal and jargonistic and people can disengage very quickly. Conscious effort therefore needs to be made to keep things simple and to move at the pace of those involved—this involves relational approaches. Atlantic Philanthropies' support for human rights work is predicated on the belief that reconciliation cannot be secured without, at the same time, addressing and protecting people's rights.

Gormally (2012: 1) offers the following definitions: human rights work relies on the standards of international human rights law to hold the state to account for abuses and to strengthen the protection and promotion of rights through the rule of law; reconciliation seeks to build positive and peaceful relationships between groups of people who have been, or may be, in conflict. Beirne and Knox (2014) have argued that there is significant room for interdependence in human rights and reconciliation approaches to peacebuilding as human rights provide the overarching framework within which reconciliation work and a needs-based integrated approach reside (see Fig. 6.1 and Table 6.1). Good relationships cannot feasibly be built on a basis of inequality or injustice. Just as self-evidently, inequality and injustice will not be secured over the longer term without breaking down the barriers of misunderstanding and hostility kept alive by those with an interest in unaccountable power. If the linkages between

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[1] The Universal Declaration of Human Rights notes in one of its pre-ambular paragraphs that its origins lie in part in the belief that 'it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law'. See also Dickson (2010).

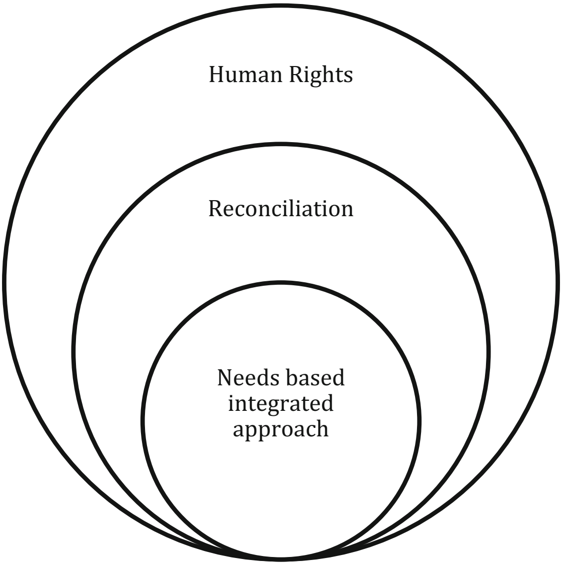

Fig. 6.1 Reconciliation and human rights—a nested model

rights and reconciliation remain merely implicit, good opportunities for synergy in the two approaches are being lost. Gormally (2012: 7) notes:

> A human rights approach to peace building involves first the identification, investigation and accountability of human rights abuses, second a process of fundamental reform of the state and its institutions to prevent such abuses occurring again, and third the construction of a society based on justice and equality in order to remove the causes and occasions of conflict.

To link these points to our earlier discussions on Aiken's social learning model of transitional justice (see Chap. 1), Aiken argued that post-conflict reconciliation demanded, inter alia, the amelioration of structural and material inequalities. The human rights approach supported by Atlantic Philanthropies here does just that. It has funded a range of organisations which adopt a rights-based approach to peacebuilding—a summary of these projects is listed in Table 6.2.

The human rights-based approach has advocates and detractors. Spencer (2010), drawing on interviews with organisations across Ireland

Table 6.1 Reconciliation and human rights—characteristics

Human rights-based approach	*An integrated approach*	*Reconciliation approach*
Characteristics	Characteristics	Characteristics
Relationship between individuals/groups with valid claims (rights holders) and state/non-state actors with obligations (duty bearers); Holding the state to account; Legalistic international law and standards ;Tackle structural inequalities; Address outstanding legacies of the conflict; Support human rights and equality institutions set up under Good Friday Agreement; Promote Bill of Rights; Outcomes-based	Focus on 'where people are at' in their daily lives; Tackle social and economic deprivation which impact on quality of life; Use joint reconciliation and human rights approaches to address needs; Improvements in poor public services (health, education, housing) which compound poor life chances; Less explicit use of human rights language or reconciliation (cross-community) motives; Organic growth in trust-building within a human rights framework; Process and outcomes based	Trust-building; Relationship formation; Contact hypothesis—sustained and constructive interaction with 'the other'; More 'friendly' than the language of rights; Negotiate with the 'other' while respecting her/his identity; Interdependent and shared society; A workable *Together: Building a United Community* strategy; Bottom-up peacebuilding through NGOs and community groups; Process as important (or more important) than product

working in this field, found support for the role of a strong autonomous community sector acting as agents of change who could empower the disadvantaged to challenge decision-makers and hold them to account. This approach, however, demands capacity-building amongst those suffering disadvantage. As one participant noted:

> There are manageable small things that can be done to engage communities on their issues and break down their perceptions about what human rights are about. They are the people which could challenge a government that wanted to close down the Human Rights and Equality Commissions in Northern Ireland. (cited in Spencer 2010: 15)

The approach drew some scepticism about such community groups trying to empower the disadvantaged when it was unclear if these groups

Table 6.2 NI Groups which adopt rights-based approach

Grantee	*Grant purpose*
Committee on the Administration of Justice (HR Trust)	To protect human rights and support the development of sustainable and independent capacity to ensure that human rights principles and standards are reflected in law and policy in Northern Ireland. Focus areas include dealing with past abuses, criminal justice and equality monitoring
Law Centre NI	To enhance the capacity of the Law Centre to protect rights and increase access to justice and services in areas within the direct competency of the NI Executive (e.g., social care and welfare, employment, tribunal reform and legal aid)
Disability Action	To secure better rights and protections for people with disabilities and to increase the participation of people with disabilities in policymaking
Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM)	To enable NICEM to secure better rights protections and improve access to justice and services for minority ethnic communities. Focus on monitoring government actions on implementing the Race Equality Strategy
Human Rights Consortium	To support civil society in securing better rights protections and to build a broad coalition of support for human rights and equality. To maintain capacity to hold government to account by supporting independent actions across all sections of NI community and to support campaigns for specific policy and practice change. To continue and complete campaigning work regarding a Bill of Rights for NI
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	To protect and promote human rights by enabling the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to develop a Human Rights Education and Training programme for the Northern Ireland Civil Service
South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP)	To enable STEP to secure better rights protections and improve access to justice and services for minority ethnic communities. Focus on monitoring government actions on implementing the Race Equality Strategy
Community Foundation for Northern Ireland	To support the development of community-driven advocacy efforts and facilitate connections and networks with policymakers and politicians. A rights-based approach to community development
	To support the engagement of disadvantaged communities in shaping how public services are delivered by local councils. Enabling communities to influence public service delivery
Public Interest Litigation Fund	To support the advancement and protection of human rights through promoting the use of strategic litigation in Northern Ireland
Participation and the Practice of Rights Project	To support and enable marginalised communities to bring about changes in public policy by using a human rights-based approach

could bring about a shift in a system which was unresponsive to them. Legal language can be unfamiliar to community groups working on social justice issues—it can cause antagonism with duty-bearers[2] and create expectations within communities that their problems can be resolved immediately. Critics argued that the primary focus should be on those with the power to deliver the change that was needed. 'We can't keep working with umpteen residents' groups—it's not sustainable' (cited in Spencer 2010: 23).

Agenda-Setting: A Case Study

The human rights-based models funded by Atlantic Philanthropies in Northern Ireland started from the premise that political agreement and the absence of violence result in the development of progressive equality and rights mechanisms designed to address inequalities, discrimination and sectarianism. Largely based on international standards, the full potential of these mechanisms has not been fully realised. For example, the devolved government (Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly) has paid lip service to its obligations in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. The 'problem definition' in this context is therefore how to call government to account for its legal obligations under peace agreements and various international human rights treaties and conventions[3] —'speaking truth to power'. By voluntarily adhering to treaties such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), states have agreed to establish systems of monitoring and analysis to assist them in implementing their human rights obligations. However, these general commitments are in sharp contrast to the level of implementation at the domestic level. Government departments and statutory bodies do not see themselves as duty-bearers with human rights obligations under international law—more as service delivery agencies wherein 'human rights' have no practical bearing on operational issues.

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[2] Duty-bearers are those actors who have a particular obligation or responsibility to respect, promote and realise human rights and to abstain from human rights violations. The term is most commonly used to refer to state actors, but non-state actors can also be considered duty-bearers.

[3] UN Declaration of Human Rights, the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the UN Convention for the Eradication of Discrimination Against Women, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the European Social Charter and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Communities in Northern Ireland, for example, suffering acute socio-economic disadvantage, combined with their experiences of the conflict, felt a deep sense of alienation from the 'peace dividend' (discussed in Chap. 4). Marginalised groups do not however view social and economic deprivation as abuses of their human rights. Using appropriate interventions models, affected groups have begun to articulate both their issues and their demands through a human rights framework which goes beyond simple assertions that 'I have a right to …' and actually holds the relevant statutory body accountable for standards which the government has signed up to. It should be noted that participation and accountability need to be addressed together as part of the power relationship in which human rights are realised or violated—i.e., accountability should be on the basis of participation by the affected group in accordance with human rights standards. Atlantic therefore supported communities to build a new society based on human rights standards and principles. We use the example of the PPR project to illustrate the outworking of this approach.

Participation and Practice of Rights (PPR)

The overall aim of this approach was to impact on power relationships through creating an understanding of how knowledge and ownership of a package of tools of rights could enable the powerless to reconstruct their relationship with the powerful. Effective participation by communities experiencing disadvantage could increase accountability of the state. The intention therefore was to promote the practice of rights through raising awareness of domestic and international human rights instruments and standards, and build the capacity in marginalised communities and groups to use them to achieve substantive equality. In short, these communities should be afforded equal opportunity, access to and improvements in public services.

In the PPR project the underlying principle that informed its work was that disadvantaged communities can secure increased access to their rights when they are able to participate in decisions which affect them and frame their concerns in a rights-based way. The PPR project therefore worked for the application of international and national human rights standards at local level, with an emphasis on social and economic rights in local marginalised communities. Grass-roots participation drives the PPR approach—local communities engage with duty-bearers to achieve changes in policy and practice. The power of the project lies in the ability of marginalised groups to name their issues of concern, articulate them in human rights terms and identify the change they want to see (see example in Box 6.1).

Box 6.1: Participation and Practice of Rights: Housing Need Example

Rathcoole Regeneration Group, supported by PPR, have welcomed the decision by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to rent out 30 publicly owned but empty flats in their area to address housing need, but are insistent that much more needs to be done to fulfil housing rights obligations impacting their community. This decision by the NIHE was to take effect on Monday 18 May 2015 and followed an effective campaigning action by residents.

Right to Housing: Action and Answers

On Wednesday 13 May 2015, residents from the Rathcoole estate in Newtownabbey were joined by Equality Can't Wait and Homeless Action activists for a public action at the NIHE and the offices of the Minister for Social Development calling for urgent action and answers. Rathcoole residents presented a petition with 1,000 signatures from people in the community demanding that the NIHE and minister act immediately to open up and rent out approximately 100 publicly owned flats which have been available, yet vacant, in their estate for around four years. The group made a freedom of information request enquiring who had taken the decision to keep the flats empty and on what basis; the NIHE levied charges for this request, which the group now paid using Monopoly money (£887.50). At the time of writing, Rathcoole residents are also planning to send a letter to the Social Development Committee at Stormont calling for an investigation into this unacceptable situation.

Driving People to Homelessness

Residents are claiming that the failure by the minister and the NIHE to rent out these flats has effectively driven people to homelessness. Robert Law, originally from Rathcoole, has been homeless since February 2015 and is living in a Belfast hostel. He said:

> I have now been in two Belfast homeless hostels since my tenancy broke down and I was made homeless in January. I cannot understand why I am living in a hostel, far away from my family and friends, when there are perfectly good apartments—owned by the NIHE—lying empty in my community. There is no reason why I should be homeless! They need to get their act together.

Since March 2015 residents discovered, through Freedom of Information requests and Assembly Questions, that despite spending almost £3 m of public money refurbishing a block of 52 flats in Glencoole House between 2009 and 2011, approximately 30 of the flats in this block are lying empty. Along with the neighbouring blocks of Monscoole, Abbotscoole and Carncoole there are approximately 100 vacant apartments in total.

According to the Housing Executive, there were 216 households in housing stress in the Rathcoole area as of March 2015. Of these, 207 required one-to-two bedrooms—all of whom may find the apartments suitable homes. Indeed, residents are quick to point out that by renting out the flats the waiting list in Rathcoole could be massively reduced by almost 50 %.

A Failure of Accountability and Transparency

When residents submitted a Freedom of Information request on 13 March to find out who had taken the decision not to rent out the flats and why, they were informed on 9 April that they would have to pay £887.50 for the information. They reduced their questions significantly from four to two questions, to try and avoid charges, only to be told that they would still have to pay £825.

David Crooks, a local community activist who has supported the campaign, said:

> It is a crazy and disgraceful situation. Every time we ask questions about why these flats are left empty, we are given vague and puzzling responses—or being or asked to pay over £800! What are they hiding from the community? We need answers and we will be sending information to the Social Development Committee to consider.
>
> The Rathcoole estate has been neglected for years by ministers and the NIHE—and the community is being gutted. Young people cannot get access to social housing in the area and are being told to move elsewhere. Some try to go private, but we have lost count of the numbers who come to us with horror stories about the cost and the poor conditions of private rental accommodation.
>
> This needs to change, and change now. We don't need promises of additional social housing in the future when there is an abundance of empty properties now that can be used for people in dire need in our

> community. We need regeneration, and we need to start with renovating and opening these flats now.

Dessie Donnelly from PPR said:

> What is happening in Rathcoole is as puzzling as it is unacceptable. How does the NIHE spend £3 m on flats and then leave them lying empty for years when there is plenty of people on the list who are in dire need of such accommodation? In fact, by keeping the flats closed more and more people are added to the list when there is housing available.
>
> Why was this decision taken? Who took the decision? Why is this information being withheld constantly from the community? And when will the flats be opened? All of these questions need answers—and people in the NIHE, the Department, or indeed current or previous Ministers need to be held accountable.

Rathcoole residents are continuing to campaign for the remainder of the flats to be opened for rent, as well as for answers to their freedom of information request so as to prevent decisions like this being taken again.

Source: Participation and Practice of Rights 2015.

In general terms, PPR aims to improve the quality of life of individuals on the margins of society by making connections between the world of human rights and the world of disadvantaged/vulnerable communities. They ensure that those who are experiencing poverty and social exclusion are enabled to identify and access the rights affecting their daily lives. As such, this project uses methods and skills that allow communities and groups to take ownership of tools of rights and set their own definitions or indicators for the implementation of international standards in areas of health, education and housing. These indicators are relevant to the specific conditions of marginalised communities, and are used to achieve improved access to the delivery of such services.

Human rights have, at their heart, the concepts of participation and accountability—but such concepts are not the lived experience of those working at community level. Thus, PPR operated in the context of deepening and developing standards of good governance so that deficits of accountability were challenged and changed in such a way that this improved access to justice for those who needed it most. Such a framework, because it enabled the empowerment of people in poverty, is fundamentally a support to the involvement of excluded groups in public affairs and may contribute to reversing otherwise unjust social and economic outcomes for people on the margins of society. This approach formed the basis of the theory of change in this human rights-based approach (see Fig. 6.2).

One issue of importance in the outworking of this model is the context within which a human rights-based model is understood in Northern Ireland. The legacy of the conflict links civil rights directly to nationalist and republican demands from the state. The corollary of this is that unionists and loyalists feel alienated from the concept of civil rights because they looked to the unionist state in the past to uphold their rights. Hence, promoting a model based on the objective needs of communities proved challenging. The connection between day-to-day issues and international standards is at the heart of the model and the modus operandi involved bottom-up participation and accountability approaches in order to safeguard the economic and social rights of the

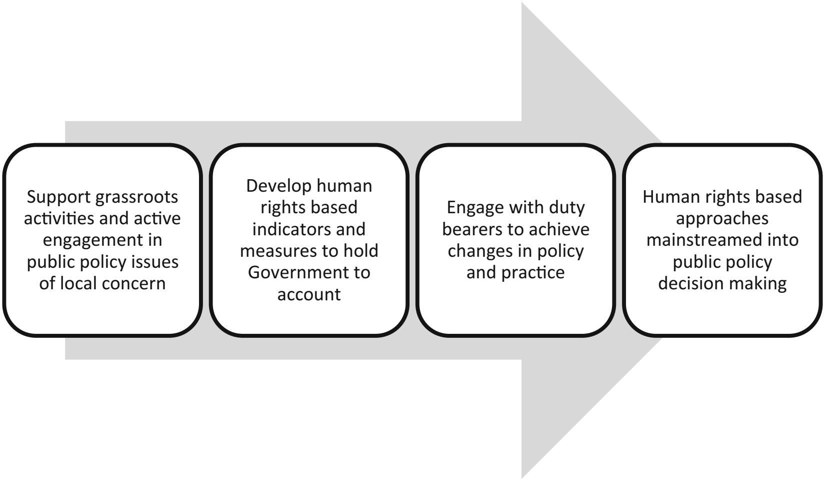
Support grassroots activities and active engagement in public policy issues of local concern
Develop human rights based indicators and measures to hold Government to account
Engage with duty bearers to achieve changes in policy and practice
Human rights based approaches mainstreamed into public policy decision making

Fig. 6.2 Theory of change: PPR human-rights-based approach

most vulnerable. In that sense, the model should resonate with both main communities whose economic and social rights have been violated in the most deprived areas of Northern Ireland.

POLICY INTERVENTIONS

The origins of this rights-based approach are rooted in a social justice model of policy intervention emerging from an all-Ireland debate between international human rights experts, lawyers, community activists, anti-poverty groups and academics. A feasibility study was conducted in 2004 to consider ways of developing a human rights-based approach to local level issues in North Dublin and North Belfast. The study highlighted the need to develop and test a model of intervention which would operationalise participation and practice of rights at the level of communities. The aim of such an intervention was to promote an awareness of human rights instruments and standards and assist marginalised communities to use them in accessing services and achieving equality. This approach sought to challenge/change public policy and improve the lives of people who experience social injustice and inequality of access to major public services such as health, education and housing.

The Model

The PPR project developed a nine-step model as a way of implementing their approach in practice (Source: PPR Submission to Atlantic Philanthropies, May 2005). This is set out below.

Step 1: Identification of, and engagement with, individuals and groups experiencing the most egregious examples of lack of access to services and equality.

The model is premised on the concept of participation as crucial to the practice of rights. It therefore takes as its starting point the individuals and groups most directly affected, in order that they can name and frame the issue as it applies to them. This intensity of engagement is, in itself, a lengthy yet necessary and worthwhile step. Because those involved are the most marginalised and disadvantaged members of society, intense resources and efforts are needed to secure their engagement, and yet it is only that engagement that can ensure that the project is addressing real issues that affect everyday lives. Participatory action research and training makes the link between social and rights issues and has proved to be a very successful method of engagement. The end product is a clear vision of the particular issues which is grounded in the experience of those directly affected.

Step 2: Sustained work with individuals and groups, as well as all other relevant stakeholders, to frame issues in a rights context.

The language and concepts of rights are often seen as legal and technical at best, and off-putting at worst. There is a need to engage in a sustained programme of work at all levels. Local individuals and groups who begin to articulate their experiences need continuous education and support, but those who work with them also need the confidence to assert these rights. There is therefore the need for ongoing training for local groups, as well as the opportunity to share information and learning with others engaged in the project. The end product is a body of people at the local level who are willing, prepared and able to engage in and challenge issues which affect their daily lives.

Step 3: Setting the legal and policy context.

A potential failure of the model is to look at problems of access to services and justice as individual issues in isolation, rather than in the policy and legal framework within which they operate. Sorting one problem out for one person for one day is meaningless unless the root cause of the problem can be identified and addressed so that the lives of others in the same situation can be improved. The process of mapping out where decisions are made, what the law says and what the policy says are essential tools before any issue can be addressed in a way that could bring about systemic rather than tokenistic change. The end product is a clear picture of where local or national laws or policies are failing to meet internationally agreed human rights standards.

Step 4: Use of networks of support, and sharing learning.

The history of the project is one of bringing ‘unusual’ groups of people together to share learning and experiences. The coalition involved in this project is unique in its make-up in that it has at its disposal a network of over 600 groups, individuals and organisations from across Ireland, North and South, who have followed or been involved in this project from the beginning. In addition, a network of international experts and advisers are on hand to provide support and advice to the initiative. Challenging the status quo and asserting one's rights can often be an isolating or unpopular experience, and local workers identified the existence of these national and international networks as crucially important. The end product is a national and international context that serves to highlight the commonality of issues and problems that cannot easily be dismissed.

Step 5: Development of benchmarks and indicators.

The inspiration for this model came from the reality of the absence of the 'progressive realisation' of rights at the local level.[4] All the preceding steps in this model must lead to the affected groups and individuals developing their own measurable indicators for change around the selected issue. These can be based on international learning and examples, but ultimately must be real to the local community, and must be actually capable of showing progress or the lack of it. The end product is a meaningful framework under which marginalised communities can measure the extent to which their rights are actually being progressively realised or protected.

Step 6: Measurement of progress against benchmarks.
Step 7: Engagement with agencies of governance responsible for delivery on these issues.
Step 8: Use of national and international pressure.
Step 9: Change in policy.

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[4] The concept of "progressive realization" describes a central aspect of States' obligations in connection with economic, social and cultural rights under international human rights treaties. At its core is the obligation to take appropriate measures towards the full realization of economic, social and cultural rights to the maximum of their available resources. The reference to "resource availability" reflects a recognition that the realization of these rights can be hampered by a lack of resources and can be achieved only over a period of time. Equally, it means that a State's compliance with its obligation to take appropriate measures is assessed in the light of the resources—financial and others—available to it. Many national constitutions also allow for the progressive realization of some economic, social and cultural rights (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2008).

Once the benchmarks are in place, it becomes easier for the local community to measure change, and it is at this stage of the model that the steps become more interlinked. The information arising from local monitoring needs to be continually used to engage with politicians, decision-makers and service providers in order to bring about change. The communities have at their disposal real and reliable data that is based on the experiences of local people. This process of engagement and accountability will not only open up participation by marginalised groups, but will also be grounded in real experience and thus capable of offering service providers solutions to the problems. These, by the nature of the project, will be rights-based solutions which will, in turn, assist the government in meeting its international human rights obligations. The end product will therefore be a change in policy that directly benefits the particular constituency that has suffered, as well as enabling the governments to better fulfil their international obligations. The model is summarised in Table 6.3 and Fig. 6.3.

Table 6.3 Participation and practice of rights—nine-step model

Steps in the model	*End product*
Step 1: Identification of and engagement with individuals and groups' most egregious examples of lack of access to services and equality.	The end product is a clear vision of the particular issues, which is grounded in the experience of those directly affected.
Step 2: Sustained work with the individuals and groups, as well as other relevant stakeholders, to frame issues in a rights context.	The end product is a body of people at local level who are willing, prepared and able to engage in and challenge issues which affect their daily lives.
Step 3: Setting the legal and policy context.	The end product is a clear picture of where local and national laws or policies are failing to meet internationally agreed human rights standards.
Step 4: Use of network of support to progress issues and shared learning.	The end product is awareness of national and international contexts that serve to highlight the commonality of issues and problems that cannot easily be dismissed.
Step 5: Development of benchmarks and indicators.	The end product is a meaningful framework under which marginalised communities can measure the extent to which their rights are actually being progressively realised or protected.

(*continued*)

Table 6.3 (continued)

Steps in the model	*End product*
Step 6: Measurement of progress against benchmarks. Step 7: Engagement with agencies of governance responsible for the delivery on these issues. Step 8: Use of national and international pressure. Step 9: Change in policy.	The end product is a change in policy that directly benefits the particular constituency that has suffered as well as enabling the governments to better fulfil their international obligations.

Source: PPR Submission to Atlantic Philanthropies (May 2005)

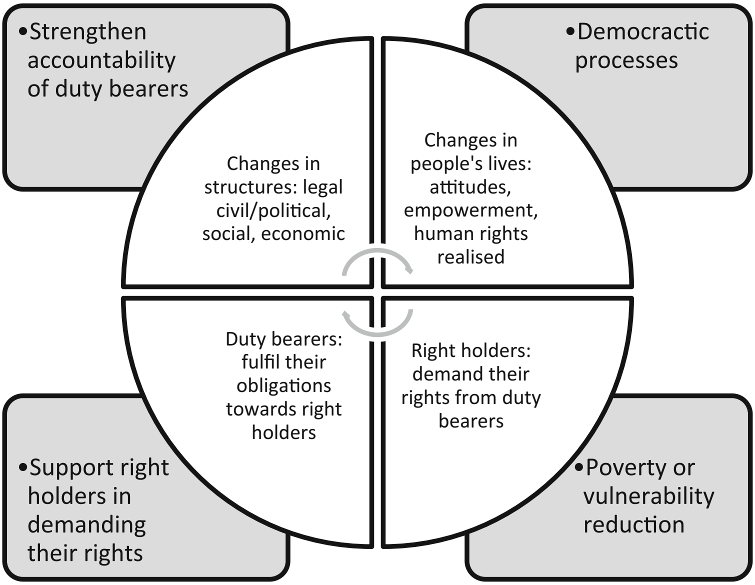
•Strengthen accountability of duty bearers
•Democractic processes
Changes in structures: legal civil/political, social, economic
Changes in people's lives: attitudes, empowerment, human rights realised
Duty bearers: fulfil their obligations towards right holders
Right holders: demand their rights from duty bearers
•Support right holders in demanding their rights
•Poverty or vulnerability reduction

Fig. 6.3 Modelling participation and practice of rights

Those leading the PPR model have argued:

> We suggest this model of working relies on at least three factors: the meaningful participation of communities affected by the issues; sustained support from individuals or NGOs who are familiar with human rights law, tools and mechanisms and are committed to working with affected communities

> to support their campaigns; and, flexibility on the part of all involved to apply these tools or develop new approaches when and where appropriate. (Marshall et al. 2014: 78)

PPR's approach to 'meaningful participation' requires a significant investment in capacity-building with community groups and activists. This has included the creation of a series of modules on the following: confidence-building; international human rights standards; identification of issues; action research; setting benchmarks and indicators; developing tactics and strategies; understanding power; and preparing for engagement with government. 'The programme's focus on identifying human rights concerns facilitates a paradigm shift for participant groups to recognise their identified issues within the human rights framework' (Marshall et al. 2014: 67).

The Interventions

Four examples are discussed here[5] as indicative of the work of PPR, which is described by its staff as follows:

> Participation and Practice of Rights puts the power of human rights at the service of those who need it most. We support marginalised people to assert their rights in practical ways and make real social and economic change in their communities. (Participation and Practice of Rights 2015)

Seven Tours

Seven Towers is a high-rise housing complex in North Belfast which suffered from decades of neglect and poor maintenance. The Seven Towers Monitoring Group (STMG) was first established with the assistance of PPR in January 2007. The group consulted with residents and identified a range of issues of concern where it could apply a 'human rights-based approach' to the flats' landlord, the NIHE (a public body within the Department for Social Development). These issues were as follows: pigeon waste, number of families living in the Towers, sewerage problems, dampness and mould, complaints resolution and resident involvement in decision-making.

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[5] Materials in this section draw directly from external evaluation reports: Deloitte Consulting (2009); Participation and Practice of Rights: Evaluation Report; Boyd Associates (2011) Mid-term Report from the 2009–2011 External Evaluation of PPR; AM Hegarty Consulting (2010) Strategic Review of the Work of PPR: 2009–2010; and, Brookhall Consulting Services (2014) Evaluation of PPR 2011–2014.

The STMG developed indicators against these issues, set targets for each (explicitly linked to international standards) and gathered baseline information against each indicator. Duty-bearers (from the Department for Social Development [DSD] and NIHE) attended a public hearing in June 2007 at which international experts commented on the indicators, targets and baseline. Shortly after that, the minister responsible visited the STMG and committed DSD/NIHE to working with the group to monitor progress against the indicators. Four progress updates were then completed over the next 18 months (which DSD/NIHE co-operated with by providing relevant information) and another public hearing was completed in January 2009. The STMG also submitted a shadow report to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and provided oral evidence in Geneva in May 2009. By late 2009 progress had been made on some of the issues. A significant number of families had been rehoused (although there were more to go). The NIHE had initiated regular pigeon-waste cleaning and had put up nets over landings to minimise pigeon access. The entire sewage system had been replaced in all Seven Towers. Indicators changed over time and included new issues around the heating system in the complex.

Overall, the STMG was successful in securing ministerial support for official engagement in new monitoring and resident engagement structures. Officials have honoured that commitment, and whilst they have not attended all hearings, senior officials have met directly with the group to discuss each set of monitoring results and have also provided data to the group that previously would have had to have been secured through freedom of information requests. Securing and maintaining this substantial shift in residents' influence has required extensive continual effort on the part of the group, including not just quantitative evidence gathering, but also mobilisation of the wider residents, commissioning of independent research, a lot of media work and also direct protest action. Clearly this tenacity has shifted NIHE and DSD approaches to resident engagement and also resulted in substantial changes in service delivery, but there was still some way to go before service providers would overtly accept the legitimacy of the rights-based arguments being put forward by the group.

Those involved in implementing the PPR model stress that participation is at the core of this approach but working with the most marginalised communities presented many challenges. For example in the Seven

Towers, residents had become so disconnected and disempowered that innovative and engaging methods to involve them had to be developed, and this took time and persistence. As PPR staff reported:

> Community groups are faced with so many challenges that taking the additional time to work through participation is challenging. We are very clear that the investment in time, energy, commitment and resources to enable participation is the required foundation for this model. It would have been easy to revert to an advocacy approach to get 'results'. But the real result is creating the capacity and belief in participation. We have learnt useful and serious lessons on ways of doing so. (Participation and Practice of Rights 2006: 8)

What this quotation illustrates is the *alternative* to an advocacy strategy evident in other work funded by Atlantic Philanthropies and described in the course of this book. Advocacy is portrayed here as disempowering or at least excluding those most impacted by human rights abuses on the part of duty-holders. In short, PPR have argued that their role was not to advocate on behalf of marginalised groups but rather to build capacity within communities to hold the state to account for abuses of their social and economic rights.

Belfast Mental Health Rights Group (BMHRG)

Consultations in 2006 with two mental health groups in Northern Ireland (Public Initiative for Prevention of Suicide [PIPS] and Reaching Across to Reduce Your Risk of Suicide [RAYS]) highlighted some interest in the PPR human-rights-based approach to mental health as an important issue, and led to the formation of Belfast Mental Health Rights Group (BMHRG). Wider interest in this area of work was kicked off by a conference hosted by PPR in November 2006, entitled 'Making and Measuring Change: a Human Rights Based Approach to Health'.

After completing a range of training, BMHRG identified the following key issues to focus on:

- Receipt of follow-up appointments by accident and emergency (A & E) patients presenting with mental health issues;
- Appropriateness of general practitioner (GP) approach to mental health issues;
- Mental health service user complaint system; and
- Involvement of mental health service users in service decision-making.

The group identified relevant indicators and targets and gathered baseline evidence (from focus groups with around 60 service users) which was launched by an international panel in 2007. The group then monitored the indicators over an 18-month period (via focus groups), publishing two progress reports. Government performance was mixed—good on the GP front, neutral on user involvement, and the situation with the complaints system actually got worse. However, it was on the post-A & E appointments system that the group really started to get traction.

Sadly, a young man (Danny McCartan) had taken his own life in 2005. The circumstances prompted a government inquiry into the care provided prior to this event. Danny's father had since become involved with BMHRG, and as part of the inquiry process the group gave evidence to the Northern Ireland Assembly Health Committee in spring 2008. He stressed the importance of simply providing A & E patients with a follow-up appointment before they leave the hospital (the Card Before You Leave scheme, or CBYL) and used this indicator to monitor and underline the unsatisfactory nature of current provision. The group then met with the Belfast Health Trust and the Health Minister, who got behind the CBYL scheme (making it a formal priority). A distinct CBYL campaign had therefore evolved, and although the group were bounced from 'pillar to post' for the next 18 months, a formal Northern Ireland-wide CBYL scheme was launched in January 2010. The intensity of the CBYL campaign made it unrealistic in practical terms for the group to campaign around the other indicators.

Although BMHRG had secured ministerial priority for CBYL, there are many steps between prioritising a policy and its appropriate implementation. BMHRG therefore had to continue its intensive CBYL campaign, achieving the following:

- Securing its members a seat on the CYBL Implementation Board as a service user representative (the initial plans did not include BMHRG);
- Persuading the Health and Social Care Board to include user participation and rights in its terms of reference, to sign up to a range of 'participation indicators', include these as a standing agenda item for consideration at all board meetings and share joint chairmanship with BMHRG;
- Convincing the Health and Social Care Board to accept BMHRG's definition of minimal acceptable components within a CBYL scheme

(and in late 2010 the Health Minister announced that all Trusts would be complying with that definition); and,
- Securing considerable improvements in the monitoring and evaluation processes applying to CBYL.

In addition to all of these substantial tangible changes in state behaviours, relevant service provider consultees commented that the Health Trusts and Department had all been very usefully reminded that their approach to user involvement in decision-making was not all that it might have been. The group was therefore felt to have made a substantial positive contribution to the state's decision-making processes. Service providers and wider external consultees also commented on the high quality of inputs from the group and politicians, in particular highlighting the importance of this type of user input to make sure that health service provision was fit for purpose (see Box 6.2 for further details).

Box 6.2: Participation and Practice of Rights—Mental Health Example

In October 2013, BMHRG was awarded the Stephen Pittam Social Justice Award in recognition of their innovative and inspiring work. The award recognised the work of the group in mobilising others around mental health issues, their achievements in securing policy change with the Card before You Leave scheme and their use of PPR's human-rights-based approach to ensure the government lived up to their commitment to the right to the highest attainable standard of health.

Kate Ward, Policy and Research Support Officer from PPR said:

> Since 2007 PPR has been working with mental health service users, carers and families impacted by suicide. Our work has shown that the participation of people impacted by services leads to better services and more efficient use of public money. Card Before You Leave is frequently cited as an example of this, however the group have always measured success by the impact it is having on the ground. It is therefore critical that the Health and Social Care Board produce the necessary data on the scheme's implementation in order to address the group's concerns.

BMHRG intended to use the award to help other groups and individuals to learn more about how they too could use rights to help make change happen. This was achieved through a residential event, ‘What We Know About Change’, in January 2015. The residential gave groups and individuals involved in the Mental Health Rights Campaign the opportunity of coming together to share, and learn from, their experiences in campaigning for change. Groups were able to discuss and reflect on the lessons learned from past campaigns, such as the Card Before You Leave campaign. They also reflected on how this learning had influenced their most recent campaign to include information on mental health in the government information campaign, Choose Well. This was the first campaign in which several groups from across Northern Ireland worked together as part of the Mental Health Rights Campaign network.

The Mental Health Rights Campaign groups are carrying out surveys and focus groups to monitor whether things have improved on the ground since they launched their research report *Time to Listen; Time to Act. Holding Mental Health Services to Account* in March 2014. The surveys and focus groups will look at the experiences of people affected by mental health issues, and their carers, when accessing help for their mental health through their GP or through A & E.

Source: Participation and Practice of Rights 2015.

Girdwood Group

The Crumlin Road Gaol and Girdwood Army Barracks site (Girdwood) is a 27-acre site which sits amongst some of the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland. The peace process rendered most of the site free and in 2005 a debate began about its future use, with the Department for Social Development (DSD) publishing a draft masterplan for the area in July 2007. A number of local community organisations felt that the masterplan completely sidelined local residents’ interests and therefore approached PPR (on foot of PPR’s prior North Belfast work) to see if the human rights-based approach could be applied. A group of residents was accordingly established, went through PPR’s human rights-based approach training and made several initial submissions challenging the existing regeneration plan (for example, ‘Unlocking the Potential’).

In May 2008 the group ran a Citizen's Jury event, at which evidence regarding community involvement in/support for the master planning process was presented to a jury of 12 local residents by a range of experts (with the Department for Social Development and Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister contributing). Following on from the event the group published a paper entitled 'Changing the Patterns of the Past: Putting People First in the Regeneration of North Belfast' and also launched a range of indicators (30). They monitored the indicators over the next year; all of them related to the DSD's involvement of local residents in planning decisions. The group's efforts resulted in DSD running a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on the regeneration planning process (to which the group facilitated substantial resident contribution), but the economic crisis began to stall momentum of the entire regeneration. Despite the group securing several meetings with DSD, the planning process was moved back behind closed doors and the Girdwood group had stopped meeting regularly by the end of 2009.

The Girdwood process was the first time that DSD had ever completed a full EQIA for a regeneration planning process and it forced an overt acknowledgement of housing inequalities in the area. This provided scope for two successive DSD ministers to move forward additional social housing plans for Girdwood within the regeneration. In addition, government subsequently changed its policy and full EQIAs have been completed for all regeneration plans developed since, significantly extending the scope of Section 75's application.[6] The Girdwood Residents Jury were also asked to present their work to the Ilex Regeneration Company[7] as a model of best practice at the launch conference for its new regeneration initiative. The model presented has since been instrumental in how Ilex constructed its own regeneration EQIA. On the basis of this regeneration work PPR has also been contracted by Belfast Interface Trust (commissioned by Belfast City Council) to produce a 'regeneration toolkit' as a replicable model of best practice.

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[6] Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public authorities designated to comply with two statutory duties.

The first duty is the equality of opportunity duty, which requires public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to northern ireland to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine equality categories of persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally; persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependants and persons without.

The second duty, the Good Relations duty, requires that public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group.

[7] The Ilex Urban Regeneration Company Limited (Ilex) was set up in 2003 by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and the Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland (DSD) to plan, develop and sustain the economic, physical and social regeneration of the Derry City Council area.

The biggest spin-off from PPR's Girdwood activity relates to the 'right to work'. The principle here is that where large-scale physical regeneration work is being planned and commissioned by government, local residents not only have a right to be involved in and influence that process, they also have a right to benefit directly from the training and employment created therein. PPR have been able to identify the linkage to international rights standards and have highlighted examples where 'social clauses' in regeneration contracts elsewhere in the world require that a certain proportion of jobs created go to local residents (including associated training/ apprenticeships).

Although the Girdwood group itself is no longer operational, considerable learning from the process has translated through to another group in terms of the 'right to work'. PPR was already working closely with residents in the Lower Shankill, and in 2010 when the DSD/NIHE decided to take aspects of the Lower Shankill masterplan back off the shelf, PPR assisted residents to establish a Lower Shankill Regeneration Board (which included some prior Girdwood participants) and relevant training was provided by PPR. The Lower Shankill Regeneration Board has since been able to engage with government to secure meaningful involvement in the regeneration planning process and initial agreement to build 'social clauses' into associated regeneration contracts.

Lower Shankill Residents' Voice (LSRV)

Although the group was originally formed with adult residents in late 2007 to challenge existing regeneration plans, when government shelved those plans, the group reformed around the 'right to play'. The group also decided that it was important to have direct participation from children and young people. Accordingly, six children from the area became involved and received training from PPR over the summer of 2008. Overall more than 30 residents received human rights-based accountability training from PPR. A set of seven indicators was agreed and baseline evidence gathered in January 2009 (mainly through on-site assessments, with some made by adults in the group, some by the children and some by both).

The seven indicators were: existence of broken glass in the estate, cleanliness of play areas, speed of traffic, level of participation, whether lights were working in parks and play areas, provision of access to a resource centre and provision of play access for children with special needs.

These indicators were then launched by LSRV at a public event in February 2009, which drew in significant representation from relevant service provider organisations and other key stakeholders (including the Commissioner for Children and Young People). After the event Playboard NI also became an advisor to the group. The indicators were then monitored regularly with progress reports produced at each point and monitoring meetings held with duty-bearers. Government progress with the indicators was relatively strong in places—there were improvements in cleanliness and lighting and reductions in the amount of broken glass, speed bumps were introduced in some areas and the Youth Resource Centre opened five evenings a week (up from one). LSRV now also accompanies NIHE staff on monthly cleanliness inspections.

The group received widespread recognition and praise for its innovative approach to involving children in the process (including from the Equality Commission Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People). However, despite initial positive engagement from the full range of relevant service provider organisations (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister [OFMDFM], NIHE, Belfast City Council, and the Roads Service), LSRV and PPR consultees indicated that engagement had been relatively superficial in practice. Although the group initially secured a meeting with the junior OFMDFM ministers, service provider engagement with the group waned over 2010, with only Belfast City Council and the Belfast Education and Library Board regularly attending monitoring meetings in person (see also Box 6.3 as an example of PPR's work on domestic violence).

What these four examples illustrate are clear impact and very tangible changes for the lives of those involved. They challenge the notion of human rights work as legalistic and abstract from the perspective of people living in deprived communities disempowered by their economic circumstances. They offer these people a toolkit of practical ways in which they can challenge duty-bearers and hold them to account for things over which members of those communities had previously felt they had no purchase or leverage (speaking truth to power). In short, the human rights-based approach tips the power balance in favour of those negatively impacted by poor public services and years of neglect arising from the conflict.

Box 6.3: Participation and Practice of Rights: Domestic Violence Example

Footprints Women's Centre and human rights organisation Participation and the Practice of Rights have been working with women from the Colin neighbourhood, who came together to tackle their concerns around the way in which the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) currently approaches non-molestation orders.

The group has now formed as Footprints Women's Movement and has gathered evidence on the impact of domestic violence in their community and, more specifically, the effectiveness of non-molestation orders as a response to domestic violence.

Our concerns are based upon the actual experience of women living in the Colin neighbourhood who have had non-molestation orders issued on their behalf and the experience of Footprints Women's Centre who have provided essential support services to women and children affected by domestic violence for more than 20 years.

Our aim is to use our experience to make change for others experiencing domestic violence.

We seek the following changes:

- That the PSNI adopt a policy of routinely informing the person who has taken out a non-molestation order that it has been served on the perpetrator.
- That the PSNI set and monitor an official target for when non-molestation orders should be served.
- That PSNI provide written information to the person impacted by domestic violence on how to obtain and renew a non-molestation order, and the process that should be followed when they are breached.

The changes we propose are in line with the commitments government has signed up to at UN level.

They are modest (in some areas they are already in place), practical and could go some way to ensuring those who have been victims of domestic violence feel safe. We need to ensure there is capacity, skill an agreed set of standards within services to enable effective advice and support to meet the needs of victims and survivors of domestic violence. Non-molestation orders are put in place by courts to protect the victim, to provide safety and reassurance and peace of mind. They are also important to show the perpetrator that they will be made accountable and that domestic abuse is unacceptable.

Non-molestation orders are important, they should be treated as priority, enforced efficiently, taken seriously at all times and not left on a desk until someone is ready to deal with it. We need to break the cycle of abuse and the impact it has on the children. This is why we seek change.

Source: Footprints Women's Movement (2014).

POLICY ADOPTION?

PPR has approached policy work in a number of ways over recent years. Firstly, as a planned by-product of work undertaken by the supported groups—for example, public hearings and other high profile media activity not only progress the work of the particular group, but also raise wider awareness of the model being adopted. This work also involves building networks of support and awareness locally, nationally and internationally, through which knowledge of the model is indirectly disseminated. Secondly, PPR actively pursues opportunities to promote its model through contributions to academic studies, conferences and other dissemination vehicles. Thirdly, PPR has substantially increased its electronic profile, not only through development of its website (and the resources made available directly on it) but also through wider web publishing of relevant information and video-based tools. All of these approaches result in a wide range of individuals and organisations making direct contact, at which point PPR actively builds relationships with those interested in the human rights-based approach. PPR's work to build wider awareness of and support for the human rights-based approach has resulted in a range of significant impacts that extend beyond the work of the supported groups:

- PPR was contracted through Belfast City Council to produce an 'Interface Regeneration Toolkit' which involved working with a range of interface community organisations from right across Belfast, using as its basis PPR's regeneration engagement model, developed with the Girdwood Residents' Jury.

- As a result of relationships built in the course of implementing the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA), the model has featured in numerous academic journals, PPR's Chair has lectured extensively on the approach nationally and internationally, and it is now included in several degree courses across Ireland— at Queen's University Belfast (courses in the Planning Department), Belfast Metropolitan College (MA in Community Development), University College Dublin (Equality Studies) and University College Cork (Applied Social Policy).
- PPR has also provided advice and assistance at the request of a wide range of organisations such as the Belfast Greater Village Regeneration Trust and Bunscoil Bheann Madigan (an Irish-medium school in Belfast). These organisations have also participated at PPR's first 'Summer School' on its human rights-based approach. The groups involved included Dundalk Simon Community, Galway Travellers Movement, Poleglass Domestic Violence Group and Migrant Rights Scotland.

Clearly PPR's work in this area has been significant in terms of increasing awareness of and support for the human rights-based approach and changing the culture of community development.

At the level of changes to public policy PPR cite some examples of their successes as follows. PPR have:

- Made improvements to the Belfast Trust's Serious Adverse Incident Review procedure allowing families to make their own record of meetings, the creation of a user-friendly information pack on the process for families, and the appointment of a Family Liaison Officer to support bereaved family members.
- Campaigned for the first-ever Equality Impact Assessment to be carried out on an urban regeneration scheme, the £231 m Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol project.
- Successfully lobbied the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UNCESCR) to include specific Concluding Observations to the UK government on Catholic housing inequality in Northern Ireland, urban regeneration and mental health.
- Achieved the withdrawal of a regeneration plan in the Lower Shankill (West Belfast) and its redevelopment with the full participation of residents and secured a cross-sectoral working group to bring forward new regeneration plans, including ministerial commitment to work on groundbreaking employment clauses in the procurement contracts.

- Ensured the passing of the Real Jobs Now motion through Belfast City Council guaranteeing ring-fenced and fully paid jobs and apprenticeships for the long-term unemployed through the council's procurement budget and a £150 m investment programme.
- Formally advised the Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure on the incorporation of ground-breaking 'equality clauses' into £42 m of government procurement contracts to provide real jobs and apprenticeships for the long-term unemployed.

Source: Participation and Practice of Rights (2015)

In the course of evaluation fieldwork by external consultants (Boyd 2011), the opinions of a range of external strategic observers were canvassed to assess the profile and 'reach' of PPR's human rights-based approach. In some cases these were individuals who had direct experience of PPR's work, whilst in others they were knowledgeable commentators regarding the wider human rights 'field' in Ireland. On the whole, those who had direct experience of PPR's work were extremely positive about both the model itself and the manner in which PPR had gone about building support around it. Innovation in the approach taken was frequently cited as a very positive factor. In some cases this was welcomed at a practical level (i.e., it had provided a much needed new perspective within campaigning work), whilst in others it was welcomed at a strategic level in that the majority of rights-based work in Ireland was focused on top-down approaches. PPR's model therefore provided much-needed evidence that human rights could and should also be approached from the bottom up. These consultees also highlighted the scale of the task faced by the PPR-supported groups in overtly securing their human rights from the state.

As might be expected, the opinions of political consultees were more mixed. Two ministerial perspectives varied, with one lauding the value of 'making rights real' and pointing out that without this type of approach, government would never be forced to realise its commitments. The other suggested that although the principles and goals of the groups were sound, the application of the human rights-based approach in practice ran the risk of derailing other delicate efforts to improve the quality of government decision-making. Another key political consultee indicated that whilst strongly supportive of the case being made by the PPR-supported group with which they had worked, they were not aware of the underpinning human rights-based approach (consultees cited in Boyd's evaluation, Boyd 2011).

Box 6.4: Mary Robinson on the Work of Participation and Practice of Rights

Human rights advocates of international standing also endorsed PPR's approach. Mary Robinson is the former President of Ireland and UN Commissioner for Human Rights. She is currently Director of the Making Rights Real—Ethical Globalisation Initiative, International President of Oxfam, Chair of the World Council of Women Political Leaders and member of the Legal Commission for the empowerment of the poor. She said of the PPR model:

> There is a real and pressing need to link local work to that of the World Trade Organisation and other such bodies—we need to make it credible that rights will work at the local level to really effect change at the higher level. I believe the work you are doing in this project is a major contribution to creating models and methods for that involvement. You are not just challenging what is wrong; you are creating an inclusive sense of rights and human dignity. It is very rare to see this kind of work developed in community-based practices like you are doing in this project, and that is what I find so exciting. So if you find it is hard, remember it is because you are engaged in pioneering work which will command much interest and application elsewhere. (Robinson 2004: 2)

The other strategic consultees (who had not had direct contact with PPR) tended to suggest that while PPR's human rights-based approach was valuable, awareness of its implementation and potential remained relatively low across the 'mainstream' human rights community in Ireland. However, contrary evidence exists in the form of the levels of support emanating from UN representatives, other national and international experts and key national agencies, including the NI Equality Commission and the Irish Human Rights Commission (see Boxes 6.4 and 6.5). PPR consultees suggested that to date its profile-building work has focused on putting the groups front and centre, rather than PPR and the overall human rights-based approach. However, raising its strategic profile further was a key component of its plans for the next phase of the model's growth.

Box 6.5: Professor Paul Hunt on the Work of Participation and Practice of Rights

Professor Paul Hunt is the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health, former member of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, co-author of UN Guidelines on Human Rights Approaches to Poverty Reduction and Professor of Law at the Human Rights Centre, Essex University. He said of PPR's work:

> This meeting is undertaking pioneering work—it's difficult work and it's pushing the boundaries but it's very important. It's about operationalising human rights standards. The fact that we are discussing this now shows a new maturity in the world of social activism and in the human rights community. It does mean that housing activists have to learn something about human rights, and human rights activists have to learn something about housing—we have to make bridges between these communities. But it is very important work and it seems to me that in such collaboration we are much stronger, and ordinary people can be greatly empowered. (Reported in Participation and Practice of Rights 2005)

Although significant progress has been made on embedding the PPR model and groups have been carrying out many functional elements of the human rights-based approach either independently or with minimal PPR assistance, they are still not free-standing (particularly in terms of the more technical aspects of the rights base and evidence-building process). A number of groups still need direct operational support for a further period.

A note of caution was expressed by the external evaluator of PPR's work in terms of mainstreaming their work and hence charting a path towards systemic policy adoption. While the evaluator described their work as 'remarkable … its processes and methodologies are exemplars of how to make rights real for those on the margins of society, isolated from and by power', she warned about the significant resistance to change amongst duty-bearers (Brookhall 2014: 37). She noted: 'PPR is beginning to show results in terms of replication, but the long struggle to get to this point shows just how difficult the work is'. Groups involved in the human rights approach need both training and ongoing support and guidance. Given fluidity in the composition and commitment of community groups, this can be a difficult task. The evaluator concluded her findings with a particularly apt reference to the link between reconciliation and human rights approaches introduced at the beginning of this chapter.

> What is striking about PPR's work is the way in which it is genuinely cross-community but in a way which it seems is largely unacknowledged. In a place with such deep, abiding and bitter sectarian divisions as North Belfast, people have worked with each other on key issues, as well as offering each other solidarity and support across those supposedly impervious sectarian barriers. This work is not acknowledged as 'cross-community' or 'peace-building' because it proceeds from a different understanding of equality and peace than the dominant 'community relations' model. But cross-community and peace building it most certainly is. That is an outcome of PPR's work it should consider further. (Brookhall 2014: 39)

This chapter has described a very different but complementary approach to peacebuilding from that in the case studies outlined in Chaps. 3, 4, and 5, which were relational in orientation. It considered a human rights-based approach, using a participation model, to hold the state to account for breaches in its social and economic obligations. In that sense it eschews the importance of advocacy approaches so prominent in previous chapters. Rather, it sees the central resource as community groups articulating their own needs within a framework of international human rights standards and treaties and using indicators to baseline and then benchmark progress towards greater social justice. What the examples in this chapter illustrate is the breadth of issues that communities have confronted and the successes they have achieved in holding public bodies to account. It has also illustrated the significant investment that is needed to build capacity in community groups in order for them to reach the point of advocating on their own behalf. This leads inevitably to the issue of embedding and replication of the human rights-based model or what has been described in previous chapters as policy adoption. Has the human rights-based approach been adopted as a systemic approach to accountability in Northern Ireland? While the external evaluations of the approach are extremely positive on the case study evidence, it is still a major challenge to move from individual projects which have benefited enormously from the model to a wider cultural change where: (a) a large number of communities are equipped with human rights skills, and (b) state bodies are significantly receptive to, rather than resistant to, this form of accountability. None of this is to signal criticism of the PPR model but rather to highlight the real difficulties of embedding and replication in cases where significant capacity-building is involved with a community sector that is fluid and, in some cases, apprehensive about the potential which they have in tackling the might of the state.

So, what makes this approach to peacebuilding different but complementary to the case studies outlined in Chaps. 3, 4, and 5? From the perspective of Atlantic Philanthropies, working in the area of human rights is a *sine qua non* for peacebuilding—without it, the causes of the conflict remain unresolved and run the risk of resurfacing. Hence, Atlantic's grant-making has supported multiple interventions in education, interface communities, restorative justice, human rights (Chaps. 3, 4, 5, and 6), works on high-quality effective services for children and older people and provides support for the new devolved democratic institutions (discussed in Chap. 7) as part of a funding mosaic to help build peace. Critics have questioned whether this was a legitimate role for philanthropy and have highlighted the equivocality in the role of Atlantic Philanthropies—how could they operate in partnership with government through significant investments in higher education research and at the same time work outside and challenge the system though issues like restorative justice and shared education?

What makes the human rights-based approach outlined in this chapter significant in Atlantic's multi-thematic grant-making was a conviction that change could be secured from the bottom up and in circumstances which ignored traditional societal divisions in Northern Ireland. In other words, the abuse of rights transcended 'orange and green' fissures and the work outlined in this chapter put 'uncomfortable issues' of inequality and discrimination back on the table. In the more conventional community relations model, these issues were the 'elephant in the room' avoided at all costs lest they offend one community or the other and run the risk of being seen as 'anti-peace' by reopening old wounds (the attitude of 'leave well enough alone'). The work of PPR provided communities, regardless of their religious identity, with the skills to call large public bodies to account in a way they were quite unaccustomed to. The human rights-based approach therefore offers key lessons for peacebuilding. Firstly, it offers a way of engaging people who have felt excluded from the peace process and have not benefited from the so-called 'peace dividend'. Secondly, it shows the value of work which empowers communities to challenge the state—this is quite different from funding NGOs to do the same, except the latter may also be dependent on state resources and fearful of 'biting the hand that feeds them'. Thirdly, the benefits arising from the use of international standards and benchmarks offer new forms of community participation and accountability mechanisms; and finally, it is notable that the strategy adopted by PPR never sought to partner with the state but rather challenged duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations.

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CHAPTER 7

Atlantic Philanthropies' Legacy in Northern Ireland

ROLES

The final chapter of this book will be more reflective of the work of Atlantic Philanthropies, not just in peacebuilding in Northern Ireland but, more generally, in terms of its contribution to society across the breadth of areas in which it has worked. These included: creating a stronger human rights infrastructure, supporting and growing the ageing sector, providing services to alleviate poverty for vulnerable older people, making dementia a public policy priority and the demonstration of the merits of prevention and early interventions through robust evidence-gathering in children and youth work.

The case studies in Chaps. 3, 4, 5, and 6 have illustrated Atlantic Philanthropies' work in addressing what Galtung (Chap. 1) refers to as 'structural violence' or in building 'positive peace'. Together, the case studies have offered evidence on how Atlantic effected social change (through the conceptual lens of Ferris and Mintrom, see Chap. 2) and sought influence (via problem definition, agenda-setting, policy adoption, implementation and evaluation) through various forms of engagement (funding analysis and technical support, building knowledge communities and supporting advocacy and public education). This final chapter of the book steps back from the detail of the case studies which specifically relate to peacebuilding and, using a framework developed by Fleishman (2009), considers three key aspects of the *overall* work of Atlantic in Northern Ireland: what roles has it played?; what strategies has it used?; and

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probably the most difficult issue to capture—what has been the impact of its work? So, while the work of Ferris and Mintrom and Frumkin provided the rubric to analyse and structure the case studies, we adapt Fleishman's scholarship as a wider framework to reflect on Atlantic's overall role in Northern Ireland.

Although Fleishman (2009: 215) is a strong supporter of the work of foundations (writing about the USA) arguing that 'they have been overwhelmingly beneficial for American society', he highlights some of the more obvious problems—accountability, political vulnerability and invisibility. Foundations such as Atlantic Philanthropies lack the most basic aspects of *public* accountability, something which those bodies that they are trying to influence must be acutely aware of. So, while Atlantic Philanthropies has openly endorsed interventions that begin with a policy hunch, involves an implementation strategy which has been described in one of our case studies (Chap. 3) as 'let the flowers bloom', public sector organisations, on the other hand, must develop business cases, operate strictly within budget, have limited flexibility during roll-out and be mindful of the audit culture which can stymie innovation and risk-taking. Since one route to the sustainability of externally funded projects is to partner with government, this clash of culture can be difficult to resolve without squeezing the very innovation which made the interventions a success in the first place. American philanthropies are described as being politically vulnerable because of the legal limitations placed on their lobbying activities; however, the same restrictions have not applied in Northern Ireland.

Fleishman (2009: 221) also refers to the invisibility of foundations (literally, in the case of Atlantic Philanthropies' work up until 1997) where they are 'not obliged to provide anyone with meaningful information about their decisions or their decisions consequences'. This includes the lack of any responsibility to disclose intervention failures. He also accuses foundations of not releasing information which would allow an independent analysis of their successes, with some few exceptions to this accusation. Fleishman explains that one reason for this closed culture amongst foundations is that they simply do not know for sure if interventions have been successful and what the consequences of their grants have been. The authors' experience of Atlantic Philanthropies' work in Northern Ireland is entirely at odds with this point. Evaluation is seen by Atlantic as a pivotal element of any intervention and unlike many public sector programme where evaluations take place post hoc, they are designed into programmes from the beginning. It is not unusual for Atlantic to have monitoring arrangements, formative and summative evaluation processes agreed *before* an intervention is launched. Associated with the charge of invisibility, Fleishman notes the sparseness of empirical literature on foundations in America. If this is true of the USA, the paucity of literature on foundations in the UK is even more evident (see Chap. 2). That said, Atlantic Philanthropies has accumulated a wealth of robust information on the success or otherwise of its interventions, although much less on the role that it has played as an organisation attempting to effect social change. Hence the aim of this final chapter is to move beyond the substance of the case studies (Chaps. 3, 4, 5 and 6) and reflect on the strategic role played by Atlantic Philanthropies in Northern Ireland.

In a review of the literature in Chap. 2 of this book, the role played by foundations was described as ranging across a spectrum from funding government deficits, through 'pay to play' to 'imposing' their own agenda. Fleishman's typology of roles is more instructive in reflecting on the work of Atlantic Philanthropies in Northern Ireland. He outlines three board roles for foundations as follows:

> (a) **Driver:** when a particular social, economic, or cultural goal can be visualised clearly and a practical strategy can be developed to attain it, a foundation may choose to play the role of driver. In this case the foundation itself maps out and directs the change effort, making grants to organisations that will simply carry out the strategy devised by the foundation.
>
> (b) **Partner:** Here, the foundation shares the power to shape a strategy and makes crucial decisions together with other partner organisations, making grants to support those organisations as well as others that simply implement the strategy.
>
> (c) **Catalyst:** When tackling a problem for which a strategy is inconceivable, inappropriate, or premature, a foundation may make grants to organisations that generally deal with the problem, without specifying or expecting particular outcomes. Here the foundation broadcasts resources in many directions, knowing that most of the grants are unlikely to produce lasting change, but hoping that a few will take root and grow.
>
> (Fleishman 2009: 60)

Fleishman describes none of these categories as mutually exclusive, with lots of potential for overlapping boundaries.

Atlantic as a Driver

Although Fleishman defines the role of 'driver' as a foundation which has a clear social, economic or cultural goal, Atlantic Philanthropies adopted this role but without a clarity of vision in the early days of its involvement in Northern Ireland.[1] This situation is described by Monica McWilliams, former leader of the Women's Coalition Party, as follows:

> In the late 1990s during the peace talks, it was a turning point in Northern Ireland. There was a window opened to put issues on the table that had been buried. That's where The Atlantic Philanthropies came into its own. So many people were looking at the governance and constitutional issues, all of which were important. But to build peace you also need to have those sustainable parts of the (Belfast/Good Friday) Agreement, which are around the social and economic parts as well as human rights and equality. Atlantic had been funding this, some of which was regarded as risky.

The way in which Atlantic became a 'driver of change' was by supporting some of the most marginalised groups in Northern Ireland—something other funders were unwilling or unlikely to do. Post-Agreement (1998), much of Atlantic's work focused on communities which had suffered from significant conflict in Northern Ireland, supporting their leaders to take risks for peace, and securing reform in areas such as policing, criminal justice and dealing with the past.

Typical of Atlantic's work as 'a driver' was the following:

(1) **Engaging the marginalised and ex-combatants in building the peace**. Between 1998 and 2003, Atlantic directed $30 m toward promoting reconciliation among the disaffected groups most deeply involved in conflict by engaging the leaders of republican and unionist neighbourhoods. This strategy was similar to Atlantic's support, during the same period, for peacebuilding and reconciliation in South Africa by promoting dialogue among ex-combatants in the anti-apartheid struggle there. An external review of Atlantic's work in this area by Deloitte (2002: 5) noted that 'support for crisis intervention work within loyalist communities in North Belfast … which involved engaging with local paramilitary leaders, has been credited with reducing

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[1] The application of Fleishman's typology to the work of Atlantic draws on examples outlined in 'Telling the Story of The Atlantic Philanthropies in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland': Atlantic Philanthropies Global Staff Conference (2015).

the level of street violence.' Atlantic also supported politically motivated ex-prisoners who wanted to work for peace. These highly controversial grants, totalling more than $8.1 m between 1997 and 2004, grew ex-prisoner support organisations on both sides of the sectarian divide. Atlantic's theory of change was that in those most conflict-ridden communities, ex-prisoners enjoyed an elevated social status that made them crucial to the political and social direction of those communities. 'We got interested in people in prison for politically motivated crimes—in their potential', said John R. Healy, former president and chief executive of Atlantic. 'Once they were released and wanted to take the path of peace, we funded a lot of them. They were people of influence in their communities. If they did not commit to supporting the peace process once they got out of prison, a very fragile peace might not hold.'

(2) **Policing Reforms.** Policing has always been a hugely contentious issue in Northern Ireland, with the majority of police officers being drawn from the unionist community (approximately 92 % in 1998). Any long-term peace settlement in Northern Ireland required a fundamental overhaul of policing. Atlantic's human rights grantees—notably the Committee on the Administration of Justice (an independent human rights organisation with cross-community membership)—were influential in securing historic reform of policing. The reform led to the emergence of the new Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) from the former Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). By 2015, the new police service drew almost 31 % of its officers from the Catholic community (vs. 8 % in the old RUC).

(3) **Spurring Economic Growth through Higher Education.** In addition to peacebuilding and reconciliation, Atlantic focused its efforts, as it did in its other jurisdictions, on strengthening third-level education. Initially, Atlantic supported proposals that improved the general quality of the two Northern Ireland universities—Queen's University Belfast (QUB) and the Ulster University—such as new or improved libraries, academic buildings or student accommodation, greater fundraising capacity and improved access to university for disadvantaged students. From 2001, this switched to a focused effort to improve the universities' research capacity. Modelled after the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLI) in the Republic of Ireland, Atlantic partnered with the Northern Ireland government to

> create the Support Programme for University Research (SPUR) initiative. SPUR's goal was to strengthen the universities' competitiveness and capacity for groundbreaking research. Between 2001 and 2008, Atlantic and the government jointly provided $152.8 m to 13 projects in the two institutions. SPUR proposals were assessed by panels of international experts and only the best were funded. 'Our University schools had been at a competitive disadvantage because of the Troubles here and the difficulty of attracting staff', said Richard Barnett, former vice-chancellor of the University of Ulster. 'SPUR literally changed our ability to do quality research.' An evaluation of SPUR noted sustained improvements in strategic planning, increased leverage of an additional $227 m, and a rise in the externally adjudicated UK-wide research ranking system. New research centres included the Centre for Molecular Biosciences at the University of Ulster (one of the top-rated centres of its type in the UK and internationally) and the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology (CCRCB) at QUB, a treatment and research facility of excellence with some of the best cancer outcomes in the UK and among the best in Europe. Discoveries are taking place 'that we wouldn't have dreamed of 12 years ago', said Professor Patrick Johnston, current QUB president and vice-chancellor, first director of the CCRCB and a renowned cancer specialist.

What these examples illustrate is that Atlantic Philanthropies mapped out, sometimes incrementally, the direction of the change effort and made grants to appropriate organisations to implement its strategy (universities; human rights NGOs; ex-prisoner groups, and so on).

Atlantic as a Partner

(i) **The ageing sector**

In Fleishman's typology, this is where a foundation shares power to shape a strategy. The best example of this is Atlantic Philanthropies' work with older people. In 2004 Atlantic launched an Ageing Programme, the context for which was that the proportion of the population aged 65-plus in Northern Ireland was expected to double from 13.5 % to 27 % by 2035—making this the oldest projected population profile in Atlantic's global Ageing Programme. Staff determined, based on scoping in 2003–2004, that gains could be made by strengthening NGOs and research infrastructure and mobilising older people to advocate on their own behalf, putting ageing issues on the political agenda for the first time. Ultimately, Atlantic invested $72 m between 2003 and 2014 to strengthen the voice of older people, develop the ageing sector, create new service models, partner with government and place dementia at the heart of the policy agenda. Notable accomplishments included:

(a) **Creating a stronger ageing sector.** Atlantic's investments helped create a more effective, efficient and professional age sector that identifies and campaigns for policies that support healthy ageing and that pushes government to act. Northern Ireland now has a strong and articulate lobby of older people. 'Prior to Atlantic's funding, Age Sector Platform existed in a previous guise but it was totally volunteer-led', said Eddie Lynch, chief executive of Age Sector Platform. 'Older people from across Northern Ireland felt that they needed to have a stronger voice on a range of issues. But the organisation struggled without resources in place and it was difficult to have the impact they needed to make progress on the big issues of concern for older people.'

With Atlantic funding, Age Sector Platform helped make the voices of seniors heard, through the creation of the Northern Ireland Pensioners' Parliament in 2011. Each year Age Sector Platform (ASP) members elect around 500 representatives from across the community to participate in a two-day regional parliament, debating motions for change with government and policymakers and defining older people's campaign issues for the year ahead. ASP members bring resolutions to special sittings of the NI Assembly and meetings with Members of Parliament in the House of Commons. ASP has had some notable successes, including the Can't Heat or Eat campaign that led to a government payment of $20 m to support the fuel costs of 80,000 older people with insufficient income to both eat and heat their homes. It was also influential in the establishment of a Commissioner for Older People in Northern Ireland and securing government commitments to address safety and crime issues for older people. 'The Pensioners' Parliament is a brilliant idea', said Edith Shaw, a recent pensioner and participant. 'I attended the Belfast Parliament and was very impressed. I think that the more of us who contribute and become involved then our voice will be heard and we will at least have an input and an influence. I think too much of the time government do things *to* us and *for* us instead of doing things with us. I hate having things done *to* me. But I'm very much in favour of doing things *with* others."

(b) **Providing services to alleviate poverty for vulnerable older people.** At the beginning of the twenty-first century, vulnerable older people in Northern Ireland often did not fully access their social security benefits because they did not know their entitlements or were wary of engaging with government on personal finance matters. This was particularly devastating for poorer people who struggled with activities of daily living and meeting their basic needs. Atlantic provided support to NGOs so that they could find and enrol older people in benefit programmes. From 2007 to 2012, the Access to Benefits project helped more than 26,000 people in Northern Ireland collect social security benefits, totalling $93.

With Atlantic's support, the government's Social Security Agency adopted some of these practices, creating the infrastructure fora partnership with NGOs that can more effectively reach out to older people in health and care settings, supported housing and other marginalised groups to increase their benefit uptake. Atlantic provided 50 % of the $1.2 m funding to establish an Innovation Fund with the Social Security Agency in 2011. To date every $1 spent on the fund has resulted in $18.72 of additional benefit payments that older people would not have claimed otherwise.

(c) **Making dementia a priority for ageing practice and policy.** Dementia affects approximately 19,000 people in Northern Ireland and estimates are that the number will grow to 23,000 people by 2017, but until recent years the issue had received little focused attention. Atlantic began supporting dementia care in 2006, investing some $6.2 m in early initiatives aiming to strengthen awareness of the disease and to investigate improved practices and treatments. Early Atlantic grantees, the Alzheimer's Society and the Dementia Services Development Centre, served on the advisory group that developed the government's 2011 Dementia Strategy. The strategy highlighted the importance of making best-practice dementia care the norm from diagnosis to end of life and creating a supportive environment in which people could live well with dementia, and developed a positive policy environment within which Atlantic could continue to pursue its dementia goals.

In 2012 Atlantic adopted an Ireland-wide objective to improve the care and wellbeing of people with dementia. Grants of $4.4 m made under this objective have resulted in: significant up-skilling of care providers through the best practice education provided by the Dementia Services Development Centre; creation of community-based models for living well with dementia through the Alzheimer's Society's Dementia Friendly Communities Programme; an applied care research programme co-funded with the Public Health Agency; and, innovation in architecture and design, including the redevelopment of the NI Hospice to better meet the end-of-life care needs of people with dementia.

An underpinning aim throughout has been to ensure that people with dementia continue to have agency in their own lives and that policymakers and service providers hear their voices. In 2007 Atlantic supported the establishment by the Alzheimer's Society of Let Me Speak, Let Me Be Heard, an advocacy programme that uses paid staff and volunteers to help people with dementia make informed choices about their health and care needs. Alzheimer's Society has sustained the programme and set up Advocacy Network Northern Ireland, which developed advocacy standards adopted by state health and social care agencies. In 2014 Atlantic supported a group of people with dementia with setting up an advocacy organization, Dementia NI, which is becoming active in the national/international network of dementia empowerment groups, and which will lead campaigns to create better quality services and support, improved public awareness, reduced stigma and better quality of life for people with dementia.

These examples show that Atlantic Philanthropies have shared power with NGOs and others such as the Age Sector Platform, the Commissioner for Older People, Social Security Agency, and Alzheimer's Society to shape government policy in the care and wellbeing of older people.

(ii) **Children and youth**

In an entirely different sector, that of children and youth, Atlantic has also played the role of partner. The launch of the Children and Youth Programme in 2004 broadened Atlantic's interest in children's issues from the reconciliation focus of its integrated education work to an emphasis on transforming children's services through a greater use of evidence-informed prevention and early intervention approaches. The key beneficiaries of such a change are the 37 % of Northern Ireland's 398,000 children living in poverty, who, relative to their peers:

- Have infant mortality rates one-third higher.
- Are four times more likely to die before the age of 20.

- By age 16 do only half as well academically (34 % achieving five A*-C GCSEs [General Certificate of Secondary Education] as opposed to 68 %).
- Have three times higher rates of births to girls under age 16.
- Experience suicide rates at three times the norm.

From 2004 to 2014, Atlantic invested $55 m to transform the way that children and young adults receive services. At the start of the programme, government and NGOs tended to work with troubled children and young people *after* their problems had manifested and were entrenched and complex. Neither early intervention nor rigorous, evidence-based evaluation was a priority for government or for service organisations, even though research had shown that intervention from the earliest stages of life could prevent negative consequences later. Atlantic grants supported prevention and early intervention services that were rigorously tested so that service providers and policymakers could understand and apply that knowledge of what worked and what did not in producing better outcomes for children. The strategy had three broad components, all vital to achieve success:

- Demonstration: demonstrating what prevention and early intervention services looked like and how they could be implemented locally.
- Gathering evidence: proving that the outcomes for children using these services were better than (or at least as good as) the current system.
- Advocacy: using the emerging evidence to bring about changes in government policies, commissioning decisions and ultimately budget allocations.

(a) **Demonstration of Prevention and Early Intervention Services:** Early grants were mostly to support demonstrations and fund their evaluation. A series of grants helped NGOs prepare to design and implement evidence-informed programmes and practices. Some of the supported services were replications of ones developed elsewhere; others were new programmes designed and developed by local NGOs. For example, Barnardos NI used a survey of more than 1000 children (undertaken by another Atlantic grantee, the Centre for Effective Education) to better understand the challenges faced by five-to-eight-year-olds from deprived areas. The children's responses directly contributed to the design of a new after-school service, called Ready to

> Learn, focused on developing literacy and supporting parents to help their children's learning. A randomised control trial (RCT) showed the programme's positive effect on literacy outcomes. Barnardos NI has begun a modest scaling of the programme from six to 12 schools while engaging with the Department of Education on a possible further expansion. Similarly, another grantee, Early Years, used an academic study on the prevalence of very young children making negative sectarian and racial remarks—one in six were doing so by the age of six. Early Years set out to pave a new future for young children, one in which religion is simply one aspect of their persona, rather than a cause for hate and exclusion.

Early Years used resources from Atlantic and the Peace Initiatives' Institute to create, implement, and test by RCT, a programme aimed at children ages three and four that sought to instil more positive attitudes and behaviours towards those who are perceived as 'different'. The programme uses a combination of cartoons, puppets, curriculum, training and support. An evaluation found strongly positive effects for children, parents and teachers. Siobhan Fitzpatrick, Chief Executive Officer of Early Years noted: 'What Atlantic supported and challenged us to do was to become an organisation focusing on really growing our own evidence, using that evidence to think about how we could really improve outcomes for children.'

As a result of the evaluation findings, Early Years is taking this programme to scale across its network of 1200 members in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland with support from government and the European Union. The programme has also generated considerable interest from other post-conflict societies. In 2015, Early Years is rolling out the programme in Serbia, to complement its work in Albania and Ukraine. In addition, Early Years received $15 m in funding to collaborate with a partner in Turkey to put the media programme in place there, among other work. And the BBC reported in late 2014 that thousands of preschools in the Republic of China would be adopting the Early Years model of early intervention to respect and normalise others' cultural norms and practices.

One of Atlantic's key investments in children's prevention and early intervention services was in the Colin neighbourhood of West Belfast, one of the most economically depressed areas in Northern Ireland. An assessment of children's services in the area revealed that while multiple services were available, families might not know about their availability or were not using them, and that government agencies were not co-ordinating these services effectively. A local group—the Colin Early Intervention Community—took up the challenge of doing things differently. This community brought together funds from multiple government agencies and Atlantic to identify gaps and overlaps in services and to plan for greater interagency and provider co-operation and co-ordination. Where gaps were identified, appropriate, evidence-informed services were added. It created a sophisticated data-tracking and measurement system to keep service providers and government on track and accountable, which is picking up on improvements in maternal depression, behaviour in classrooms, and speech and language services.

(b) **Gathering evidence:** Other investments went into university research centres and technical support organisations to build the capacity of practitioners and academics on prevention and early intervention. About two-thirds of the Atlantic-funded projects were evaluated by RCT, which provides strong evidence of effectiveness and has been a highly under-used methodology. As results from the RCTs and other evaluation methods came online, there was a shift to supporting replication and scaling, and fine-tuning the implementation of successful programmes. Where possible, Atlantic Philanthropies funded this work in conjunction with government.

This injection of resources and expertise in rigorous forms of evaluation led to huge expansion locally in skilled researchers and evaluators. For example, Queen's University Belfast now has a well-respected educational trial unit, the Centre for Effective Education, which is entirely self-financing; a highly rated social care research centre, the Institute for Child Care Research; and a cross-disciplinary research network, Improving Children's Lives. Atlantic also funded the Centre for Effective Services, which works across the island, helps practitioners and policymakers make better use of evidence and supports effective implementation of proven models and programmes.

(c) **Advocacy for early intervention:** Having seeded a range of effective evidence-informed services and helped create a research and evidence-literate set of service providers, Atlantic increased its efforts to get government to take on board its learning and approaches. Each grantee was expected to be an advocate for the prevention and early intervention approach, and they were supported to create a formal network to present a unified and amplified voice to policymakers and funders. Senior officials and those responsible for commissioning children's services came together to learn evaluation results and, through access to study trips and conferences, became educated in the benefits of prevention. The voices of young people are typically missing in public policy debates that will influence their future. So Atlantic supported grantees to develop models to ensure that their voices were heard. For example, Voices of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) used an online survey tool to teach about the best and worst of young people's experiences of being in the care system. The findings were used to challenge providers of care placements and to ensure that government officials take into account the views of young people as they develop policies that affect their futures.

Atlantic as a Catalyst

Fleishman described the role of a foundation in cases where the problem is less clear-cut and expectations of outcomes are less directive. The field of human rights in Northern Ireland is one such example. The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement provided a framework to end the conflict and create lasting peace. The Agreement was groundbreaking on several fronts, not least of which was that human rights and justice were central to it. However, it was dependent upon a new power-sharing model of devolved government, which had its flaws. Deal brokering between the two main parties behind closed doors often led to short-term, partisan horse-trading which undermined the universality of the Agreement and had the potential to ultimately derail it. In these cases the British and Irish governments didn't want to 'rock the boat', and there was effectively no opposition within the Northern Ireland Assembly to challenge these deals. This is the space in which Atlantic's human rights grantees operated—providing that independent challenge function to hold the new government accountable to its prior commitments, making sure that peace had a real and positive impact on the day-to-day lives of *everyone* in Northern Ireland, and thereby keeping the Agreement 'on the rails' (Boyd Associates 2014). As Professor Christine Bell from the University of Edinburgh noted, the 'on-going monitoring of both the human rights situation and the response of new institutions … is detailed and important work that is vital to all other work. It is not new and often does not appear exciting. However, it is the bedrock of any strategic intervention by Atlantic Philanthropies.'

Grantees' accomplishments included:

(a) ***Monitoring human rights.*** With Atlantic funding, NGOs have been able to conduct rigorous research and publish findings to regularly challenge government, advocating and identifying many practical ways in which Northern Ireland's government can better fulfil the commitments specified in the Agreement. This work has changed political debate by demonstrating that political and policy decisions should be based on objective need, reliable evidence and data, rather than assumption-based anecdote or thinly veiled community bias.

(b) ***Creating change through public interest litigation.*** Prior to Atlantic's investments, there had been little litigation of this type. Grantees established a culture of *pro bono* legal services in which lawyers donated their time. Successful cases have resulted in improved rights for people with learning disabilities and the exoneration of wrongly convicted prisoners, creating sustainable new case law that cements rights for groups of marginalised people across Northern Ireland and beyond.

(c) ***Securing changes in social housing.*** The Participation and Practice of Rights Project's campaign in North Belfast has established new, meaningful consultative mechanisms between the NIHE and its tenants, enabling them to highlight egregious shortfalls in housing standards and to work constructively to address them. For example, the NIHE rehoused all families with young children from the seven high-rise blocks in the New Lodge (Belfast) into more suitable accommodation, and replaced the sewage systems in all seven blocks. Since then, the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees has publically recognised the work of the Seven Towers Residents Groupas representing best practice in using international human rights standards to make local change.

CRITIQUE OF ATLANTIC'S WORK IN NORTHERN IRELAND

What Role Did Atlantic Philanthropies Play?

None of the above is to suggest that Atlantic Philanthropies had a well-defined strategy and that all outcomes were pre-determined and ultimately successful; rather, this strategy evolved over time. Atlantic's work in

Northern Ireland began by supporting higher education (some 61 grants totalling $136 m), as it had in other jurisdictions, with a small amount of resources dedicated to 'peace work', acknowledging the context in which it operated. From 2004 onwards Atlantic witnessed the ending of anonymity in grant-making, their shift out of higher education, a more explicit focus on social justice across all their country programmes and plans to become a spend-down philanthropy. With these changes came a much greater focus on programmes, objectives and strategies, and the incorporation of logic models and evaluation as an integral approach to assessing the impact of their work. In short, Atlantic's style became more managerial and outcomes-focused, moving away from a looser regime in which individual judgements by on-the-ground staff had informed the pattern of grant-making, although mediated by senior management.

Specifically in relation to Northern Ireland, one of four new programmes launched in 2004 was Reconciliation and Human Rights which also operated in the Republic of Ireland, the USA and South Africa. In Northern Ireland this programme replaced a previous strand of work entitled Peace and Reconciliation, reflecting a change in thinking whereby rights were now seen as a crucial element of peacebuilding and a nuanced reaction to the pre-existing community relations paradigm. Atlantic Philanthropies' work in Northern Ireland therefore shifted to better capture the prospects for a long-term political settlement as the outworkings of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement emerged. Over time, Atlantic Philanthropies' role in Northern Ireland oscillated between being a grant-making foundation to an operational foundation. In the former, they sought to act as 'a catalyst', in Fleishman's typology, empowering community and voluntary organisations to initiate change, and in the latter Atlantic assumed a more hands-on directive role ('a driver' in Fleishman's terms). In some cases, Atlantic was operationally schizophrenic—hands-on in some interventions (shared education) and hands-off in others (contested spaces). What wasn't always clear to grantees were the circumstances or point in time when Atlantic Philanthropies would move from one mode of operation to another. In order words, when and how was a judgment made by Atlantic to take a lead, moving from empowering groups to advocate on their own behalf, to one where Atlantic used its leverage to exert influence at the highest levels of government. Moreover, given the time limited nature of their funding, did this pattern of overt influence and intervention by Atlantic Philanthropies (as opposed to grantees) become more pronounced as the foundation's closure drew closer? As Atlantic moved to mainstream its work through partnership with government, it became much more of a driver of, rather than catalyst for, social change.

While much is made in the literature of foundations' 'pay to play' role and indeed this charge could be levelled at Atlantic's peacebuilding work in Northern Ireland, the amount of Atlantic funding, although significant in itself, was relatively small when compared with the large government spending departments in which it sought to exert influence (education and health). Atlantic Philanthropies spent £384.6 m between 1991 and 2015 in Northern Ireland, or 3.8 % of *one* year's public expenditure, currently about £10 bn per year in total (see Chap. 2 for more details). So, on the one hand, although the criticism is, what gave Atlantic Philanthropies 'the right' to intervene in selective areas of public policy, on the other hand officials in departments which were the 'target' of these interventions have argued that the quantum of funding was less important than the flexibility it afforded government in co-delivering services with Atlantic. It was not uncommon, for example, for officials to circumvent the stringencies of public procurement rules using Atlantic's part of the joint funding arrangement to more effectively deliver on policy outcomes. Additionally, there were examples where government departments found it convenient to schedule Atlantic payments to accommodate the rigidities of public sector financial year requirements. More fundamentally perhaps, Atlantic's grant-making was underpinned by a real desire to cement peace through funding multiple thematic areas (e.g., improving children's services, better care for people with dementia, and so on) and to support the emerging democratic institutions. Some questioned if this was a role which a philanthropic organisation should assume—pushing the political and public policy envelope and 'interfering' in the process of government with no democratic mandate. Atlantic's response to this criticism of policy 'interference' is that most of their early investments were in the NGO sector and it was only in their later work that partnership with government became a priority. Hence their legitimacy 'to play' came through funding NGOs which were never invited to the policy table but who, through their bottom-up work, had demonstrated alternative and/or more effective service provision in areas such as dementia, shared education, prevention and early intervention child services. Government, in turn, expressed an interest in partnering with Atlantic in these areas of service provision.

Atlantic's preference was to empower groups and communities to lead on social change. However it became clear that some relatively small organisations in which Atlantic Philanthropies had invested, with proper due diligence, were overwhelmed by the challenges set, expectations to deliver and, in some cases, resources allocated to them. Voluntary and community groups in Northern Ireland had been weaned on a diet of government and European funding which operated under strict monitoring rules. These tended to be process-driven and outputs-focused. Although groups frequently complained about the strictures imposed by such a funding environment, when identified and funded as an Atlantic Philanthropies grantee, their new operational freedom became difficult to handle. This new regime afforded grantees significant autonomy, discretion and flexibility and well-resourced plans to fund their activities. But it also demanded a focus on outcomes within and beyond the parameters of their own projects. Some groups failed to cope with this challenge.

All of this highlights the importance and trust Atlantic placed in the groups which it supported—crudely put, it funded selected voluntary and community groups to do things on its behalf and, from this experience, to advocate for wider social change. Atlantic tried to identify organisations already interested in the areas of work it was supporting to ensure a natural synergy but, on occasions, stretched groups beyond their natural hinterland, particularly when it came to expectations of advocating for social change in the wider policy arena. Once this relationship between funder and grantee became established and trust evolved, a cadre of groups secured ongoing funding from Atlantic. Was the selection of groups always 'right'?; did a comfortable relationship develop over time which lacked challenge?; and how robust was the scrutiny of the work of the groups? What is abundantly clear is that Atlantic's evaluation process kicked in at the design stage of interventions and hence a mechanism existed to assess the work of groups. What is equally clear from the funding arrangements over time is that a smallish number of groups, vis-à-vis the overall size of the voluntary and community sector, attracted repeat funding (e.g., Community Foundation for Northern Ireland; Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, Integrated Education Funds, Early Years, Human Rights Trust, Age NI, Barnardos NI, South Tyrone Empowerment Programme and Disability Action). Could all the prior judgments on the merits of grantees have been that accurate? Of course, a private philanthropic organisation does not have to justify its selection of groups or account for its choices. It is also true to say however, that although there was no public accountability for funding particular groups, there was significant internal scrutiny and challenge (particularly from 2004 onwards), and other organisations deemed unable to meet intervention goals were refused grant aid.

Some groups involved in peacebuilding work had become adept at ‘pleasing funders’ from a range of sources—this was done by putting in place a seemingly cross-community grouping to secure external funding but de facto operating as separate entities until occasions demanded an inclusive approach for presentational purposes. Atlantic employed local programme executives, so such practices were well known to it. Some groups who exhibited strong *bona fides* were subjected to external moderating pressures by paramilitaries on the extent to which they could engage in radical interventions, which occasionally stymied their work, however well-intentioned grantees were. In these circumstances change could only come about at the pace of community gatekeepers. Hence, the fulfilment of Atlantic’s expectations may in some cases have foundered due to the influence of malign actors who controlled geographical areas in which projects operated.

Atlantic Philanthropies’ role in peacebuilding also raised some interesting ethical issues. Given its funding support for the re-integration of ex-combatants and, in the case of restorative justice projects, those working very closely with paramilitaries, there were legitimate questions to be asked about the ethics of funding such groups. What balance did Atlantic Philanthropies strike between ‘taking risks for peace’ and running close to men (and women) of violence? Was there a ‘greater good’ discussion or did they adopt a hands-off ‘see no evil, hear no evil’ stance? The intervention space occupied here by Atlantic could be categorised as falling between Fleishman’s roles of ‘driver’ and ‘catalyst’ of social change. It drove change in the sense that it had a general direction of travel—to support the peace process. But equally, there was a huge degree of uncertainty about where its interventions would take it and those it was funding. Some officials and politicians have at times viewed Atlantic’s role as reckless. Others perceived it as having the resources to experiment with radical ideas free from the shackles of public sector accountability associated with spending taxpayers’ money.

Design and Intervention Levels

Returning to Frumkin’s work on foundations (outlined in Chap. 2) also offers a possible critique of Atlantic Philanthropies’ work in Northern Ireland. To recap, Frumkin argues that foundations can exert social change through five different approaches or levels of operation: through individuals, organisations, networks, politics and ideas or, put differently, moving from the micro-level of the individual, via the meso-level of organisations and networks, to the macro-level of politics and ideas. He suggests that if these tactics are pursued simultaneously and implemented cleverly than they can be self-reinforcing. However, he draws attention to two unresolved issues in the overall approach: first, interaction between the levels (micro, meso and macro) and, second, the relative effectiveness of each level. If we consider interaction between the levels, it isn't clear in the field of peacebuilding in Northern Ireland (and perhaps other thematic areas of interventions) that Atlantic Philanthropies had explicitly considered whether its interventions were linear and aggregating. There wasn't therefore a clear understanding of the change produced at the five levels and the extent to which these changes were cumulative (for example, how, if at all, did the significant investment in the Suffolk and Lenadoon interface project [see Chap. 4] contribute to government policy on removing all peace lines by 2023, a commitment contained in Building a United Community?). Added to this, Atlantic argued that many of the seemingly disparate interventions which they supported (restorative justice, human rights, integrated and shared education, and work on high-quality effective services for children and older people) could be seen as part of a holistic approach to peacebuilding and the creation of a post-conflict stable society. This begs the question as to the aggregate contribution to the whole versus the specific individual or relative contributions of the sum of the parts. The intervention process to support peacebuilding was therefore much more ad hoc and intuitive than rational, which must have had implications for resources allocation across Atlantic Philanthropies' funded projects. For example, during the period 1991–2015, Atlantic awarded grants of \$136.5 m to equality and justice groups[2] and \$31.6 m to peace and reconciliation organisations. How were the relative and collective contributions of these awards to peacebuilding assessed, given the approximate 4:1 allocation ratio? This suggests some implicit thinking on the relative merits of these areas and their aggregate effects towards the creation of a 'positive peace'. In one intervention (Contested Spaces—see Chap. 4) Atlantic adopted an area-based approach to peacebuilding, where it supported a range of interventions around peace lines across Northern

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[2] During the period 1991–2015 Atlantic Philanthropies provided grants of (approximately) \$11.5m to Equality Rights and Justice grantees and \$125m to Reconciliation and Human Rights grantees. The Equality Rights and Justice Programme was a forerunner to the Reconciliation and Human Rights Programme (see Chap. 2 for more details).

Ireland. Given the breadth of this project, it was difficult to have a focused and coherent overall advocacy strategy and make evaluative judgments on the relative effectiveness of its constituent parts.

Now let us consider Frumkin's second unresolved issue, the relative effectiveness of each level of intervention. Here, he argues that there is limited consensus among foundations on which level is likely to yield best results but as we move from the micro, through meso, to macro levels, risk and rewards increase. Atlantic's predisposition tended towards supporting and empowering groups. Here again, and perhaps as a feature of its time-limited nature, as Atlantic moved towards spend-down, the question of how to influence politics and the legislative agenda at the macro-level became more important. There were internal discussions over a long period of time within Atlantic Philanthropies as to how, or if, it should work with government at the macro-level, especially if this put philanthropic money under the control of politicians and officials. The substitution of Atlantic funding for state resources was the most obvious concern, resulting in a strategy to only partner with government where this levered public monies or commitments to sustain activities down the line. The specific circumstances of Northern Ireland accommodated this shift towards operating at the macro-level in Atlantic Philanthropies' 'thinking'. With a power-sharing devolved Assembly and legislature now in place in Northern Ireland, opportunities to gain access to local politicians with real policy influence opened up at a time when Atlantic was charting its exit route. This space also offered openings for new ideas on the way public policies were conceived and implemented—Atlantic took full advantage of this.

This discussion links to the use and value of logic models (see Chap. 2) which were integral to the funding requirements of projects supported by Atlantic Philanthropies. Grantees were, in their funding applications, required to articulate a theory of change or logic model. This model depicted the sequence of inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes, necessary to secure the desired social change. While really useful in promoting a priori thinking on the various stages of the intervention process, in practice grantees rarely referred back to these as an operational framework for their work (although there were exceptions to this within the Children and Youth Programme). It is of course accepted that as implementation of projects take place, the logic model frame of reference may change and indeed that external factors can influence how interventions unfold, but such an approach seems at odds with the significant operational freedom and flexibilities which Atlantic Philanthropies afforded grass-roots grantees.

It is perhaps a more accurate assessment that Atlantic Philanthropies adopted a generic 'theory' of change to peacebuilding in Northern Ireland, which had unwritten 'principles' that informed their approach to the work: judiciously select well-respected NGOs; set broad parameters for the social changes sought; provide them with resources to effect change; build their capacity to advocate though the use of robust evidence funded by Atlantic; and finally, take their pilot projects to scale. In that sense, the wider theory of change agenda was to build from the bottom up and Atlantic role's was one of 'leading from behind' and 'oiling the wheels of high-level advocacy', in which their positional and financial clout added value to the work of groups.

There is no consensus within Atlantic as to whether such an approach demonstrated clear intentionality or if these loose parameters simply offered the space for flexibility in the highly volatile political environment that is Northern Ireland. What became clearer as Atlantic's funding in Northern Ireland shifted to reflect the wider concerns of building peace is that Atlantic sought to 'normalise' society through tackling inequalities which had fuelled the violence and left those impacted by the conflict so vulnerable. A key part of this was to challenge the community relations orthodoxy which prevailed, namely, that the way to build peace is to address the two warring tribes problem and build 'prodalics' (a hybrid of Catholics and Protestants). Atlantic's 'theory of change' was entirely at odds with this conventional wisdom. Instead, its approach was to identify the common (cross-community) problem of inequalities, particularly around poor public services in areas which had suffered significantly through the conflict, and through a bottom-up process of supporting NGOs, agitate for change. Atlantic Philanthropies was heavily criticised for this approach, which eschewed the community relations school of peacebuilding. However, without public accountability requirements, Atlantic had the resilience to ignore or rebuff attacks from those wedded to improving community relations as a philosophy.

What Were Atlantic's Expectations of Grantees?

Expectations that all groups would advocate for social change beyond the parameters of their own projects were sometimes difficult to achieve. Given their size and scope, some struggled to move outside their own small organisational and geographical limits. The mantra of 'empowered local people running local projects' supported by philanthropic resources working within a broad operational and policy canvas, didn't always work. Tensions arose between doing effective work within a local project, and Atlantic's desire that lessons learned should influence systemic change and be brought to scale. Some groups, despite encouragement, training and funding support from Atlantic Philanthropies, were incapable, chose not to or simply didn't want to make the leap. They found it difficult to navigate the policy landscape. The skills they had as community and voluntary workers did not always translate into policy advocacy competencies. There was tension sometimes between evidence-gathering and advocating for social change. Some funded groups saw their role as exclusively about the scientific pursuit of evidence and its associated methodological robustness. Others saw themselves as delivering community activities or 'making it happen'. Still others perceived their role as interfacing with key decision-makers. Could all these actors provide a seamless web within a funded organisation, or more widely across a network of organisations operating in a thematic area? There were patent flaws in a funding proposition which sought to do all of these things, sometimes within small-to-medium-size NGOs. Atlantic learned lessons from this and sought, over time, to channel the activities of several organisations working on multiple interventions into learning and advocacy forums (e.g., Shared Education Learning Forum; Contested Spaces Forum).

The corollary of the bottom-up approach adopted by Atlantic Philanthropies was that as a philanthropic body it often had 'no official position' on key areas of intervention. If one takes, for example, the key issue of tackling the segregated or parallel system of education in Northern Ireland (as detailed in Chap. 3), Atlantic Philanthropies supported both integrated and shared education. So, critics could argue, what was Atlantic's position on education reform? Did it have one? Were both equally important? Are both still equally important given its more recent shift in funding towards shared education? Somewhat unusually, and over time, Atlantic's position did become clearer through formal submissions to Northern Ireland Assembly enquiries on shared and integrated education. Such public engagement in formal debates was uncommon for Atlantic.

Success and Sustainability

Some grantees questioned what constituted 'success' for Atlantic Philanthropies? Was it a legislative commitment by government to take forward some of the interventions which they had supported (e.g., shared education legislation); was a change in government policy sufficient (e.g., how Contested Spaces informed the government policy document *Together: Building a United Community*); or, was it acceptable for grantees to point to how their work had influenced practice in their field of intervention (e.g., the Housing Executive becoming much more aware of tenants' rights thanks to the Participation and Practice of Rights Project)? In other words, how much was enough to demonstrate the efficacy of resources invested by Atlantic Philanthropies in particular areas of peacebuilding and other interventions?

An issue which Atlantic had perhaps underestimated or at least failed to pay due regard was the impact of embedding its policies within government. For Atlantic Philanthropies, co-planning and co-delivering interventions, where it had previously been sole funder, with government departments represented a major milestone on its journey to building sustainable public policies. What it had not anticipated was the extent to which its grantees (individuals, organisations and networks) felt abandoned by this route map, despite their prior knowledge that this would happen and they should make contingency plans for this scenario. Such had been the dependency culture which had unintentionally grown over time between Atlantic and grantees that groups felt bereft as final grants came to an end. Rather oddly in some cases, they didn't quite believe the reality of spend-down and therefore did not engage seriously in seeking alternative funds. In that sense some organisations, notwithstanding sufficient prior notification and support from Atlantic Philanthropies regarding the fact that their funds would end, felt 'let down'.

Perhaps, more importantly, that sense of loss was exacerbated by what grantees would perceive as 'handing over' their projects to government departments. The relationship between Atlantic-funded organisations and the formal system of government could be described as dialectic. There were high-profile government departments (health, education, justice) which grantees railed against during the advocacy phases of their work, often involving clashes with senior officials. Grantees engaged in tactical battles to circumvent the ownership of public policies claimed by officials and appealed directly to politicians through the mechanisms of devolution (e.g., by appearing before statutory committees in the Northern Ireland Assembly, seeking to influence political party manifestos or pushing for inclusion of their work in the Programme for Government). All of this was to 'force the hand' of recalcitrant officials who favoured the status quo and were uncomfortable with risky policies which might impact negatively on their career trajectories. Now, grantees were being asked to ‘sup with the devil’—to hand over their cherished projects to government departments and graciously withdraw on the basis of ‘job done’. Having conceived and nurtured these interventions, this sense of loss was described by one grantee as ‘like handing your child over for adoption with no guarantees that they would be well looked after by his/her new parents’. Or put differently, ‘do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends?’ (Abraham Lincoln)—such was the price of sustainability for some groups. That said, some of these groups may well end up delivering erstwhile services which they nurtured through their work with Atlantic Philanthropies under contract from government.

Atlantic Philanthropies have always emphasised the value in supporting voluntary organisations which hold government to account for its commitments under European and UK law, international human rights standards and political agreements such as the implementation of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. Some of these groups did not receive, or eschewed, funding from the state to maintain their independent voice (e.g., Committee on the Administration of Justice). Given the lack of a formal political opposition in the devolved government of Northern Ireland, support for these groups acted as an accountability check mechanism. Could the withdrawal of some of their funding through the departure of Atlantic Philanthropies lessen oversight and, in turn, leave the state largely unfettered in its use of power and less mindful of its formal commitments to the peace process? As a bulwark against state ‘abuse’ Atlantic Philanthropies recently established a £10 m Human Rights Fund to strengthen NGOs beyond Atlantic’s lifetime and help them with the capital costs of purchasing their own premises. By dint of Atlantic’s work, such organisations were never going to partner with government, and hence funding was made available to secure their independent voice and improve their funding environment at least in the short-to-medium term.

The relationship which Atlantic had, and continues to have, with government is quite different from that of other funders such as the International Fund for Ireland and the Special European Union Programmes Body. Both these funders work to actively collaborate with government and, in particular, to publicise their activities in support of peacebuilding. Atlantic Philanthropies, on the other hand, has at one and the same time partnered with government on multi-million pound investments in university research and been heavily criticised by government for supporting restorative justice. In that sense Atlantic’s relationship with government has been complex and changing: holding the latter to account, challenging it, but at the different times partnering and co-delivering with it.

Impact of Atlantic's Peacebuilding Work

The discussions above offer a more strategic oversight of the totality of Atlantic's activities and interventions in Northern Ireland (as detailed in Chap. 6). Moving beyond this, however, demands attention to the impact of the work of Atlantic Philanthropies. Here again, it is useful to draw on Fleishman's work. He notes:

> For some classes of foundation initiatives, it is extraordinarily difficult to determine whether there has been any impact and, if so, how to measure that impact. Many of the world's problems are simply too big and too amorphous for foundation impact to be clearly discernible. (Fleishman 2009: 152)

Fleishman goes on to highlight the three major problems in assessing the impact of foundations' work. The first is how to determine the existence and direction of causality—did the interventions funded by the foundation directly cause the social change or could other stakeholders also have contributed (perhaps indirectly) to that change? This problem is particular acute when, for example, the foundation is acting as a catalyst for change, working through others to shape policy change. Second, the problem of the counterfactual—could the social change have happened anyway without the intervention(s)? Third, if the social change initiative or ideas originated from outside the foundation, can credit for its impact be attributed to the funders? Although there are ways to mitigate against some of these issues, such as experimental (randomised controlled trials) or quasi-experimental design which evaluates programmes (as in the early intervention work for children and young people described above), Fleishman is more pragmatic in his advice. He argues:

> The overwhelming number of foundation initiatives can never warrant the expense of true experimental designs, and I am convinced that an undue concern for unambiguously establishing causation could paralyse not only research but also action. If we assume that we can never know what would have happened had we not acted ourselves, and if such a thought deterred us from acting, nothing would ever get done … Common sense must be the arbiter of an imperfect causality and counterfactuality. (Fleishman 2009: 155)

Fleishman therefore outlines the kinds of major impacts that 'mark the most effective foundations'. These are: major benefits to the public, outputs and benefits created, expansion of knowledge, helping to launch a movement, helping an existing organisation find a new path, catalysing an urgent social change and taking an initiative to scale.

Having considered some of the work of Atlantic Philanthropies through case studies in the field of peacebuilding in Northern Ireland, an obvious question to ask, in light of Fleishman's comments, is what has been its impact? It is therefore useful to locate our conclusions in a wider public policy context of the potential for a shared society in Northern Ireland, moving forward. In other words, we can ask the following question: have the interventions supported by Atlantic Philanthropies contributed directly to a more shared and inclusive society? While this may seem like a very logical question to pose from the perspective of external funders, the answer is not a simple one to evidence. The problem of course (as referred to above) is one of causality—how can we be sure that the specific interventions funded by Atlantic Philanthropies added in a direct and positive way towards a more shared and inclusive society? One of the design features of the work of Atlantic Philanthropies is a very strong emphasis on evaluation. Indeed, beyond the substance of specific interventions, Atlantic has promoted and used a variety of evaluation methods: (quasi) experimental design, quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis, mixed methods and innovative tools such as 'most significant change' approaches (Davies and Dart 2005). In that sense, Atlantic's work has made a contribution to the literature on how to evaluate social change interventions (Knox 2010, 2015). But what has been the cumulative (and quite varied) impact of the work of Atlantic—has the whole been greater than the sum of the parts? Moving beyond the confines of programme impacts to consider the impact on wider society is confounded by the various (and potentially very impactful) interventions which have been funded or supported by public and other philanthropic funds.

Over a number of years the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey has been conducting attitudinal surveys on the state of community relations. This has been useful in tracking how receptive people are to a more inclusive society and whether Atlantic Philanthropies' investment in Northern Ireland is consistent with the wishes of those who live there. In other words, is there a desire for a more shared society and what should this look like in practical terms? One way of locating the work of Atlantic Philanthropies in the wider public policy milieu is to consider a trend analysis of attitudes on shared space and community relations captured through the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILTS) from 1998 until the most recent results, published in 2014. To do this, we examine two variables which have been collected over this 16-year period that have direct relevance to Atlantic Philanthropies' peacebuilding work, as follows:

- If you had a choice, would you prefer to live in a neighbourhood with people of only your own religion, or in a mixed-religion neighbourhood?
- Are relations between Protestants and Catholics better than they were five years ago, worse, or about the same now as then?

In examining the data over this period, we are attempting to assess the research question of whether Northern Ireland has become a more reconciled society and a 'shared' society based on people's opinions. A trend analysis tests the hypothesis that reconciliation and a shared society change in a linear or higher order (e.g., quadratic or cubic) fashion. A quadratic trend is one that has a consistent curving pattern upward or downward, while a cubic trend is characterised by a shift in curvature from upward to downward or vice versa (two changes in the direction of the trend).

Living in a Mixed-Religion Neighbourhood?

To test this hypothesis, we conducted a one-way, between-groups, analysis of variance (since the subjects in each of the yearly survey groups are different). One-way between-groups analysis of variance is used when we have an independent (grouping) variable with three or more levels (groups) and one dependent continuous variable. The analysis therefore uses the year of data collection as the independent variable and attitudes expressed on mixed neighbourhoods and better relations between Protestants and Catholics, respectively, as the dependent variable. However, because people's attitudes are expressed on an ordinal scale (e.g., own-religion-only neighbourhood, mixed neighbourhood or other) we have to convert this into a continuous scale.

Hence we recode the NILTS variables as set out in Table A.1 (Appendix). The analysis will tell us whether there has been a significant difference in people's attitudes towards mixing and community relations over the 16-year period.

Results: More Mixing

The descriptive data (Table A.2, Appendix) show that there were over 21,000 participants who expressed their opinions over the 16-year period from 1998 onwards on whether they would prefer to live in a neighbourhood with people of only their own religion, or in a mixed-religion neighbourhood.

Table 7.1 gives both between-groups and within-groups sums of square, degrees of freedom etc. Since the significance value is less than .05 (between-combined test), then there is a significant difference among the mean scores on attitudes towards mixing over the 16-year period. The linear term is a test that there is a linear trend ($p = 0.000$). 'Deviation' tests for the existence of a more complex trend. In this case, the linear, quadratic and cubic trends were significant.

The means plot (Fig. 7.1) provides a way to compare the mean scores on attitudes to mixed neighbourhoods for the different years of the survey. The linear trend shows an improving preference for living in a mixed community over the 16-year period. The point at which people expressed the lowest preference for living in mixed neighbourhoods was in 2001 and the highest preference came in 2010. This could well reflect the wider political events in Northern Ireland. During the period 2000–2001, devolution was in trouble with a stalemate over the decommissioning of paramilitary weapons and the Northern Ireland Assembly was unstable (suspended in February 2000 and again in August 2001). The IRA said that it had held several meetings with the arms decommissioning body and was honouring

Table 7.1 ANOVA—preference for mixed neighbourhood

			Sum of squares	*df*	*Mean square*	*F*	*Sig.*
Between groups	(Combined)		3195.547	15	213.036	15.775	.000
	Linear term	Unweighted	283.796	1	283.796	21.014	.000
		Weighted	407.738	1	407.738	30.192	.000
		Deviation	2787.809	14	199.129	14.745	.000
	Quadratic term	Unweighted	1137.971	1	1137.971	84.263	.000
		Weighted	816.989	1	816.989	60.496	.000
		Deviation	1970.820	13	151.602	11.226	.000
	Cubic term	Unweighted	1269.930	1	1269.930	94.035	.000
		Weighted	1339.035	1	1339.035	99.152	.000
		Deviation	631.785	12	52.649	3.898	.000
Within groups			301,713.662	22,341	13.505		
Total			304,909.209	22,356			

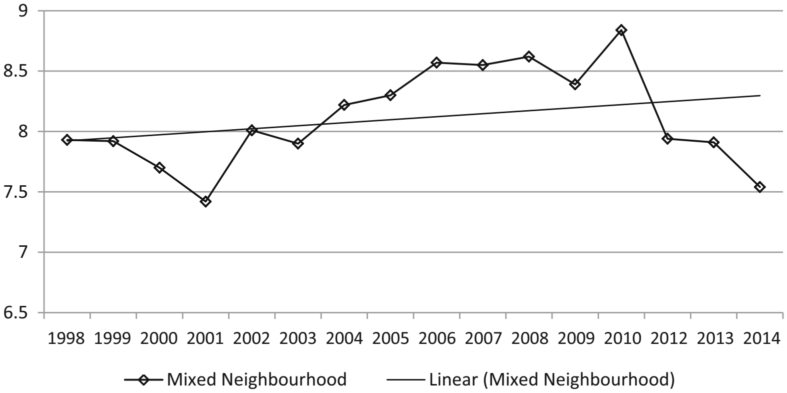

Fig. 7.1 Preference for mixed neighbourhood

its commitments but claimed the British government continued to renege on two of its promises—policing reform and demilitarisation. Confidence in the political process was therefore low which, in turn, sent a signal to the electorate of the politicians' unwillingness to share power. By contrast, 2010 registered the highest preference for a shared society expressed through the public's preference for mixed neighbourhoods. A power-sharing Executive had been in place since 2007 and the main political parties (Sinn Féin and the DUP) appeared to be co-operating for the good of Northern Ireland as a whole. In summer 2012, however, rioting broke out over parading issues, closely followed by widespread disruption and violence following a decision by Belfast City Council to limit the number of days the Union flag could be flown over the City Hall from 365 to 17 designated days throughout the year. These incidents highlighted the divisions in Northern Ireland and since then, confidence in the political process has been dented with threats to the stability of the Executive and Assembly over outstanding issues on welfare reform, dealing with the past and occasional murders of former republicans which, in turn, has reflected negatively on Sinn Féin's political mandate. These events illustrate how the wider macro-political events create the ambience for public opinion on a more shared society. When political leadership fails, there is a knock-on effect on confidence within the community and their willingness to invest in the concept of mixed neighbourhoods.

With large samples even small differences between year groups can become statistically significant. One way to assess the importance of the findings is to calculate the effect size (or strength of association) which indicates the relative magnitude of the differences between means. We do this by calculating the eta squared value or effect size. Eta Squared = sum of squares between groups (319.547) ÷ total sum of squares (304,909.209): 0.01 which is considered to be a small effect size or strength of association between the survey year and people's preference for living in a mixed neighbourhood.

The above analysis on people's attitudes towards mixed neighbourhoods can be supplemented with recent data on residential segregation emerging from the 2011 census which captured patterns of housing in the (then) 582 local government wards. The data showed that the percentage of single-identity wards (or those with 80 % + of one religion) had declined from 55 % to 37 % which, at face value, is positive news but the research cautioned against assuming that mixed wards were integrated—they can be self-segregated at street level (Shuttleworth and Lloyd 2013, reported in Nolan 2014). Overall, Shuttleworth and Lloyd (2013: 58) show from their work on the 2011 census data that there has been 'a small but clear decrease in residential segregation during the first decade of the 21st century'.

Improving Community Relations?

Moving to consider our second research question, we conducted one-way, between-groups, analysis of variance across the same time period of 16 years to assess whether people perceive relations between Catholics and Protestants to be better than they were five years ago, worse, or about the same now as then. Using the year of data collection as the independent variable and attitudes to community relations in the last five years as the recoded dependent variable we examine the trend over the 16-year period.

The descriptive data (Table A.3, Appendix) show that there were 23,017 participants who expressed their opinions over the 16-year period from 1998 onwards on whether community relations had improved over the last five years. The worst period of community relations was in the period 2001–2002 and the best in 2007–2008.

Table 7.2 gives both between-groups and within-groups sums of square, degrees of freedom and so on. Since the significance value is less than .05 (between-combined test), then there is a significant difference among the mean scores on attitudes improving community relations over the 16-year period. The linear term is a test that there is a linear trend ($p = 0.000$). 'Deviation' tests for the existence of a more complex trend. In this case, the linear and cubic trends were significant.

Table 7.2 ANOVA—better community relations than five years ago

			Sum of squares	*df*	*Mean square*	*F*	*Sig.*
Between groups	(Combined)		13,780.992	15	918.733	102.493	.000
	Linear term	Unweighted	2146.839	1	2146.839	239.500	.000
		Weighted	2221.962	1	2221.962	247.881	.000
		Deviation	11,559.030	14	825.645	92.108	.000
	Quadratic term	Unweighted	413.644	1	413.644	46.146	.000
		Weighted	53.009	1	53.009	5.914	.015
		Deviation	11,506.020	13	885.078	98.739	.000
	Cubic term	Unweighted	6137.110	1	6137.110	684.652	.000
		Weighted	6882.610	1	6882.610	767.820	.000
		Deviation	4623.410	12	385.284	42.982	.000
Within groups			206,177.147	23,001	8.964		
Total			219,958.138	23,016			

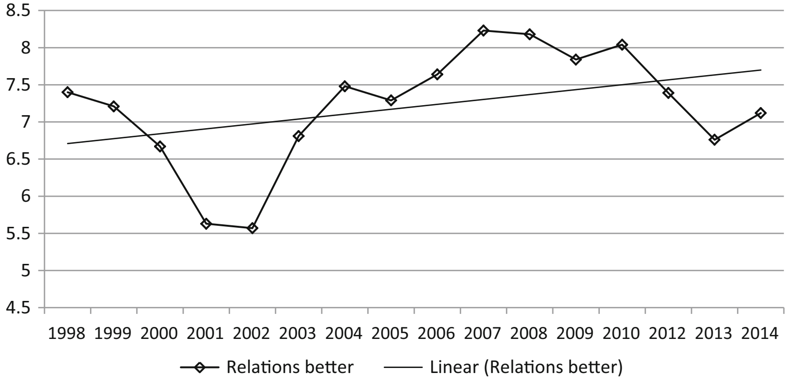

Fig. 7.2 Better community relations

The means plot graph (Fig. 7.2) shows a linear trend towards improving community relations over the 16-year period. Perceptions of community relations were worst when devolution and the wider political process were in trouble (on/off direct rule) and best when devolved power-sharing arrangements were agreed, and Sinn Féin and the DUP agreed to a coalition and the return to Stormont after years of staccato devolution. The effect size or strength of association (eta-squared calculation =0.063) shows a medium effect size between the survey year and people's perceptions of improving community relations.

If one overlays the two graphs in Fig. 7.3, the pattern or contour of people's opinions to these two key indicators is very similar over the 15-year period, indicating the importance of the wider political environment in terms of a shared future between the two main communities. The most recent disagreements on dealing with the legacy of the conflict and a breakdown in relations between Sinn Féin and the DUP over welfare reform and republican violence (which could result in a collapse of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive) are captured by the recent dip in public attitudes towards a shared society. In short, what this analysis of data over a 16-year period tells us is that while initiatives such as the Contested Space/Interface Programme are necessary on-the-ground trust-building interventions, of themselves they are not sufficient and require the wider political context to be favourable in order to create optimal conditions for long-term success.

A More Shared Society?

The above analysis, while useful, provides a longitudinal view of only two variables. In fact, the NILTS survey asks a large number of questions on contact between the communities, mixing and perceptions of relations. We use factor analysis to simplify the correlational relationships between a number of these variables. In other words we use this statistical technique to distil relationships between several variables on community relations and identify within them what factors, or common patterns of association between groups of variables, underlie the relationships.

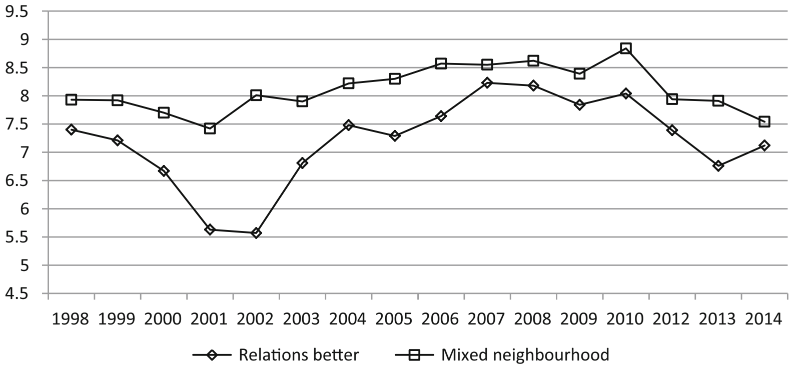

Fig. 7.3 Better community relations and preference for mixed neighbourhood

We therefore begin an exploratory analysis by reducing some 16 variables in the 2014 NILTS survey to meaningful clusters which can inform us about the ongoing work that Atlantic Philanthropies is funding in Northern Ireland. In short, what underlying attitudes lead people to respond to the questions on community relations as they do?

A principal component analysis with orthogonal rotation (varimax) was carried out on the 16 variables relating to respondents' views on a more mixed or integrated society. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified the sampling adequacy of the analysis, KMO = 0.86 exceeding the recommended value of 0.6, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity χ^2 (120) = 15,584.5, $p < 0.001$ indicated that correlations between the variables were sufficiently large for a principal component analysis. An initial analysis revealed the presence of four components with eigenvalues exceeding Kaiser's criterion of 1. An inspection of the scree plot (see Fig. 7.4) justified the retention of four components for further investigation.

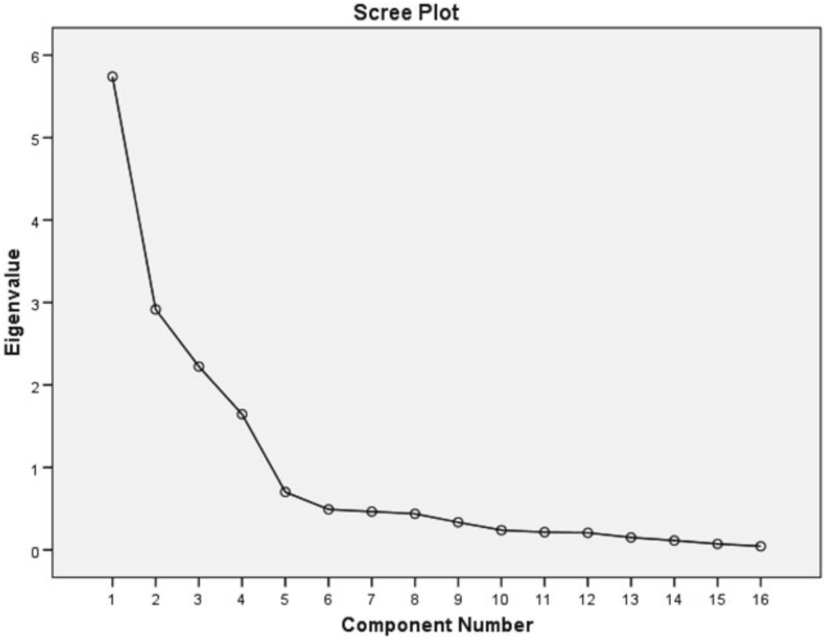

Fig. 7.4 Scree plot of mixed/integrated society

To assist in the interpretation of these components, varimax rotation was performed. The rotated solution is shown in Table 7.3 and illustrates strong loadings and all variables loading substantially on only one component. The four-component solution explained a total of 78.2 % of the variance (see Table 7.4).

The variables that cluster on the same components suggest the following order of preference to achieve a more inclusive or shared society.

Component 1: Preference for shared society. This component shows people's preference for more cross-community mixing in primary, post-primary schools, housing, work and leisure/sports activities, respectively. There is also evidence of much greater tolerance when it comes to mixed marriages.

Component 2: Shared and open facilities. This component shows an acknowledgement that more of our facilities are 'shared and open' to the two main communities: libraries, parks, leisure centres and shopping centres, respectively.

Component 3: Role of government in encouraging shared society. This component is a commentary on the role which government is playing in actively encouraging a more inclusive society in Northern Ireland. It is interesting to note here that while all three variables which comprise this component are negatively skewed (peak lies to the right) and hence an acknowledgement that government is proactive, it is clear that government could do more (mean scores for schools sharing facilities, shared communities and integrated schools are 6.11, 5.87 and 5.82 respectively[3]).

Component 4: Living and working together. This component reinforced people's preferences for mixed living and working arrangements and a more inclusive society.

What is encouraging about these results is that they validate the work of Atlantic Philanthropies and affirm public support for shared education as a central plank in its work on peacebuilding in Northern Ireland. These empirical calculations tell us a number of things about what is happening in Northern Ireland without definitively linking these to the work of Atlantic Philanthropies. The people of Northern Ireland are showing an increasing

---

[3] Scale on which respondents asked to locate their views on ranged from 1: 'definitely not achieved' to 10: 'definitely achieved'. The 'don't know's were excluded from the analysis.

Table 7.3 Rotated component matrix

	Component			
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*
Are you in favour of more mixing or more separation in primary schools?	.942			
Are you in favour of more mixing or more separation in secondary and grammar schools?	.940			
Are you in favour of more mixing or more separation where people live?	.937			
Are you in favour of more mixing or more separation where people work?	.932			
Are you in favour of more mixing or more separation in people's leisure or sports activities?	.923			
Are you in favour of more mixing or more separation in people's marriages?	.766			
Do you think that libraries in this area are 'shared and open' to both Protestants and Catholics?		.920		
Do you think that parks in this area are 'shared and open' to both Protestants and Catholics?		.897		
Do you think that leisure centres in this area are 'shared and open' to both Protestants and Catholics?		.887		
Do you think that shopping centres in this area are 'shared and open' to both Protestants and Catholics?		.878		
Has this idea been achieved … The government is actively encouraging schools of different religions to mix with each other by sharing facilities			.903	
Has this idea been achieved … The government is actively encouraging integrated schools			.889	
Has this idea been achieved … The government is actively encouraging shared communities where people of all backgrounds can live, work, learn and play together			.775	
Would you prefer to live in a neighbourhood with people of only your own religion, or in a mixed-religion neighbourhood?				.839
Would you prefer a workplace with people of only your own religion, or a mixed-religion workplace?				.805
Would you mind or not mind if a close relative were to marry someone of a different religion?				.698

Notes: Extraction method: Principal component analysis

Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser normalisation (rotation converged in five iterations)

Table 7.4 Total variance explained

Component	*Rotation sums of squared loadings*		
	Total	*% of variance*	*Cumulative %*
1	5.065	31.656	31.656
2	3.291	20.567	52.223
3	2.292	14.327	66.551
4	1.869	11.681	78.232

Extraction method: Principal component analysis

preference for mixed living, and community relations are improving over time although not always in a linear trend upwards. In particular, there is a strong preference for more mixing in schools, an example of which is shared education. Importantly though, the public's preference for a more inclusive society is moderated by the wider political milieu. Failure in political relations and leadership at the macro- (Northern Ireland) level reverberate at the level of communities. Stormont has become the weathervane for a shared society, and public attitudes suggest that the devolved government could do much more to encourage and facilitate such a transition, including leading by example.

Achievements and Sustainability

If the above analysis provides an objective insight into the impact of peacebuilding, how does Atlantic Philanthropies self-assess its overall achievements and legacy in Northern Ireland? Atlantic suggests the following as its key successes (see Table 7.5):

While the above achievements cover a number of issues, a set of core themes and approaches emerge from the work of Atlantic Philanthropies.

Atlantic has always sought to build and cement peace in Northern Ireland—from early support to organisations involved in dialogue, through challenging work with those on the margins to large-scale partnership investments in shared education. They sought ways to use Atlantic's unique position and perspective to encourage moves towards a more peaceful and stable society.

At times the discourse around human rights and its implementation has suffered through the conflict. Atlantic has always maintained that a real and lasting peace cannot be separated from a strong culture and respect

Table 7.5 Atlantic Philanthropies: key successes in Northern Ireland

Reconciliation	*Human rights*	*Ageing*	*Children and young people*
Programmes of shared services developed at hostile 'interface' communities, improving delivery of issues such as early years and parenting, cyber-bullying and youth engagement for many individuals and families	Nearly 500 cases of punishment beatings and shootings prevented in Belfast and Derry, and paramilitary beatings and shootings eradicated in seven of nine pilot areas	Creation of Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament in 2011 has enabled more than 500 older people annually to represent their interests to government and policymakers	33,000 children and their families receive high-quality, evidence-based early years care and education services; there has been a rollout of the Northern Irish model in other countries, including Serbia, Palestine and Colombia
Nearly double the number of integrated schools and pre-schools (49 to 90) and triple the number of students (7000 to 21,000) over 35 years (for integrated schools)	Fundamental reform to policing secured resulting in almost four times the representation of police officers from the Catholic community (8 % to 30 %) over 15 years (policing) within the new Police Service of Northern Ireland	$20 million from government to provide 80,000 older people with winter relief payments through the 'Can't Heat or Eat' campaign	Introduction of a sophisticated data-tracking and measurement system to identify gaps in children's services and improve interagency co-operation and co-ordination between government and service providers
By 2013, 20 % of all Northern Ireland schools (13,000 pupils) participated in regular weekly shared education from virtually a zero base in 2006	Extensive new case law established clarifying and extending the rights of disadvantaged groups. For example, securing judgements which extended the rights of the wrongly accused, or ensured that hospital patients with learning disabilities are regularly assessed to see if they would be better suited to community-based care	Over 26,000 people collected social security benefits, totalling $93 million, between 2007 and 2012 through the Access to Benefits project	

(*continued*)

Table 7.5 (continued)

Reconciliation	*Human rights*	*Ageing*	*Children and young people*
Shared education model replicated in deeply divided societies: Macedonia and Israel-Palestine.	Enabled local communities to use international human rights standards to improve their local public services. For example, getting all of the families with young children rehoused from high-rise tower blocks in North Belfast	Nearly a 19-times return on investment of benefits for older people, including housing, health and care and community services	
$220 million leveraged, in addition to Atlantic and government investments of $150 million, for research excellence and university infrastructure		Development of the 2011 Dementia Strategy highlighting the importance of making best-practice dementia care the norm from diagnosis to end of life, and sustaining a supportive environment	

for human rights. Atlantic has maintained a focus on rights especially for those at the margins of society. Its work has encompassed support for core rights organisations that seek to protect and extend the coverage that human rights gives to everyone as well as focusing on the needs of particularly vulnerable groups, e.g., ethnic minorities or people with disabilities. Their Ageing and Children and Youth Programmes are also underpinned by rights approaches. Atlantic's work has brought evidence to bear on policy and practice. Across all programmes, they sought information, engaged in research and put it to work to shape the best programmes and services. A large part of Atlantic's legacy will be policy and service improvements built on good evidence and validated by rigorous evaluation. Where possible, Atlantic has partnered with others, including foundations and government. It has always been conscious that it was 'a large funder in a small place' and it needed to ensure that what it has helped to build can continue beyond its funding. By bringing others together, it not only levered additional resources but was able to build a collective commitment and sustainability to their work in Northern Ireland (Atlantic Philanthropies 2014).

A significant element of Atlantic's work was about taking risks, working with people and groups who/which were considered undesirable to the establishment. These included ex-prisoners, paramilitaries and community representatives with a history of political violence (including some who had been convicted of murder) at a stage when no one else would engage with these groups. Former Chief Executive of Atlantic Philanthropies, John Healy, captured this work as follows:

> We needed to try to get normal politics operating in Northern Ireland but couldn't do that just with formal agreements, important as those were. Eventually, normal politics are local or they're nothing. So we focused our efforts on the bottom of the pile, so to speak, looking at the community-level operatives and leaders, the ex-paramilitaries and their political representatives. We also dealt with people and parties that represented the middle class. But the hardest work, and the work that not many people had the stomach for, was in the localities where people had not yet chosen between the path of politics and the path of violence. (Healy cited in Proscio 2014: 3)

Less obvious examples were taking risks in challenging the educational status quo to tackle inequalities and segregation in the education system, and holding government to account for poor public services in interface areas.

As Atlantic staff envisioned how to make a lasting impact with its work, the final phase of grant-making in Northern Ireland focused on working with government to enshrine the most successful models the foundation's grantees had helped develop, and to ensure the sustainability of key grantee organisations that will continue to hold government to account for providing services and for meeting its commitments in the peace agreement.

Partnership with Government

Reconciliation and Human Rights

Increasing Shared Education

Atlantic made a final three-year $16.1 m grant in 2014 to create—in collaboration with the Department of Education NI and the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister—a four-year programme to scale up shared education to more than 60 % of all schools in Northern Ireland. This first financial commitment to shared education from the Northern Ireland Executive amounts to $24 m. More than 100 schools have already submitted shared education plans to the Department of Education, plans which will scale up and mainstream work that Atlantic had previously supported. The Programme for Government contains a series of commitments to shared education and the Education Bill, which received royal assent in December 2014, includes a commitment by statutory bodies 'to encourage, facilitate and promote shared education'. These commitments mean that shared education will be effectively mainstreamed across Northern Ireland. Integrated schools will also play their part in these new cross-sectoral partnerships as well as continuing to take up opportunities to expand formally integrated provision where they arise.

Strengthening NGOs to Protect Human Rights

Atlantic has invested more than $21 m in advocating for, and securing, human rights in Northern Ireland over the past decade. This has involved encouraging and enabling grantees to develop innovative ways to make rights real 'on the ground' and to hold government to account effectively. To ensure that these skills and methods are applied going forward, Atlantic has seeded a new Human Rights Fund that is drawing in contributions from new donors in this field. This fund will enable former Atlantic grantees to continue to protect and advance human rights and equality perspectives within Northern Ireland's public administration over the next decade.

Ageing

Improving the Care and Well-Being of People with Dementia

Since its initial investments in the dementia field in 2006, Atlantic's goal has been to influence the quality of life for many people in Northern Ireland so that best practice care is the norm and the support services and environment exist to enable people with dementia to remain independent and in their own homes for as long as possible. To further that goal, Atlantic made grants of $9.3 m in 2014 to support a joint initiative with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to accelerate and improve the implementation of the NI Dementia Strategy. Government's contribution will be approximately $14 m. The grant will support:

- Development and mainstreaming models of respite care for people with dementia and their carers that allow the former to remain independent and in their own homes for as long as possible.
- Improved public awareness of dementia to prompt seeking early help and reducing the stigma, and better information and advice for people with dementia.
- Creation of new skills and standards of care for the dementia workforce
- E-health and social care—using connected health to improve the patient journey for people with dementia and provide better support for families and carers.
- Supported housing—encouraging sustainability and further development of supported living models to maintain independent living for as long as possible.
- Dementia analytics—building the capacity to collect and use dementia data to improve the planning and commissioning of effective and good value for money dementia services.

Children and Youth

Transforming Children's Services Through Prevention and Early Intervention

Atlantic's investments in the children's field have changed the way that government funds and provide services. The work has focused on shifting away from providing reactive and disconnected services, towards a scaled, evidence-based approach that tackles problems in children's lives before they reach crisis levels. A final three-year $16.1 m grant to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety creates a joint initiative, the *Early Intervention Transformation Programme*, between Atlantic and the Northern Ireland Executive. The initiative will focus on redesigning government services for the most vulnerable children and youth, rolling out evidence-informed programmes supporting children and families and embedding prevention and early intervention approaches in the training of staff work and youth justice. Much of the redesign and co-ordination of service delivery will be based on the successes in the Colin community (outer Belfast), which comprised work in children's services across all health and social care settings, education, and youth.

We summarise the roles played by Atlantic Philanthropies, its impact on peacebuilding and the sustainability of its work in Fig. 7.5.

The most effective work that Atlantic has supported will be enshrined in policy through joint government agreements on prevention and early intervention services for children, shared education and dementia care. That work will ultimately touch on virtually everyone in Northern Ireland. The journey taken by Atlantic from funding interventions as an external

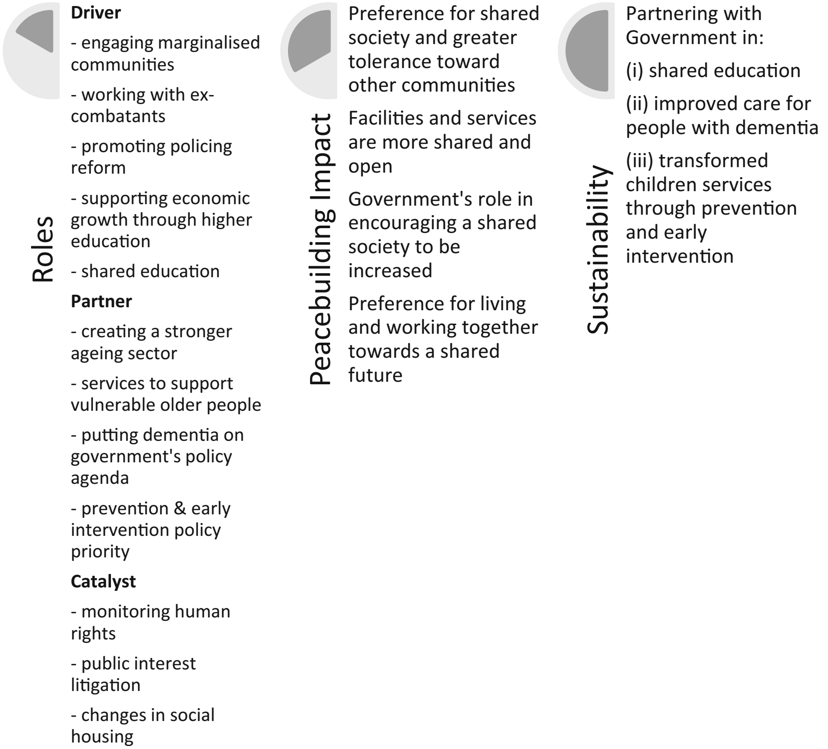
Roles
Driver
- engaging marginalised communities
- working with ex-combatants
- promoting policing reform
- supporting economic growth through higher education
- shared education
Partner
- creating a stronger ageing sector
- services to support vulnerable older people
- putting dementia on government's policy agenda
- prevention & early intervention policy priority
Catalyst
- monitoring human rights
- public interest litigation
- changes in social housing
Peacebuilding Impact
Preference for shared society and greater tolerance toward other communities
Facilities and services are more shared and open
Government's role in encouraging a shared society to be increased
Preference for living and working together towards a shared future
Sustainability
Partnering with Government in:
(i) shared education
(ii) improved care for people with dementia
(iii) transformed children services through prevention and early intervention

Fig. 7.5 Roles, impact and sustainability: Atlantic Philanthropies in Northern Ireland

stakeholder to partnering with government in the delivery of core public services has been fraught with difficulties. The transition process posed all kinds of challenges—would the flexibility and creativity synonymous with being an external funder be lost under the auspices of accountable government operating in a very different (political) context? Does the passion which accompanied the work of many of the NGOs dissipate when services are transferred to mainstream public sector organisations? Some of this will happen but, on the other hand, unless and until these interventions become part of the government's portfolio then there is limited sustainability when foundation funding ends. It is of course worth noting that ideas can be sustained and can inform the way in which public services are currently provided, rather than simply seeing external interventions as short-term funded options which cease unless embraced by government.

Atlantic Philanthropies' 24-year involvement in Northern Ireland has been significant. It is perhaps easier to make sense of its peacebuilding journey in retrospect. During that period it reacted to the often violent and changing circumstances in which it found itself. From an initial focus on helping the higher education sector, it moved into mainstream conflict and post-conflict interventions. Its work was multi-thematic in nature, but informed by a belief that peacebuilding required tackling systemic structural inequalities across the fields of human rights and reconciliation. This approach often challenged conventional peacebuilding models, which had for so long been rooted in improving community relations where 'two warring factions' were seen as the problem. Its mantra of 'empowering local people to do local projects' characterised how it operated although, at times, Atlantic Philanthropies' own role offered a critical element of support and advocacy to voluntary and community groups working on its behalf. Its independence provided a platform that allowed for innovation, creativity, challenge and flexibility in the projects it supported. Atlantic took significant risks in its approach to peacebuilding in Northern Ireland, often without a clear strategic direction as to where it would land. Its success came through those multiple NGOs in which it trusted and funded interventions, shepherding and supporting these. It was a friend and foe of government (departments) in equal measure but ultimately was acutely aware that the success of its interventions had to be embedded in public policy, the law, guidelines or good practice. This belief was strengthened by the fact that Atlantic was a time-limited foundation and hence its legacy had to be sustained without ongoing external resources. In the overall scale of public expenditure Atlantic's funding was relatively modest, but its impact has been significant. Atlantic's efforts have changed those community and voluntary organisations with whom it worked in at least three ways: those organisations' ability to challenge the status quo through radical thinking; showing the powerful role which evidence can play in promoting social change; and increasing the capacity of such organisations to advocate in multiple ways to effect significant change.

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APPENDIX

Table A.1 Recoding Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILTS) data

Survey Question	**NILTS ordinal scale**	**NILTS converted to continuous scale**
Survey Codes: mxrlgngh (mixed neighbourhood) rlrelago (better community relations)		
If you had a choice, would you prefer to live in a neighbourhood with people of only your own religion, or in a mixed-religion neighbourhood?	1: Own religion only 2: Mixed religion neighbourhood 3: Other 7: Refusal 8: Don't know 9: No answer	1: Own religion only (recoded variable) 3: Excluded from the analysis 7: Excluded from the analysis 8: Excluded from the analysis 9: Excluded from the analysis 10: Mixed religion neighbourhood (recoded variable)
Are relations between Protestants and Catholics better than they were 5 years ago, worse, or about the same now as then?	1: Better 2: Worse 3: About the same 4: Other 5: Don't know	1: Worse (recoded variable) 5: About the same (recoded variable) 4: Excluded from the analysis 5: Excluded from the analysis 10: Better (recoded variable)

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Table A.2 Descriptives

Preference for mixed neighbourhood								
Survey year	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. deviation*	*Std. error*	*95% confidence interval for mean*		*Minimum*	*Maximum*
					Lower bound	*Upper bound*		
1998	1641	7.93	3.787	.093	7.75	8.12	1	10
1999	2084	7.92	3.796	.083	7.76	8.08	1	10
2000	1646	7.70	3.925	.097	7.51	7.89	1	10
2001	1645	7.42	4.070	.100	7.23	7.62	1	10
2002	1682	8.01	3.733	.091	7.84	8.19	1	10
2003	1675	7.90	3.805	.093	7.72	8.09	1	10
2004	1763	8.22	3.587	.085	8.05	8.39	1	10
2005	1160	8.30	3.524	.103	8.10	8.50	1	10
2006	1140	8.57	3.291	.097	8.38	8.76	1	10
2007	1123	8.55	3.311	.099	8.36	8.74	1	10
2008	1157	8.62	3.249	.096	8.43	8.80	1	10
2009	1192	8.39	3.449	.100	8.20	8.59	1	10
2010	1134	8.84	3.016	.090	8.67	9.02	1	10
2012	1080	7.94	3.782	.115	7.72	8.17	1	10
2013	1095	7.91	3.801	.115	7.69	8.14	1	10
Total	21217	8.10	3.673	.025	8.05	8.15	1	10

Table A.3 Descriptives

	Better community relations than 5 years ago							
	N	*Mean*	*Std. deviation*	*Std. error*	*95% confidence interval for mean*		*Minimum*	*Maximum*
					Lower bound	*Upper bound*		
1998	1732	7.40	2.812	.068	7.27	7.54	1	10
1999	2144	7.21	2.982	.064	7.09	7.34	1	10
2000	1704	6.67	3.167	.077	6.52	6.82	1	10
2001	1699	5.63	3.136	.076	5.48	5.78	1	10
2002	1719	5.57	3.378	.081	5.41	5.73	1	10
2003	1704	6.81	3.174	.077	6.66	6.96	1	10
2004	1763	7.48	3.012	.072	7.34	7.62	1	10
2005	1156	7.29	3.120	.092	7.11	7.47	1	10
2006	1188	7.64	2.886	.084	7.48	7.81	1	10
2007	1150	8.23	2.550	.075	8.08	8.38	1	10
2008	1196	8.18	2.564	.074	8.04	8.33	1	10
2009	1216	7.84	2.749	.079	7.69	8.00	1	10
2010	1183	8.04	2.658	.077	7.88	8.19	1	10
2012	1143	7.39	2.966	.088	7.22	7.56	1	10
2013	1150	6.76	3.188	.094	6.58	6.95	1	10
Total	21847	7.12	3.091	.021	7.08	7.16	1	10

Index

A
- Access to Benefits project, 226
- accountability, 21, 45, 100, 242
  - of foundations, 220
  - for funding voluntary/community groups, 235
  - and human rights, 183, 184, 186, 188, 189, 191–192, 193, 197, 206, 209, 214
  - of state, 14, 231, 261
- accountable policing, 161, 162, 168
- accreditation of community-based restorative justice schemes, 164, 165, 167, 168–170
- Achieving Personal Potential (APP), 143, 144
- Action for Children, 145
- Active Respectful Communities (ARC), 139
- Adams, G., 10, 54
- Addressing Bureaucracy Project, 16
- advocacy
  - Contested Space/Interface Programme, 140–141, 142–143
  - for early interventions, 230–231
  - groups, 48; and public policymaking, 64, 69–70
  - and human rights, 201
  - joint, 129, 133–134
  - local services, 135–136
  - policy, 95–99, 132–137
  - shared spaces, 139–146
- Advocacy Network Northern Ireland, 227
- after-schools homework club, 144
- Age Concern, 48
- Ageing Programme, 224, 256
- ageing sector, work of Atlantic Philanthropies in, 224–227, 258–259
- agenda-setting
  - community restorative justice, 156–160
  - human rights-based model, 188–189
  - public policy, 65–66, 67–68
  - shared education, 86–95
  - shared spaces, 118–125
- Age Northern Ireland, 70–71, 235

Note: Page numbers with “*n*” denote footnotes.

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C. Knox, P. Quirk, *Public Policy, Philanthropy and PeaceBuilding in Northern Ireland*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-46269-5

Age Sector Platform (ASP), 225
Ahern, B., 72
Aiken, N. T., 185
  peacebuilding model of, 7–9, 37
All Children Together, 80
Alliance Party, 10, 11, 51–52
all-party groups, 68
All Party Groups on Ethnic Minority Communities, International Development, and Children and Young People, 68
Alzheimer's Society, 226
  Dementia Friendly Communities Programme, 227
  Let Me Speak, Let Me Be Heard programme, 227
analysis of variance (ANOVA), 245, 246, 248, 249
Anglo-Irish Agreement 1985, 72
Anheier, H. K., 44, 46, 53
anti-social behaviour, and policing, 143, 152, 153–154, 155–156, 157, 166–167, 176, 177
area-based peacebuilding, 146, 237–238
area planning of schools, 100–101
Aspire, 139
Atlantic Philanthropies, 35, 37, 43, 49, 51, 52, 53–59, 118
  achievements and sustainability, 254–257, 260
  agenda-setting, 66, 67–68
  Children's Law Centre, 48
  community restorative justice, work in, 157–159, 165, 170, 172, 176, 178–179
  Contested Space/Interface Programme, 138–146
  critique; design and intervention levels, 236–239; expectations of grantees, 239–240; role, 232–236, 260; success and sustainability, 240–243
  Delivering Social Change (DSC) framework, 104
  funding allocation ratio of, 237
  Global Opportunity and Leverage (GOAL) Fund, 59
  and government, relationship between, 242–243
  as grant-making foundation, 233
  grant-making in Northern Ireland, 61
  human rights, work in, 184, 185, 187, 189, 201, 215, 254, 256
  impact of peacebuilding work, 243–245, 260; improving community relations, 248–250; living in mixed-religion neighbourhood, 245–248; shared society, 250–254
  integrated education, work in, 80, 88–89
  interference in government public policies, 234
  Law Centre, 48, 62
  official position on interventions, 240
  as operational foundation, 233
  partnership with government; dementia care, 258–259; shared education, 257–258; strengthening NGOs to protect human rights, 258
  Promoting Shared Education within Specialist Schools in Northern Ireland, 91
  roles, 219–221; catalyst, 231–232; driver, 222–224; partner, 224–231
  shared education, work in, 90–95, 103–107, 109–110
  Shared Education Signature Project (SESP), 104–107
  shared spaces, work in, 118, 122, 124, 125, 129, 130, 134, 136, 137, 138, 146
  SLIG investment of, 129

  work in Northern Ireland, 59–65; engagement, 66, 68–71; funding, 71–72; influence, 65–66, 67–68
attitudes
  and conflict, 6
  positive, and contact theory, 98
  public; on community relations, 248–250; on shared spaces, 245–248
  of youth, 107

B
Baggott, M., 26
Bain Report, 87–88
Barnardos NI, 139, 228–229, 235
Barnett, R., 224
Barrow Cadbury Trust, 74
BBC
  Britain's Secret Terror Deals, 28
  Panorama programme, 28
behaviour
  anti-social, 143, 152, 153–154, 155–156, 157, 166–167, 176, 177
  and conflict, 6
Beirne, M., 184
Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement of 1998, 9–10, 13, 14–15, 26, 28, 31, 72, 115, 156, 160, 161, 177, 183, 188, 231
Belfast City Council, 10, 132, 136, 207, 209, 211
Belfast City Hall flag protests, 10
Belfast Community Sports Development Network, 136
Belfast Education and Library Board, 207
Belfast Greater Village Regeneration Trust, 210
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, 132
Belfast Interface Project (BIP), 122
Belfast Interface Trust, 206
Belfast Mental Health Rights Group (BMHRG), 201–204
Belfast Streets Ahead project, 119
Belfast Telegraph, 103–104
Belfast Trust, Serious Adverse Incident Review procedure, 210
Bell, C., 231
Bernard van Leer Foundation, 45
Bloomberg, M., 17
Borooah, V., 97*n*
Boutros-Ghali, B., 1
Bradley, D., 25
Bradley, K., 52–53, 57
Brest, P., 52
Brewer, J., 7
Brown, J., 154
Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities, 116, 118, 175
Bunscoil Bheann Madigan, 210

C
Cadwallader, A., 28
Cairney, P., 110
Callahan, D., 54
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 45
Cameron, D., 25
Can't Heat or Eat campaign, 225
capacity building, 129
  community, 118, 129, 189, 199, 201, 214, 215
  and human rights, 186, 201, 214, 215
  organisational, 48
  policy advocacy, 133–134, 135
  in schools, 97
  and shared education, 109
  and social change, 70
  youth, 143–144
capital grants, 60–61

Card Before You Leave (CBYL) scheme, 202–203, 204
catalyst, foundations as, 221
  Atlantic Philanthropies, 231–232
Catholics, 6. *See also* Protestants
  and community restorative justice, 152
  defence associations, 152
  maintained schools, 82, 104
  and Protestants, relationship between, 30, 34, 248–250
  recruitment in police, 21, 23
  and shared education, 82, 90, 91, 104
  and shared spaces, 117, 122, 126, 127, 128, 245–248
causality of philanthropic interventions, 51–52, 243, 244
Centre for Public Inquiry, 54
Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP), 142
ChildLine, 142
children. *See also* shared education
  human rights participation by, 206–207
  parenting programmes, 139–141
  sector, work of Atlantic Philanthropies in, 227–231, 259–260
Children and Youth Programme, 227, 256
Choose Well campaign, 204
circle time activities, 131
civil rights movement, 5–6
civil society, and quality peace, 13–17, 33–34, 35
Clinton, B., 72
Coakley, J., 31
Colin Early Intervention Community, 230
collaborative networks, 140–141
Commissioner for Older People in Northern Ireland, 225
Committee on the Administration of Justice, 62, 187, 223, 242
Communities Unite in Reconciling and Building Societies (CURBS), 143
community-based investment, 118
community boycott of offenders, 157
community capacity, 118, 201, 214, 215
community development groups, 127
Community Dialogue, 135
Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI), 53–54, 55, 187, 235
community foundations, 53, 57
community liaison team, for tackling crime, 157
community organising, and social change, 69
community policing, 21, 151, 154, 155, 157
community relations, 14, 95, 96, 107, 239, 244, 245, 251, 252, 254
  improving, 248–250
Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED), 96
Community Relations Council, 115, 133, 136
Community Relations in Schools (CRIS), 139
community relations model, 96, 99, 214, 215
community restorative justice (CRJ)
  agenda-setting, 156–160
  initiatives, 55
  loyalist schemes, 164–168
  policy adoption, 162–164
  policy implementation, 172–179
  pressures for change, 160–162
  problem definition, 151–156
  republican schemes, 168–172
  transition, 176

Community Restorative Justice Ireland (CRJI), 157, 157*n*, 158, 164, 173, 174, 175, 178
  schemes, 169–172
conflict management, 128
Conflict Resolution Centre, 25–26
conflict triangle (Galtung), 6
Connolly, F., 54
Connolly, N., 54
consociationalism, 15, 32, 36
Consultative Group on the Past, 25
contact theory, 98, 124
contentious issues, community engagement on, 135
Contested Space/Interface Programme, 137, 138, 237, 250
  early years and parenting programmes, 139–141
  impact on policies, 146
contradiction, and conflict, 6
controlled integrated schools, 85, 86
controlled schools, 79, 81
controversial issues, 140
Conway, P., 151, 155
Co-operation Ireland, 60, 135
Corston Independent Funders' Coalition, 44
Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), 79, 101
Craigavon Intercultural Partnership (CIP), 143
Creating Shared Public Spaces initiative, 134
creative philanthropy, 53
CREDIT (Classrooms Re-Imagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers Project), 98
crime, and neighbourhood renewal, 120, 121
Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI), 160, 164, 165, 166, 168, 170
Criminal Justice Inspectorate, 24, 169
Criminal Justice Review, 161, 162, 163
cross-community bands, 130–131
cross-community collaboration between schools, 86, 87, 90
cross-community consent, in Northern Ireland Assembly, 32–33
cross-community groups, 52, 236
cross-community networks, 124, 143
cross-community parental engagement, 139–140
cross-community projects, 143
Crumlin Road Gaol and Girdwood Army Barracks site, 204–206, 210
cultural violence, 5
Currie Primary School, 139

D
Daly, S., 44, 45, 46
Darby, J., 13
Delivering Social Change (DSC) framework, 104
dementia care, Atlantic's support to, 226–227, 258–259
Dementia NI, 227
Dementia Services Development Centre, 226, 227
Demmers, J., 5, 6, 7
Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), 10, 36, 247, 249, 250
Department for International Development (DFID), 35–36
Department for Social Development (DSD), 119, 199–200, 204–206
  Addressing Bureaucracy Project, 16
  Neighbourhood Renewal Programme, 173
  Partners for Change, 15

Department of Education (Northern Ireland) (DENI), 17, 81, 85, 87, 89, 90, 93, 101, 102, 103, 105, 110, 141, 257–258
  Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED), 96
  response to Shared Education Programme, 93–95
  Sharing Works: a Policy for Shared Education, 107, 108
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Republic of Ireland), 73
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 258, 259
Department of Justice (DoJ), 17, 31, 122, 143, 175
  on shared spaces, 116
devolution, 9–10, 31, 32, 33
direct rule, 14, 116, 118, 249
direct violence, 5
Disability Action, 187, 235
Disability Living Allowance, 120, 121
domestic violence, human-rights-based approach to, 208–209
double funding, 95
driver, foundations as, 221
  Atlantic Philanthropies, 222–224
Dublin-Monaghan bombings, 28
Duffy, G., 97*n*
Dundalk Simon Community, 210
duty-bearers, 188*n*, 200, 207

E
Eames, Lord, 25
early interventions, for children/youth support, 228–230, 259–260
  advocacy, 230–231
Early Intervention Transformation Programme, 259–260
Early Years, 229, 235
Early Years Fund, 17
economic recession, 18–19
economic reconstruction, and quality peace, 17–20, 34, 35
Education (NI) Act 1977, 80
educational performance
  in integrated schools, 86
  and neighbourhood renewal, 121
  underachievement of youths, 144
Education and Library Boards, 101
Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), shared education self-evaluation framework, 106
Education Bill, 102, 108, 258
Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, 81
Edwards, M., 45
electoral activity, social change-related, 70
11+ transfer test, 144
empirical literature on foundations, 221
employment rate, 18–19
Engaging Whole School Communities: Good Practice in Shared Education and *Buddy Up: a Whole School Community Resource,* 141
Entitlement Framework, 86–87
entrepreneurs, 45
  institutional, 59
  policy, 64
  and reconciliation, 9
Equality Can't Wait and Homeless Action, 190
equality clauses, 211
Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), 205, 206, 210
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, 74
ethnic self-designation, 32–33
European Commission Task Force, 18

European Convention on Human Rights, 27
European Union, 18, 35
  role in Northern Ireland peace process, 73–74
evidence
  adverse policymaking, 96
  as advocacy tool, 98
  for children/youth support interventions, 228, 230
ex-combatants, engagement of, 222–223
ex-gratia payment, for victims, 25
ex-prisoner support organisations, 223

F

Faces and Spaces, 139
factor analysis, 250
Fearon, K., 14
fears, tackling, 118
Feeney, C. F., 53, 54
Fermanagh Sharing Education Programme, 93
Fermanagh Trust, 93, 97, 98
Ferris, J. M., 63–64, 65–72
Fine Gael, 159, 160, 164
Finucane, P., 25, 28, 151
FitzGerald, G., 72, 159, 164
Fitzpatrick, S., 229
flagship public policy, 146
Fleishman, J. L., 219–221, 224, 243, 244
Footprints Women's Centre, 208–209
Footprints Women's Movement, 208
Ford, D., 11, 172
Ford Foundation, 45
Foster, A., 12
foundations
  accountability of, 220
  characteristics of, 44–45
  empirical literature on, 221
  engagement, 66–71
  funding, 71–72
  invisibility of, 220
  political vulnerability of, 220
  and public policymaking, 63–64
  role of, 221
  seeking influence, 65–66
  and social change, 52–53
  types of, 45
Foyle Contested Space, 141, 142–143
Francis, D. J., 2
Freedom of Information request, 190, 191
free school meals (FSM), 82, 83, 84
Frumkin, P., 46, 47, 49, 53, 54–55, 62, 236, 238
Fundación March, 45
funding
  community restorative justice schemes, 173–174, 173*n*
  development project, 25–26
  ethics of, 236
  external, influence through, 54
  government; for civil society, 15, 17; for philanthropy, 46
  of policy analysis, 68
  and policymaking, 64
  of voluntary/community groups, 235, 236
Further Education College, 87

G

Gallagher, T., 97*n*
Galtung, J., 219
  peacebuilding model of, 5–7, 37
Galway Travellers Movement, 210
General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE), 82, 83, 84
Gleann Collann Irish Pipe Band, 130
Glen Community Complex, 134

Glen Community Parent Youth Group, 134
Glennane Gang, 28
Global Opportunity and Leverage (GOAL) Fund, 59
Gormally, B., 184, 185
Gormley-Heenan, C., 124
governance, and quality peace, 31–33, 35
government
  and Atlantic Philanthropies; embedding policies within, 241; partnership, 234; relationship between, 242–243
  and civil society, concordat of, 15–16, 17
  and grantees, relationship between, 241–242
  and philanthropy, 46
  policies, segregation-related, 118–119
  role in encouraging shared society, 252
grammar schools, performance inequalities in, 82, 83
Grant, P., 45–46, 51, 52
grantees
  and government, relationship between, 241–242
  outcomes expected from, 234–235, 239–240
grant-making foundations, 44, 45, 233
grassroots mobilisation, 69–70, 97
Greater Shankill Alternatives Programme. *See* Northern Ireland Alternatives (NIA)
Gurt, H., 132

H
Haass, R., 27*n*, 72
Hain, P., 25
Hamber, B., 2
Hamill, R., 151
Hanson, D., 162, 172
hard-to-reach groups, 140
Harvey, H., 52
Health and Social Care Board, 202, 203
Health Care for America Now (HCAN), 54
Health Fare programme, 132
Healy, J. R., 56, 223, 257
Heaney, S., 62
Help the Aged, 48
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, 26, 27
hierarchical model to peacebuilding, 3–5
higher education
  economic growth through, 223–224
  funding for, 54
high-intensity support, in integrated communities, 145
Hill, M., 65
Hillsborough Agreement 2010, 10, 13
Historical Enquiries Team (HET), 24, 26–27
Historical Investigations Unit (HIU), 11, 27
Holy Family Primary School, 139
Hospitalstiftung, 45
housing issues, human-rights-based approach to, 199–201, 232
  rights, 190–192
human right-based model
  agenda-setting, 188–189
  Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR), 189–194
  policy adoption, 209–216
  policy intervention; Belfast Mental Health Rights Group (BMHRG), 201–204;

        domestic violence, 208–209; Girdwood group, 204–206; Lower Shankill Residents' Voice (LSRV), 206–207; model, 194–199; Seven Towers, 199–201
    problem definition, 183–188
human rights, 21, 231, 254, 256
    and community policing, 152, 154, 161
    grants, 61, 62
    strengthening NGOs to protect, 258
Human Rights Act 1998, 161
Human Rights Consortium, 187
Human Rights Fund, 242, 258
Human Rights Trust, 235
Hunt, P., 213

I
ideas, and social change, 49
Ilex Regeneration Company, 205*n*
imperfect peace, 155
Incredible Years Parenting Programme, 139
Incredible Years School Readiness Programme, 140
Independent Commission for Information Retrieval, 11, 27*n*
Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC), 161–162, 169
indirect violence. *See* structural violence
individuals, and social change, 47–48
inequalities
    access to schools, 82
    performance inequalities in schools, 82, 83–84
    structural and material, 9
    tackling, 55–56
informal community justice, 152, 154
institutional entrepreneurs, 59
Institut Pasteur, 45
integrated education, 65, 80, 87–88, 90, 240. *See also* shared education
    classification of pupils in, 85
    growth of, 84–85
    performance of, 86
    pupil attendance to, 85
    supporters, attacks on shared education, 103–104
Integrated Education Funds, 235
integrated school, 79
integrating education, 86, 87–88
intercommunity collaboration, in shared education, 89, 92
interface communities, 31
    barriers in, 123
    Belfast Interface Project (BIP), 122
    leadership development in, 48
    neglect of statutory organisations in, 137
    policy costs of living in, 123
    and shared spaces, 117, 118, 121–125
    SLIG, 126–132
    and social deprivation, 124, 125
Interface Regeneration Toolkit, 209
interface violence, 124, 128
Interface Working Group, 133, 136
interface youth engagement programmes, 143–145
International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 188
International Fund for Ireland (IFI), 18, 31, 35, 72–73, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 109, 110, 122, 128, 242
Invest Northern Ireland, 19
Irish Human Rights Commission, 212
Irish Republican Army (IRA), 152, 159–160, 246

J
Jarman, N., 123–124
Jeong, H.-W., 2
Jobseeker's Allowance, 120, 121
John, P., 65
Johnston, P., 224
joint advocacy, 129, 133–134
Joint Declaration, 1993, 72
Joint Government/Voluntary and Community Sector Forum, 15, 16
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, 74
Jung, T., 44, 53–54, 56
justice (social learning model), 8

K
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure, 251
Kellogg Foundation, 43
Kelly, G., 2
Kennedy, L., 152
Kingdon, J. W., 65
kneecapping, 152
knowledge communities, in policymaking, 68
Knox, C., 97*n*, 184

L
lack of trust, tackling, 118
LaMarche, G., 56, 57, 58
land disputes, 128
Law Centre NI, 187
leadership, and social change, 47–48
learning
  organisational, 92
  sharing of, 195–196
  social learning model of transitional justice, 7–9, 37, 185
Learning for Life and Work (LLW), 142, 143
Leat, D., 53
Lederach, J. P., peacebuilding model of, 3–5, 17, 36–37
legal context of human rights, 195
Lenadoon Community Forum, 127, 134
Lenadoon Estate. *See* Suffolk and Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG)
Lenadoon Women's Group, 134
Lethal Allies (Cadwallader), 28
Leverhulme Trust, 45
liberal peacebuilding hypothesis, 1–2
life expectancy, and neighbourhood renewal, 120, 121
limited-life philanthropy, 55
Lisanelly Shared Education campus, 99*n*, 102
litigation, 70
  public interest, 69, 232
Lloyd, C., 116, 248
lobbying, 70
Local and Global Citizenship, 98
local defence associations, 152
local services advocacy, 135–136
logic model of philanthropy, 238
  effectiveness of each level, 50–53, 237, 238
  elements, 47
  interaction between levels, 49–50, 237
Long, N., 10
Lower Shankill Regeneration Board, 206
Lower Shankill Residents' Voice (LSRV), 206–207
loyalists, 20, 37
  areas, community policing in, 157
  community restorative justice schemes, 164–168
  paramilitaries, 28, 54, 55, 151, 152
Lundy, P., 26
Lynch, E., 225

M
macro-level politics, 4, 49, 237, 238
mainstreaming
  of human rights-based approach, 213
  of shared education, 109, 110
maintained schools, 79, 81
Mandelson, P., 31
marginalised groups, engagement of, 222–223
maximum permissible disclosure, 26
McChesney, F. S., 45
McCusker, L., 112*n*
McDowell, M., 54
McEvoy, K., 153
McEvoy, L., 2
McGuigan, K., 12
McGuinness, M., 10
McWilliams, M., 222
media as mechanism for youth engagement, 144–145
Media Initiative for Children, Respecting Difference Programme, 139
Mediation and Community Support (MACS) Service, 167
Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), and shared education, 97, 100
mental health, human-rights-based approach to, 201–204
Mental Health Rights Campaign, 204
MI5, 23, 26, 28
Migrant Rights Scotland, 210
Mika, H., 159
Minister for Social Development, 134
Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG), *Advancing Shared Education* report, 89, 101–102
Mintrom, M., 63–64, 65–72
Mitchell, G., 72
Mitchell principles of democracy and non-violence, 156
mixed foundations, 45
mixed-religion neighbourhood, living in, 245–248
Montanaro, L., 43
most significant change approaches, 244
Mount Vernon UVF gang, 28
multiple deprivation index, 124, 127
Murphy, P., 26
Murtagh, B., 117, 122

N
negative peace, 5, 7, 9, 35
negotiations, and quality peace, 31–33, 34
neighbourhood renewal, 119–121
Neighbourhood Renewal Programme, 173
Nelson, R., 151
networks
  collaborative, 140–141
  cross-community, 124, 143
  human rights support, 195–196
  and policymaking, 64
  and social change, 48
A New Beginning: Policing in Northern Ireland (1999), 21
next practice, 98
Nicholson, J., 132
NI Equality Commission, 132, 212
NI Hospice, 227
Nolan, P., 14
non-governmental organisations (NGOs), 3, 178, 242, 261
  strengthening, to protect human rights, 258
  support to children and youth, 228
  support to vulnerable older people, 226

non-grammar schools, performance inequalities in, 82, 83
non-molestation orders, 208–209
North Eastern Education Library Board (NEELB), 93, 97, 98
Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 75, 205, 205*n*
Northern Ireland Alternatives (NIA), 157, 157*n*, 158, 166–168, 172, 173, 174, 175, 178
  inspection of schemes, 164–165
Northern Ireland Assembly, 31, 32, 98, 177, 240
  achievement of, 33, 34
  cross-community consent in, 32–33
  debate on shared and integrated education, 100
  devolution of, 9–10
  Education Committee, 97
Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders (NIACRO), 157
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council, 123
Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM), 62, 187
Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), 59–60, 81
Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA), 17, 235
Northern Ireland Executive, 12, 29, 36, 258, 259
  Programme for Government, 15, 16, 66, 99–100
Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), 29, 36, 166, 172, 190, 199–200, 206, 232
  Shared Neighbourhood Programme, 132, 132*n*
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, 187
Northern Ireland Life and Times survey (NILTS), 117, 117*n*, 244, 245, 250–251, 263
Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure, 119–120*n*
Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS) database, 120–121
Northern Ireland Offices (NIO), 155, 172, 173
  Protocol for Community-based Restorative Justice Schemes, 162–164
Northern Ireland Pensioners' Parliament, 225
Northern Ireland Policing Board, 21, 26, 168
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), 121

O
O'Clery, C., 62
Oechsli, C. G., 58–59
Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM), 102, 105, 132, 257
  Contested Space/Interface Programme, 138–146
Older People's Policy Forum, 48
O'Loan, N., 28
operating foundations, 45
Orange Order parades, 11
organic approach to peacebuilding, 5
Ostrander, S., 57
O'Sullivan, M., 27*n*, 72
Otter, S., 27
Our High 5 Campaign, 71

P

Paisley, I., 10
Parades Commission, 11
paramilitaries, 151–152
  control, reasons for, 153–154
  punishment of, 152, 152*n*, 153, 154, 155–156, 176–177
  restorative justice by, 166
  -style attacks, 173, 176–177
Parenting NI, 139
parenting programmes, 139–141
parents, involvement in integrated education, 80–81
Parents and Communities Together (PACT), 145
Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR), 187, 189–194, 232
  Belfast Mental Health Rights Group (BMHRG), 201–204
  domestic violence, 208–209
  Girdwood group, 204–206
  Lower Shankill Residents' Voice (LSRV), 206–207
  model, 197–199; benchmarks and indicators, 196; identification of/engagement with individuals and groups, 194–195; legal and policy context, 195; support networks and sharing of learning, 195–196; sustained programme of work, 195
  opinions of external observers, 211–213
  policy adoption, 209–216
  Seven Towers, 199–201
  Summer School, 210
participatory action research, 195
partner, foundations as, 221
  Atlantic Philanthropies, 224–231
Paterson, O., 25, 100
Patten, C., 21
Patten Report, 161
pay-to-play role of philanthropy, 45, 60, 221, 234
Peace Bridge (Derry), 73–74, 119
peacebuilding, 129
  definition of, 1–3
  external actors, 72–74
  and human right-based approach, 215–216
  models of, 3–9
  in Northern Ireland, 9–12, 72
  positive peace, 33–37
  quality peace, 13–33
  and segregated communities, 123
  and shared spaces, 137
peace dividends, 13, 17, 35, 37, 121, 189, 215
peace making, 1, 7, 11
peace partnerships, 73
PEACE programmes, 73, 74
peace walls, 17, 30–31, 115, 122, 124
People and Place: a Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, 119
performance inequalities, in schools, 82, 83–84
Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU), 98, 142, 143
philanthrocapitalism, 45
philanthropy, 43–46
  creative, 53
  definition of, 43
  effecting social change, 46–53
Pifer, A., 53
pilot programmes
  public policy, 68
  shared education, 89, 90, 95, 98, 105, 108, 109
PIPS Suicide Awareness, 139
Playboard NI, 141–142, 207
Poleglass Domestic Violence Group, 210

Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (PONI), 21, 24, 27
Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), 12, 21, 26–27, 143–144, 153, 161, 164, 166, 168, 171, 172, 174, 175, 208, 223
policing, 21–24, 31, 151–152
  reforms, 223
Policing Board, 168
policy adoption, 66
  community restorative justice, 162–164
  human rights, 209–216
  shared education, 99–104
  shared spaces, 146–148
policy advocacy
  shared education, 95–99
  Suffolk and Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG), 132–137
policy analysis, funding, 68
policy context, of integrated education, 88
policy development, and social change, 70
policy engagement, 66, 68–71
policy entrepreneurs, 64
policy evaluation, 66, 68
policy implementation, 66
  community restorative justice, 172–179
  shared education, 104–110, 110
policymakers, relationship of foundations with, 64
policy transfer, 142
political parties, and shared education, 97
political peace process, 7
political settlement, 2, 11, 21, 35, 36, 233
political stability, 11, 31, 35
  and community restorative justice schemes, 176
political vulnerability of foundations, 220
politics, and social change, 48, 62–63
positive intergroup contact (social learning model), 8
positive peace, 5, 7, 33–37, 128, 219, 237. *See also* quality peace
post-agreement security, and quality peace, 21–24, 34
post-primary education, 90. *See also* shared education
  GCSEs of pupils, 84
  pupil cohorts, 79
power-sharing government, 10, 11, 12, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 168, 231, 238, 247, 249
principal component analysis, 251
private investment, 17–18
Probation Board, 164
problem definition
  community restorative justice, 151–156
  human rights-based model, 183–188
  public policy, 65
  shared education, 79–86
  shared spaces, 115–118
prodalics, 239
Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, 28–29
Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLI), 223
progressive realisation, 196, 196*n*
Progressive Unionist Party, 156
Protestants, 6. *See also* Catholics
  and Catholics, relationship between, 30, 34, 248–250
  recruitment in police, 21, 23
  and shared education, 82, 90, 91
  and shared spaces, 117, 122, 126, 127, 128, 245–248
Protocol for Community-based Restorative Justice Schemes, 162–164

Provisional Irish Republican Army, 12
public accountability, of foundations, 220, 235
Public Accounts Committee (PAC), 16
public actors, in philanthropy, 46
public awareness, and social change, 69
public confidence in police, 21–23
public education, on policy issues, 70–71
public expectations of peace, 35–36
Public Health Agency, 227
Public Initiative for Prevention of Suicide (PIPS), 201
public interest litigation, 69
  of human rights, 232
Public Interest Litigation Fund, 187
Public Interest Litigation Support Project (PILS), 69
public perceptions of police, 21–23
public policy
  interference in, 234
  making, Ferris and Mintrom model of, 64–72
  and philanthropy, 46, 63
  and social change, 48, 63–64
Public Prosecution Service, 163
public sector
  jobs, 19, 20
  spending of Atlantic Philanthropies, 60
public services, 116
punishment of paramilitaries, 152, 152*n*, 153, 154, 155–156, 176–177
punitive sanctions, 157

Q
quality of life, 35
  and human rights, 192
  and neighbourhood renewal, 120–121
  of people with dementia, 258–259
quality peace
  economic reconstruction, 17–20
  negotiations and governance, 31–33
  post-agreement security, 21–24
  reconciliation, 28–31
  role of civil society, 13–17
  transitional justice, 24–28
Queen's University Belfast (QUB), 91–92, 97, 98, 223
  Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology (CCRCB), 61, 224
  Centre for Effective Education, 230
  Centre for Effective Services, 230
  Improving Children's Lives, 230
  Institute for Child Care Research, 230

R
Rathcoole Regeneration Group, 190
Reaching Across to Reduce Your Risk of Suicide (RAYS), 201
reactive containment, 155
Ready to Learn, 228–229
Real Jobs Now motion, 211
reconciliation, 37
  Atlantic Philanthropies' work in, 257–258
  community-based, 129
  grants in, 61
  and human rights, 183, 184–186, 214
  and peacebuilding, 2–3, 5
  and quality peace, 28–31
  and transitional justice, 7–9
Reconciliation and Human Rights programme, 233
reforms, policing, 223
regeneration, 137
  human-rights-based approach to, 204–206
  Interface Regeneration Toolkit, 209
  projects, 128

Report of the Consultative Group on the Past, 24
republican(s), 12, 24, 55
  areas, community policing in, 151, 152, 153–154, 157
  community restorative justice schemes, 168–172
Republic of Ireland, role in Northern Ireland peace process, 72, 73
research
  shared education, 98–99
  social change, 69
residential segregation, 116–117. *See also* shared spaces
  tackling, 117–118
resource availability, and human rights, 196*n*
restorative justice, definition of, 157
Reynolds, A., 72
right to play, 206
right to work, 206
risk/reward, in philanthropy, 50, 51, 52
Robinson, M., 212
Robinson, P., 10, 24, 100
  on devolution, 33
rotated component matrix, 252, 253
Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), 21, 28, 151, 153, 154, 223
Royal Victoria Hospital, 153
RTÉ (Raidió Teilifís Éireann)
  Collusion, 28
  Prime Time, 28
Ruane, C., 86, 100, 159
Rural Development Council, 133
Ryan, S., 2

S
Sanghera, B., 52–53, 57
schools, access to, 82, 84
Schuyt, T. N. M., 43
sectarianism, 130–131
sectarian violence, 126
security, post-agreement, 21–24
segregated schools, 79, 80, 81
  pupil attendance, 81–82
self-evaluation framework of shared education, 106
self-help, 14, 137
Seven Towers, 199–201, 232
Seven Towers Monitoring Group (STMG), 199–200
Shankill Women's Centre (Belfast), 143
shared classes, 91
shared community, 102, 107
shared curriculum focus, 142
shared education, 137, 240, 254
  agenda-setting, 86–95
  Atlantic Philanthropies' work in, 257–258
  definition of, 89–90, 108
  mainstreaming, 109, 110
  policy adoption, 99–104
  policy advocacy, 95–99
  policy aims for, 108
  policy implementation, 104–110
  problem definition, 79–86
Shared Education Bill, 108
Shared Education Learning Forum (SELF), 97
Shared Education Programme (SEP), 89, 91–96, 100, 107
Shared Education Signature Project (SESP), 104–107
A Shared Future, 28–29, 87, 116
shared neighbourhood programmes, 145
shared services, 118, 129, 137, 139, 140
  delivery models, 118
shared society, 28, 87, 116, 244–245, 250–254
  improving community relations, 248–250
  living in mixed-religion neighbourhood, 245–248

shared spaces
  agenda-setting, 118–125
  Contested Space/Interface Programme, 138–146
  interventions and advocacy activities, 139–146
  policy adoption, 146–148
  policy interventions, 125
  problem definition, 115–118
  programmes, 141–143
  Suffolk and Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG), 126–132; policy advocacy, 132–137
Sharing in Education Programme, 80
Sharing Works policy, 108
Shirlow, P., 117, 122
Shuttleworth, I., 116, 248
Silke, A., 152
Sinn Féin, 10, 12, 21, 24, 36, 54, 156, 157, 159, 177, 247, 249, 250
  involvement in policing, 168
Smyllie, S., 46
social capital, and shared spaces, 118
social change
  grantees advocating, 239–240
  interventions, evaluation of, 243, 244
  and philanthropy, 46–53, 57, 59, 236
Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), 12
social justice philanthropy, 56–58, 59
  definition of, 57
social learning model of transitional justice, 7–9, 37, 185
socially deprived areas, 35
  economic downturn in, 20
  neighbourhood renewal in, 119–121
  segregation in, 118
  youth educational underachievement in, 144
social outcomes, measurement of, 51–52
social peace process, 7
Social Security Agency, Innovation Fund, 226
Social Services, 166, 170
social welfare, and neighbourhood renewal, 120, 121
Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), 142
South Armagh Childcare Consortium (SACC), 139
South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP), 187, 235
Spaces to Be, 141–142
Special European Union Programmes Body, 242
specialist schools, 89, 90–91, 94
Spencer, S., 185
sport as cross-community medium, 131
St Andrews Agreement, 10, 13, 31, 168, 183
state collusion, 25, 28
statutory organisations, 118, 122, 124, 133, 137, 155, 173, 174, 176
Stormont House Agreement, 11, 13, 27, 66, 72, 183
  welfare reform proposals, 12
storytelling archive for victims, 25
Strategic Advisory Panel, SLIG, 132–133
street-level bureaucrats, 66
structural funds, 18
structural positive peace, 7
structural violence, 5, 37, 219
Suárez, D. F., 59
Suffolk and Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG), 126–132, 146
  policy advocacy, 132–137
Suffolk Community Centre, 131–132

Suffolk Community Forum, 127
Suffolk Primary School, 134
suicides, and neighbourhood renewal, 120, 121
Support Programme for University Research (SPUR) initiative, 224

T
Taylor, R., 15
teachers, development to deliver shared education, 92, 97–98
technical support, in policymaking, 68
terrorism, security threat from, 23
test cases, 69
theory of change, 46–47, 50–52, 223, 238, 239
  community restorative justice, 158
  human rights, 193
  shared education, 92
  shared spaces, 124, 126
theory of leverage, 46–47
theory of scale, 46–47
third-level education, 223
Thümler, E., 46
Time to Listen; Time to Act. Holding Mental Health Services to Account, 204
Toepler, S., 44
Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC), 29, 66, 73, 102–103, 116, 117, 146–148
Towards Sustainable Security: Interface Barriers and the Legacy of Segregation in Belfast, 133
transformative dialogue (social learning model), 8
transition, moving to transformation, 5, 36–37
transitional justice
  and quality peace, 24–28
  and reconciliation, 7–9
  social learning model of, 7–9, 37, 185
Troubles-related deaths, investigation of, 26–27
truth (social learning model), 9
Truth and Reconciliation Commission (South Africa), 24
truth commission, 24–25
truth recovery, 9, 11, 24
two tribes approach, 2

U
Ulster Defence Association (UDA), 54, 131
Ulster Unionist Party, 14
Ulster University, 223
  Centre for Molecular Biosciences, 61, 224
UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UNCESCR), 210
unemployment, 18–19
unionists, 11, 12, 20, 25, 37, 74, 193, 223
  and civil society, 14
  in peace process, 4
United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 200
United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees, 232
United Nations Security Council, 1
United States
  vs. Europe, philanthropy, 43–44
  investment, in Northern Ireland, 18
  role in Northern Ireland peace process, 72
United Youth Programme, 146
Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 184*n*

unresolved issues, in philanthropy, 49, 53, 237, 238
Upper Falls Protestant Flute Band, 130
USA Foundation Center and Independent Sector, 57

V
varimax rotation, 252
venture philanthropy, 46
Villiers, T., 11
violence
  forms of, 5
  interface violence, 124
  and peacebuilding, 6, 34, 35
  and post-agreement security, 23
violent peace. *See* structural positive peace
Voices of Young People in Care (VOYPIC), 231
voluntary/community groups
  funding of, 235, 236
  outcomes expected from, 234–235, 239–240
  and peacebuilding, 13–17, 35
  selection of, 235
voluntary grammar school, 79
vulnerable older people, support to, 226

W
Ward, B., 97*n*
Ward, C., 112*n*
Waterside Partnership, 145
welfare reform proposals, of Stormont House Agreement, 12
West Belfast Partnership Board, 135
Wilford, R., 32
Williamson, I., 97*n*
Woodward, S., 167
Wu, X., 66

Y
youth
  interface youth engagement programmes, 143–145
  sector, work of Atlantic Philanthropies in, 227–231, 259–260
  support, 128
youth clubs, 143–144
Youth Conference Service, 166
Youth Justice Agency, 166
Youth Resource Centre, 207