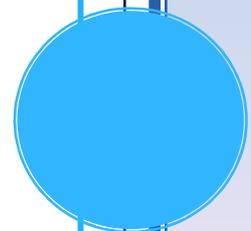# Building Sustainable Communities

The Regeneration & Development of Interface Areas

European Union
European Regional
Development Fund
Investing in your future

BCRC
Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium

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Contents

INTRODUCTION

Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium (BCRC) is a citywide cross-community partnership working to assist conflict transformation at Belfast's interfaces. The project's mission is to *empower interface communities to develop the tools and resources to manage and address conflict transformation within their local areas and across the city of Belfast, underpinned by a community development ethos.* BCRC has successfully applied for EU Peace III funding to deliver a peace building programme until June 2014.

During workshops held by BCRC across Belfast in early 2008, it was made clear that the key issues of concern for interface communities fall into six overall categories: community safety and policing, youth, education, employment, health and, not least, housing and development.[1]

Supported by the information and process resulting from the workshops and BCRC's ongoing work in interface communities across the city, a position paper on interfaces was produced in 2010. This outlined a response to the ongoing discussion on peace walls and barriers, stressing the importance of addressing the underlying issues in interface areas, i.e. the causes and not just the symptoms. It concluded that "*the issue of interface walls and barriers needs to be seen in the context of local regeneration of interface areas in which residents and local communities decide their priorities and give direction for strategies to improve the living conditions of residents[2]."* On this basis, BCRC believes that the issue of regeneration and development in interface areas has received insufficient attention and that the barriers to building sustainable communities therefore need to be further investigated.

The purpose of this report, commissioned by BCRC and carried out by CMWorks, is to examine potential barriers that persist regarding the regeneration and development of interface communities and to make recommendations for overcoming these.

Key objectives of the research include:
- To examine and provide analysis as to why interface communities remain within the most deprived wards in the city.

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[1] Blomkvist, J and Hackett C. (2008). *Issues and Strategies for Conflict Transformation at Belfast's Interfaces*. Belfast, Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium.
[2] Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium. (2010). *BCRC Position Paper on Interfaces.* Belfast, Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium.

- To assess the impact and effectiveness of existing regeneration processes using case studies in designated parts of the city.
- To identify potential physical and economic opportunities within each of the designated areas.
- To make recommendations on how potential opportunities can be developed and incorporated into existing and future regeneration processes.

Methodology

The report that follows places its findings from the desk research, 12 structured interviews[3] and seven focus groups set within the generic context of interface communities across Belfast. It goes on to provide an analysis of potential regeneration and reconnection opportunities within specific interface locations in Belfast and to make recommendations on how these opportunities can be incorporated into existing and future regeneration processes.

The methodology proposed in the original research design and the actual activities undertaken changed during the process of the study. This change in itself became a significant factor in understanding some of the particular issues that impact upon risk and opportunities in interface communities.

The original methodology proposed the use of a survey (available in electronic and hard copy)[4] with designated stakeholders. Staff in BCRC provided contact details for stakeholders and the survey details and a request for further dissemination and return were distributed. Hard copies were also given by BCRC to community workers and representatives as well as being distributed by the commissioned research company. Further attempts were made by the BCRC Project Manager and staff to encourage returns either in electronic or hard copy.

The response was low [18 returns] to the point that the results could not be regarded as having validity as a robust piece of research although some of the information is referenced in the report.

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[3] Interview respondents included representatives from DOJ; OFMDFM; DSD; Staff from Interface Network Organisations; a range of community workers and voluntary activists across the city and an academic with published research in interface issues.
[4] https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HLNNHHK

Explanations for the poor response were volubly expressed by individuals in the focus groups and interviews. In essence a number of reasons were provided;

- Interface communities are experiencing survey and consultation fatigue as evidenced by the plethora of research reports available on the issue. This might also be affected by the discussion in one particular focus group as to the extent to which "community" consultations had been authentic in engaging directly with local people, particularly residents. In some cases there was a perception that the profile of "community representatives" responding to consultations and surveys was led by paid workers and voluntary activists rather than local residents. This consultation fatigue and sense of "what's the point when nothing changes" was also apparent among a number of the individual workers and volunteers.
- There was feedback from some individuals that they perceived some of the consultations as academic exercises that had contributed little to affecting positively the quality of their lives and/or regeneration and development. One focus group participant commented *"We've been talked to and talked about but where is the difference to our lives"*. Another commented "*Whether it is in a republican or loyalist area it's still the question 'what is there for us from all this'"*.
- It was perceived by some individuals that the survey designed for this research fell between two stools. On the one hand, it sought to engage with respondents to identify barriers to regeneration and development at a strategic and operational level and at the same time elicit responses from individuals living in interface communities. One interviewee focus group member commented "*Okay there is surveys done on the group but there's rarely a chance for residents to speak"*. Another person at the same focus group pointed out "*There are layers of people to ask, but often it's just vox pop when what was needed was to ask the whole street"*.
- It also emerged that some of the communities were already themselves carrying out in depth surveys over an extended period of time that will be of direct use within those specific areas.

The feedback and response to the methodology of this report from the focus groups and some individual interviews acted as a focus for the frustration felt by many on the ground workers and residents groups with developments to date. This is referred to again in a later sub-section of the report in terms of the challenges for social and economic regeneration.

Secondary research carried out to collate all relevant information confirmed the plethora of reports already written on diverse aspects of living and working in interface areas. During the research work including interviews, it became apparent that the commissioning and delivery of research papers and reports on interface issues in designated parts of the city is an ongoing process. As indicated previously, the range of research reports and papers available is significant. There is no doubt that an extensive and impressive catalogue of research exists in relation to the study of peace and conflict and interface areas in Northern Ireland with a subsequent array of recommendations as to mechanisms and strategies to address cause and impact.

The challenge for this report is to provide something meaningful and of use to key stakeholders, particularly the network of individuals and groups involved in conflict resolution who live and work in interface areas and/or are charged with delivering a strategic and focused approach to renewal and peace building in those areas.

Focus groups with a range of community residents, paid staff and community voluntary activists clarified their hopes and expectations for the BCRC report i.e. something practical and tangible that they could use in their on-going work to build sustainable and peaceful communities in which to live, work and play.

The project research undertaken for this report has sought to use previous studies and tools to provide a mapping framework that might inform the analysis as to why interface communities remain within the most deprived wards in the city. The framework has also been informed by the Aid for Peace model as a way to map the peace and conflict environment. This report, commissioned by Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium attempts to offer a specific targeted approach to understanding key aspects of deprivation and disadvantage that impact generically upon interface communities in Belfast and to consider how diverse communities of interest can address these within existing and future regeneration processes.

This requires initial consideration in terms of the scope of the research and analysis i.e. within the specific environment of a particular interface community or the broader generic context of interface communities across Belfast.

In order to structure the desk research undertaken for the report the Aid for Peace conflict sensitivity analysis is used to map the factors that contribute to interface communities remaining within the most deprived wards in the city, while risk and opportunities factors are used to summarise the context within specific interface areas.

The first section sets out the findings and analysis of the desk research, integrated with the response from focus groups and individual interviews. It utilises the Aid for Peace framework to provide a resource that might be useful to those most concerned with the strategic and generic aspects of responding to peace building and renewal in interface areas. It seeks to provide reference to the desk research findings and some additional insight as to why interface communities remain within the most deprived wards in the city.

The second section sets out a framework of key characteristics of best practice in relation to regeneration processes and a brief profile of the stage of readiness of three regeneration processes in designated parts of the city. The case studies and areas selected were influenced by the work of BCRC staff and the involvement of their Steering Group as key stakeholders in supporting the strategic and operational response to regeneration within those interface areas.

The third and final section seeks to summarise analysis and conclusions to make recommendations on how potential opportunities can be developed and incorporated further to assist the ongoing renewal and regeneration of designated interface areas, particularly by those who live and work there.

1.0 INTERFACE COMMUNITIES AND FACTORS THAT IMPACT ON REGENERATION AND RECONNECTION

The primary purpose of this report is *"to examine potential barriers that persist regarding the regeneration and development of interface communities and to make recommendations for overcoming these"*.

During initial meetings to examine these barriers a wider discussion took place regarding regeneration and development in any deprived community. This report acknowledges the multiple deprivations experienced by many communities in Belfast and the legacy of the conflict within those areas. However, this report attempts to profile the specific challenges within interface communities and their impact upon regeneration and the building of safer sustainable communities.

1.1 Why Interface Communities Remain Within the Most Deprived Wards in the City

There is a robust research base that has recorded the impact of conflict and violence upon communities throughout Northern Ireland. There is also historical evidence of the deprivation experienced by many of those same communities over many decades.

The research report Attitudes to Peace Walls[5] suggested that the significance of the walls can be framed in five distinct ways.

- Safety and security
- Economic investment and return
- Good relations perspective
- Social and economic deprivation
- The disconnect between an international perspective that promotes the success of the Northern Ireland peace process and the continuing presence and impact of the peace walls.

This report attempts to examine these factors and to consider the relationship between multiple deprivations, violence and the specific context of interface areas. Kenneth Bush

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[5] Byrne, J, Gormley Heenan, C, and Robinson, G. (2012). *Attitudes to Peace Walls, Research Report to OFMDFM*. Belfast, University of Ulster.

in his work on the Aid for Peace[6] provides a series of key factors to enable individual communities and other social partners to map the peace and conflict environment within their own setting. These factors are used in this report to provide a framework that combines an examination of multiple deprivations and the peace and conflict environment with the desk research and the action research from interviews and focus groups carried out for this report.

1.1.1 Location

Undoubtedly the context of an "interface" environment is one that provides the most significant factor that impacts upon all the aspects of sustainability and peace building opportunities throughout all the communities examined for this report.

Interface has been described as *"a visible and recognised site in urban settings like Belfast, but in other places tends to be defined as contested space. Often these areas are associated with parades related disputes, territory marking with flags and symbols, and/or youth led, locality specific violence".* [7]

Neil Jarman in his work defines interfaces as "*the intersection of segregated and polarised working class residential zones in areas with a strong link between territory and ethno-political identity*"[8].

More simply it has been described as a Peace Line *"to cover all kinds of interface barriers that keep communities apart including walls, gates and security barriers"*[9].

The recently published report by the Belfast Interface Project refers to the collation of information *"regarding the distribution of security barriers and associated forms of defensive architecture in residential areas of Belfast, including blighted spaces situated close to interfaces".*[10] The report identifies 99 different security barriers and forms of

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[6] The Aid for Peace approach is a multi-purpose and multi-level process that facilitates the planning, assessment and evaluation of peace as well as aid interventions in conflict situations. www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/pdfs/Handbook-Aid_for_Peace-2009_Dec.pdf

[7] Goldie, R and Ruddy, B. (2010). *Crossing the Line; Key Features of Effective Practice in the Development of Shared Space in Areas Close to an Interface.* Lisburn. Roz Goldie Partnership and Belfast Interface Project.

[8] Jarman, N. (2005). *Changing Places, Moving Boundaries: The Development of New Interface Areas* in Shared Space, Issue 1, 9-20, August 2005. Belfast, Community Relations Council.

[9] Byrne, J, Gormley Heenan, C, and Robinson, G. (2012). *Attitudes to Peace Walls, Research Report to OFMDFM.* Belfast, University of Ulster.

[10] Belfast Interface Project. (2012). *Belfast Interfaces – Security Barriers and Defensive Use of Space. Belfast,* Belfast Interface Project.

defensive architecture across the city categorising them in terms of location and the nature of the barriers e.g. wall alone; metal fencing etc.

The language used in all examples is crucial in understanding the ways in which the same "barriers" may be viewed by different stakeholders, whether as "defensive architecture", "contested space" or a barrier that keep communities apart.

In the same way, recent research maps the differences in attitudes to peace walls between those who live within those interface areas and the general population. [11]

General Population
- 82% believe peace walls are ugly
- 78% believe that segregation of communities is common even where there are no peace walls
- 76% would like to see peace walls come down now or in the near future
- 64% believe that peace walls should be a big priority for the Northern Ireland Government
- 60% can envisage a time when there are no peace walls
- 38% believe that peace walls are necessary because of the potential for violence
- 38% believe that peace walls are a tourist attraction

Peace Wall Residents
- 69% maintain that the peace walls are still necessary because of the potential for violence
- 63% would like to know more about initiatives and discussions on the peace walls
- 58% would like to see the peace walls come down now or sometime in the future
- 58% were very/fairly worried about the police ability to preserve peace and maintain order if the peace wall was removed
- 38% can envisage a time when there will be no peace walls
- 37% believe that if the peace wall was removed there would be some significant incidents but only during particular dates/anniversaries or marches; but 23% believe there will be constant problems
- 34% know a little and/or a lot about initiatives and discussions on the peace walls
- 31% believe that the community has overall responsibility for making decisions about peace walls

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[11] Byrne, J, Gormley Heenan, C, and Robinson, G. (2012). *Attitudes to Peace Walls, Research Report to OFMDFM*. Belfast, University of Ulster.

The challenge arises when consideration is given to the pace and process of progress to respond to the peace walls, not simply as a barrier between communities but one that recognises that for many individuals and groups, the same bricks and barriers are considered as "defensible architecture".

The dimension of specific location for the consultations regarding the pace and process of addressing the removal or adaptation of existing structures is one that created much discussion particularly among focus group participants in three areas.

One respondent emphasised the significance of location within a specific interface area or community.

As you get closer to the actual interface it becomes harder for some people to engage. That's why we have to work and consult with people who actually live in interfaces. When you're frightened you don't have to have a logical reason to see why it should come down. [Community Rep]

The history of the "interface" space, which if not "contested", could most certainly be described as "non-shared", underpins both the cultural history and experiences of individuals and groups living within the physical environment of "interface spaces".

"Segregation has long been a feature of the Belfast landscape, while physical barriers between the groups are a more recent addition. Isolating the effects of only physical division in certain areas of Belfast is, with the data widely available, nigh onto impossible. Segregated living areas are by no means a new development in Belfast, but since the Troubles began, the degree of this segregation has only increased. Today, 98% of all estates in Belfast are segregated, rising to a full 100% in West Belfast. 47.4% of Belfast lives in highly-segregated areas."[12]

The cultural nature of the barriers and their impact is described in the CRC report Towards Sustainable Security.

"Interface barriers are more than physical structures. They are the structures which remind us that the hostility, fear and anger of the past remain alive and continue to

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[12] Bown, H. (2007). *Partition in Entrenched European Conflicts.* Hamburg, University of Hamburg, Institute for Conflict Research and Security Policy.

threaten the peace of people and communities on either side of the barrier. The barriers separate communities in which the fear remains that, without the barrier, lives will be put at risk. They freeze the geography and demography of single-identity communities and prevent all sorts of normal freedom of movement.[13]

In the concluding remarks in the Attitude to Peace Walls Report, the authors recognise some of the challenges that exist in tackling these barriers *"The seeming acceptance of the 'normality of the abnormality' of an almost 50 year 'temporary structure means that policy makers have a considerable undertaking in actioning the key priorities around peace walls in the current Programme for Government."* [14]

This report would suggest that the undertakings required from community representatives, residents and other groups living and working in each location are equally if not more challenging.

The recognition of the longevity of some of the visible and invisible barriers was referred to by some of the respondents for this report. In the interviews and focus groups, individuals living and working in different areas pointed out the "invisible" barriers that exist and in many cases for significant periods prior to the years of conflict between 1969 and the present.

There are physical barriers and also non–visible barriers. People feel very confined to their own community and with that there can come a lack of access to some services."

[Statutory Rep]

There are parts of this city where choice as to where you walk is unconscious. It's a mindset in your head no matter where you walk in this part of the city. We are conditioned to think about all these things, it is very often sub conscious, so how do we attempt to change the conditioning we all have? [Community Rep]

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[13] Community Relations Council. (2009). *Towards Sustainable Security: Interface Barriers and the Legacy of Segregation in Belfast.* Belfast, Community Relations Council.
[14] Byrne, J, Gormley Heenan, C, and Robinson, G. (2012). *Attitudes to Peace Walls, Research Report to OFMDFM.* Belfast, University of Ulster.

It becomes a barrier in your life at a very young age – you grow up with the mental barriers. Kids as young as five instinctively know you shouldn't turn right.

People even in death stayed within what they perceived as a safe space .Even when we die we take a separate route to sometimes the same cemetery. It's how it has always been.   [Local Residents]

Previous research reported on the impact of "segregation" in interface communities;

"Segregation between interface communities affects not only housing, working, and schooling in Belfast, but also larger patterns of public and private consumption. Fear of crossing into areas dominated by the other community prevents people from accessing public transportation, leisure facilities, city parks, shopping areas, health care, and other services. In a recent survey, over three-quarters of respondents could list at least three examples of publicly-funded facilities which were off-limits to them."[15]

A number of the interviewees commented that the context and impact of segregation is not confined to interface areas alone and acknowledged that there needs to be a more comprehensive approach to City planning.

A recent report in the Architects Journal UK in May 2013 provided some insight on the overall context and impact of urban planning in Belfast.

Belfast is designed as a segregated city and if we want to change that then we must plan for a city not physically segregated. How would the City look in terms of employment, planning and design if accessibility and social mobility was fully considered?

[Interface Network Staff Member]

"Three years ago Mark Hackett's Forum for Alternative Belfast (FAB) revealed a map of Belfast, entitled 'Missing City', charting empty sites within 20 minutes' walk of the city centre. It showed that, if combined, these undeveloped sites would make up an area the same size as Belfast's existing city core. Much of this abandoned land stock remains the same today and in the coming weeks

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[15] Bown, H. (2007). *Partition in Entrenched European Conflicts.* Hamburg, University of Hamburg, Institute for Conflict Research and Security Policy.

FAB will unveil a 1:500 scale model of the city, with the aim of making it easier for the people of Belfast to recognise where these gaping holes are and see the impact they have on the texture of their townscape."[16]

A previous discussion paper published by BCRC also provided a succinct and accurate statement on the issue

"The segregation of loyalist/unionist and republican/nationalist communities has deep historical roots that predate the construction of the walls and barriers"[17].

There is recognition by those who live and work in interface areas that attitudes and beliefs held by individuals and groups are based on a mixture of experience, history, beliefs, opinions and facts that are specific to individuals, groups and events in an area itself. To address these directly requires specific and focused opportunities where aspects of cultural identity can be explored with safety and support.

We need to break down the wall of myths and recognise at the same time that a lot of people carry these all their lives. Your whole bringing up shapes your life and children will continue to live behind these myths unless we do something about it. [Interface Worker]

Hilary Brown in her work on the interface structures refers to a statement made by a Public Sector representative that perhaps best encapsulates the challenges that exist in interface spaces.

That these interfaces remain decades later is a testament to a Northern Ireland Department of the Environment (DENI) official's statement that "it is far easier to put them up than it is to take them down. By and large, it looks like we have built a psychological barrier and it's the psychological barrier which is hard to take away[18]

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[16] www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/without-a-plan. Accessed May 2013.
[17] Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium. (2010). *BCRC Position Paper on Interfaces.* Belfast, Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium.
[18] Bown, H. (2007). *Partition in Entrenched European Conflicts.* Hamburg, University of Hamburg, Institute for Conflict Research and Security Policy.

In the survey for this report 75% of respondents recorded attitudinal barriers as being very influential in preventing the regeneration and development of their local area.

Whatever the subsequent policy and strategic initiatives to address interface structures, this report reiterates the conclusions drawn from previous reports and adds additional conclusions and recommendations of its own.

1. There is no one size fixes all solution to the reduction and/or elimination of the security barriers and associated forms of defensive architecture. Each specific location requires its own consultation and planning process and an understanding of the historical and current levels of readiness to address the adaptation or removal of the barriers and the specific safety planning to undertake such a process.

2. The direct engagement between cross sectoral partners to plan and implement the consultation and planning process needs to ensure that local community fears and aspirations are directly addressed within each specific location.

3. Much effort to date has been made to consider the requirements to manage change and to enable individuals and groups to understand the benefits of that change. This report suggests that equal consideration is given to the management of transition in order to acknowledge the "hearts and minds" and mental barriers that individuals and groups are also being asked to "dismantle". Change management is incomplete in itself. Change management focuses on the situation and on creating an alternative to the status quo. But that new situation will fail if the people who live and work in those areas and contribute ultimately to community sustainability and regeneration have not, themselves, been changed too. Change "works" only if it takes root in people's minds and hearts. Effective change management alone is not enough. The reality is that it's often transition, not change that people resist. Existing networks and "in-community" resources are best placed to assist with that transition through formal and informal initiatives and discussion.

1.1.2 Timing

Timing, it is said is "everything". Certainly the respondents in the interviews and focus groups carried out for this research commented on the influence of the "times that are in it" referring to recent demonstrations, subsequent public disorder incidents and interface violence that occurred from December 2012 on an ongoing basis in diverse locations in the Belfast area and beyond.

Sporadic violence at interface may be at a decreased level but it is as severe as it can be when it breaks out.

Intercommunity tensions have taken a complete turn for the worst following the removal of flag and ongoing protests that have continued regularly causing disruption and anger among communities [Community Interface Network Staff]

However, on a more positive note, the incidents did not, except in one area, stop the local focus groups taking place. Indeed the process reflected the work undertaken to date by community workers, voluntary activists and local resident and community groups to meet and negotiate in regard to various proposed shared space projects.

These proposed shared space projects are briefly outlined in later sections of the report and in themselves provide a useful illustration of the factors that impact upon their pace and progress of those projects.

It was also clear from the focus groups and interviews that the involvement of local community activists, workers and networks provided an essential safety mechanism for shared space discussions and negotiations to take place within each area. Their "cultural understanding and knowledge" in regard to the fears and hopes of their own and the "other" communities, the stage of readiness of the same communities to participate in discussion and work on shared space, particularly that might involve the removal or downgrading of some of the defensive architecture, was particularly notable in its contribution to progress.

While the recent demonstrations and interface violence might be viewed as a particular reaction to a specific event, the reality is that for community workers and residents in interface areas, there are an ever present series of events linked to festivals and parade that impact upon safety and security levels for individuals, families and others in interface areas. This has resulted in the building of networks formal and informal that has made a significant positive contribution to deconstructing violence as much as constructing peace. In the past an innovative mobile telephone network was established among community workers. Here, any signs of violence were identified and dealt with by activists on both sides of the interface, which built trust between a wider group of community workers.

More recently, many of the same community workers and activists continue to assist the work of the Belfast City Council Tension Monitoring staff bringing their local connections, expertise and "cultural competence" to address the "hotspots" which might potentially or actually flare up in a particular interface space.

The success and resources required of this preventative aspect of reducing interface violence often is unrecognised in terms of resource allocation to the "on the ground" community organisations and networks that respond to the "flare ups" on an ongoing basis.

There is clear evidence from the desk research and the responses from the focus groups and interviews of the previous and current initiatives developed and maintained by community workers and activists to try to maintain levels of security and safety in what are "regular times" when events threaten the hard work undertaken to maintain stability and security in interface areas.

Timing, therefore, has also to consider the development and work to date of relationships in and among workers, activists and representatives from diverse communities of interest and also in relation to relationships among and between community representatives and cross sectoral partners in local and regional Government and public agencies.

Within the same time scope for this report [May 2013] OFMDFM announced a package of significant and strategic actions linked to the new good relations strategy, providing a framework in which local interface communities can integrate their current and future work more strategically with regional government actions. Actions include:

- The creation of 10,000 one year placements in a new "United Youth Programme" offering young people in the NEETS category structured employment, work experience, volunteer and leisure opportunities along with a dedicated programme designed to foster good relations and a shared future.
- 100 Shared Summer Schools/One or two week Summer Camps to be held across NI by 2015 for post primary young people.
- 4 Urban Village Regeneration projects for large scale urban regeneration in targeted areas of deprivation.
- 10 Shared Educational Campuses to be commenced within 5 years.

- DSD Minister will be tasked to bring forward proposals on 10 new Shared Neighbourhood Developments. The proposal will be brought forward in the next 2 months.
- Creation of a significant Cross-Community Sports Programme.
- A 10-year Programme to reduce and eventually remove all interface barriers, working together with the local community.[19]

Crucially the statement also outlines the key principles[20] that have been set out to ensure that a robust and inclusive approach is in place to ensure ownership and inclusivity of the consultation, planning and implementation process.

- Local communities should come together to produce a phased plan of how to reduce and eventually remove the barrier.
- Maximum consensus should be achieved from both sides of the wall.
- Community, family and property safety is a core issue and consideration for the plan.
- The reality is that in Belfast that there are identifiable geographical areas that suffer disproportionately from deprivation with increasing polarisation between deprived and more affluent areas. Problems co-exist and overlap in geographical areas that increase polarisation in terms of social and economic capital and investment.

The involvement of community networks from interface areas in monitoring the outworking of these principles is essential as is the mutual accountability from community projects and networks to fulfil the commissioning and quality assurance requirements required to deliver on the ground initiatives.

The focus groups and interviews as well as the desk research clearly identified political, economic and social–cultural developments that might also impact positively on the timing of specific existing and future regeneration processes. This is explored further in later sub sections of the report. Opportunities to integrate the growth of social, economic, environmental and cultural sustainability with developments in social policy and specific funding and commissioning opportunities are being pursued to varying degrees by some of the projects examined for the purpose of this report.

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[19] Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. (2013). *Together: Building a United Community.* http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together_building_a_united_ community.pdf. Belfast. Accessed May 2013.
[20]Ibid

1.1.3 Political Context

The Aid for Peace framework[21] sets out clearly the key factors that contribute to risk and opportunity within a political environment specifically relationships between local communities and public agencies, the profile of "spoilers" and champions" and initiatives to build peace and deconstruct violence as well as the nature of the political system and the political and economic issues affected.

The presence and support for the interface projects by elected political representatives, at a local or regional level, varied greatly across the focus groups in the designated areas. For some individuals and groups, there was a sense of lack of interest or understanding from some of their representatives, while others were clear that such support had contributed significantly to the profiling and progress of the specific interface initiative.

A previous report from BCRC and INCORE highlighted some of the specific challenges of building relationships among and between local communities and their "representatives".

Significant minorities in the study felt that nobody represented their interests in both North and West Belfast (36%, 14%, 26% and 36% in North, South, East and West Belfast respectively).

Substantial minorities felt they never have a say in what happens in their own community (36%, 18%, 52% and 34% in North, South, East and West Belfast respectively).

High proportions of people in all areas agree that their community has no 'champions' to stand up for them and also feel they do not have people fighting for their interests. (53%, 54%, 39% and 43% in North, South, East and West Belfast respectively). In general this is felt more keenly by Protestants.[22]

While some of these factors need to be understood in terms of the specific location e.g. relationship among and between individuals and groups, the predictability or stability of

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[21] www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/pdfs/Handbook-Aid_for_Peace-2009_Dec.pdf. Accessed May 2013.
[22] Lewis, H, Dowds, L, McGivern, Y, Hamber, B and Robinson, G. (2008). *Communities in Transition: An exploration of attitudinal barriers to the development of intercommunity relationships in a post-conflict society.* Belfast, BCRC and INCORE.

the political and security environments this report also acknowledges external conditions of the political environment that are relevant across all areas at this time.

Roles and responsibilities, policy and practice regarding interface areas has to date been addressed within three distinct strands; good relations, community safety and economic regeneration. The research published by Jonny Byrne et al [2012] highlighted the disconnect between the development of policy, the outworkings in practice and the level of knowledge and awareness of these same policy initiatives among the population. Two-thirds of peace wall residents [66%] know hardly anything about initiatives such as Programme for Government, strategies such as Cohesion, Sharing and Integration and other opportunities for building sustainability.

In the same way, there is a need for robust mechanisms to ensure that the concerns, aspirations and plans voiced by local community residents and other stakeholders in each area are heard, understood and most crucially *used* in order to deliver regeneration, good relations and community safety initiatives in each area.

In interviews for this report public sector representatives emphasised the need for an integrated approach to hear from networks and areas willing and able to work together and with government to address the issues in interface communities. This is recognised not only in terms of the violence experienced, but in the need to have access to opportunities for social and economic development and good relations as well as building safe and secure communities. There was positive and robust support for the development of plans and associated interventions and actions that would contribute directly to the reduction or elimination of violence and/or an increase in positive relations at a local level to build Good Relations.

We seek solutions that help to address all the challenges, especially for residents and the local community. We want someone to be there to drive delivery to bring investment into the area to build sustainability in joined up approach.

Delivery mechanisms need to be considered across the priority areas and issues with clear benefits and outcome focused. We know that community relations is not a quick win but the importance of the outcomes needs to be shared to see the development and benefits for all.

[Senior Public Sector Rep]

The creation of the Interagency Working Group with the participation of community representatives has undoubtedly strengthened the opportunities for cross sectoral understanding, acting as a sounding board and consultation mechanism for information sharing and to assist decision making.

The Building a United Community document states that the Interagency Working Group *"will lead to a more strategic approach to how interventions are designed and resources are allocated".*[23] It is intended that the Group will ensure, in the short-medium term, a collaborative approach by government and statutory agencies to the transformation of interface areas and review existing arrangements for engagement with communities.

The Interface Community Partnership is viewed by its Chair as a strong mechanism to feed into the strategic thinking of the Interdepartmental Working Group, enabling networks and forums in diverse interface locations to come together to enable shared communication and constructive challenge.

Senior public representatives also emphasised their willingness to directly address local communities and residents to hear their concerns and aspirations.

> *Any solution has to be community driven and we [government department] will work with them to facilitate change. We can't and don't want to impose a solution because it will never work.*
>
> [Senior Public Sector Rep]

This report suggests that there is a shared and common vision among public sector and community representatives as to the issues that need to be addressed within interface spaces of multiple deprivations.

However, it is also clear that for many community activists and networks working consistently within those spaces, that a clear message needs to be heard that the frameworks created for consultation and information dissemination are also used to harness the expertise and work undertaken to date as well as the building of capacity to support full and equitable participation by residents and other key stakeholders for the future. Any review of existing arrangements for engagement with communities needs to consider the assets of the community networks and the cultural competence of community workers within those networks to best take forward that engagement.

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[23] Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. (2013). *Together: Building a United Community.* http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together_building_a_united_ community.pdf. Belfast. Accessed May 2013.

There is a need to ensure that information is accurately and directly conveyed from Government to communities and their representatives. For example, one community representative stated *"Under legislation DOJ are intent to take [named barrier] down. They want to take down walls and gates, regardless of consequences"*. Conversely, senior public sector representatives interviewed for this report acknowledged their commitment to *"actively seek local agreement to reduce the number of peace walls"*[24] while emphasising their commitment to do so in a way that enables the perceptions and security of people living in interface communities to be comprehensively addressed.

One Senior Public Sector Rep stated "*We are prepared to go out and listen to communities directly and to ask them what are the conditions that need to exist to enable your communities to participate confidently in interface discussions and work?"*

The challenges lie in ensuring that resources and mechanisms for the delivery of capacity building to ensure effective and efficient implementation are designed in collaboration with the networks and community activists best able to articulate their needs and proposed solutions.

Conclusions and recommendations as to best practice for community capacity building are referenced later in the report.

1.1.4 Understanding Violence and Conflict

It is essential that there is a clear understanding of the level and patterns of violence that are experienced in interface areas.

Kenneth Bush in his work on Conflict Impact Assessment[25] refers to and defines militarized and non-militarized violence to assist the mapping of violence and the context for peace building and the building of safer sustainable communities. He uses the term 'militarized violence' rather than 'war' or the "Troubles" in the Northern Ireland context because it conveys a more accurate sense of the nature of contemporary armed conflict.

Within the Aid for Peace framework the military context is assessed in terms of the relationship between armed actors and the intensity, targets and patterns of violence in

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[24] Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. (2013). *Together: Building a United Community.* http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together_building_a_united_ community.pdf. Belfast. Accessed May 2013.
[25] www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/pdfs/Handbook-Aid_for_Peace-2009_Dec.pdf. Accessed May 2013.

the area. It would be a disservice to the previous and current work undertaken in interface areas to address regeneration without referencing the input and the impact of the role of ex-combatants to peace building in interface areas.

Focus groups and interviews in each of the four areas included contributions from ex-combatants from diverse communities of interest; inter and intra republican and loyalist groupings. Their role as community representatives and the level of negotiation and working agreements reached inside and out of the formal structures of consultation and decision making goes a long way to explain some of the progress that has been made in the regeneration projects and sometimes the challenges they experience from others. This history of their previous and current initiatives to work to create earlier intervention at times of unrest and to work with others to contribute to safety planning is apparent although not always recognised overtly in policy documents and strategic statements.

The Communities and Police in Transition Project [CAPT] with Intercomm Ireland as the lead partner utilised Kenneth Bush's work in particular to examine positive relationships and initiatives to address non-militarized violence as "*a category of violence rather than a specific type of violence*". It refers to all forms of violence *"not perpetrated by (largely, though not exclusively) men, in or out of uniform, who are organized specifically (and primarily) to use military weapons to in the pursuit of individual or collective objectives."* The types of violence within this category are very diverse, and can include: criminal violence; domestic violence; structural violence (poverty, preventable disease and deaths, etc.); anti-social behaviour (in the UK sense); riots; homophobic attack and abuse; racism; and casteism[26].

Any exploration of the different types and levels of violence recognizes that many individuals and communities in Northern Ireland have experienced different forms and types of violence. Reference has been made in various reports as to the impact of the conflict upon the physical and emotional well-being of individuals, families and communities of interest and in particular in interface locations.

The desk research and the information gathered from the focus groups and interviews suggest that individuals and communities in interface areas experience a range of levels and forms of violence that exceed those of other "deprived" communities and groups in experiencing trauma, hurt or harm as a result of direct or latent conflict and violence.

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[26] www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/pdfs/Handbook-Aid_for_Peace-2009_Dec.pdf. Accessed May 2013.

Peter Shirlow in a short report on Post Conflict Northern Ireland[27] comments that sectarianism and sectarian tension continue to be a lived experience for many people living in areas that bore the brunt of the conflict. The report goes on to determine:

- Remaining violence has wide-ranging repercussions on youth and families living in segregated communities including mental health problems and behaviour problem for children and adolescence
- Youths' sense of security and safety about their communities is weakened by continued exposure to sectarian acts.
- A related decreased sense of security increases widespread mental health problems and aggression levels.

The 'lived experience' of sectarianism was also referenced by some of the respondents in the focus groups and interviews.

The elephant in the room is still sectarianism.

[Local Resident]

Sectarianism and its manifestation in violence and confrontation are not however confined to interface and deprived communities. One experienced community interface network worker commented *"Interfaces have always been the site of violence but not*

The big challenge is about targeting sectarianism and addressing the harder questions about flags, emblems and parades which are long running problems and interface sites are often where they manifest themselves.

[Interface Network Staff Member]

always its source".

The report, A Policy Agenda for the Interface[28], defines four types of violence taking place at the interfaces:

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[27] http://www.us-irelandalliance.org/content/433/en/Politics/Connections/peter%20shirlow.html. Accessed May 2013.
[28] O'Halloran, C, Shirlow, P, and Murtagh, B. (2004). *A Policy Agenda for the Interface.* Belfast, Belfast Interface Project.

- "Recreational" violence, most often carried out by children and teens who gather and loiter near interfaces.
- "Event-linked" violence, often initiated by protests or political, cultural, or sporting events.
- "Casual proximity-related" violence, perpetrated by those passing by the interfaces after drinking or attending a sporting event.
- Orchestrated and premeditated violence which the report states "*is practiced almost exclusively by each interface's 'hinterland' community and not by those living on the interface themselves, who are rather exploited as a human shield. As such, the interfaces may be the primary location of violence, but the initiation often lies beyond these areas*".

Regardless of the type of direct violence, evidence exists of the impact of that violence, whatever its "type". Research carried out in East Belfast reported that

"*Some people also felt that levels of alcohol consumption increased within the community throughout the period of disorder. Interviewees talked about people having to drink just to get through the nights when the rioting was at its worst.*"

"*Some participants openly discussed the psychological impact that the violence had on them. They talked about feelings of depression and helplessness, along with anger and revenge. One interviewee in particular highlighted the sense of disbelief in the whole situation. They had been living on the interface throughout the violence and decided to get away for the night to have a rest and a peaceful nights' sleep.*"

"*It also became apparent that the prolonged interface violence was having detrimental effects on adult and family relationships. Several participants talked about becoming socially withdrawn and non-communicative with their spouses. Conversations stopped, because in a lot of cases frustrations would boil over and result in arguments and rows. One interviewee became aware of the changes in his behaviour but did not immediately attribute it to the violence. However, after talking with neighbours, it became apparent to him that what he was experiencing at home was no different to what other families were going through*"[29]

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[29] Byrne, J. (2005). *Interface Violence in East Belfast during 2002: The impact on residents of Short Strand and Inner East Belfast.* Belfast, Institute for Conflict Research.

A 1992 report showed that 8 of the 10 most deprived wards and 9 of the 10 worst wards for health deprivation are located in Belfast; of the former, 6 of the 8 are interfaces, including the top four.

One of the interviewees for this report commented "*There is an impact on physical and emotional health. A dependency on drugs to cope because your nerves can be wrecked and it's hard to sleep*".

Another commented *"It's a human rights issue. It can be death by postcode. Research has shown that people in interface areas can die 10 years earlier than the general population Interfaces have been the running sores of this conflict and from its very outset and perhaps they have been the most traumatized of communities*".

One interface worker highlighted some of the 'multiplier impact' for young people "*There can be a lack of academic achievement, young people's lives become disrupted including their sleep, then they can't go to exams or have mental health and well-being issues*". Another pointed out that "*We need to give young people something to work forward to*".

The Belfast Interface Project[30] seeks to address some of these issues particularly in regard to young people with its Youth Intervention Project. The project seeks to develop a co-ordinated approach to youth intervention which moves from the current annual crisis intervention approach towards a year round process of positive youth-centred inter-community development support.

However, crisis intervention at interface areas is not confined solely to sectarian violence or to youth alone. One interface worker commented "*It's down to mainly anti-social behaviour with a stroke of sectarianism.*" A local resident reported "*We have an older aging community in our interface area. There has to be something done for them*".

Johan Galtung in his work refers to direct or personal violence as the type of violence where there is an individual that commits the violence. The threat to use force is also recognised as direct violence. Where violence occurs where there is no such individual he suggests this is indirect or structural violence. He states;

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[30] http://www.belfastinterfaceproject.org/youth-intervention-project

"In both cases, individuals may be killed or mutilated, hit or hurt in both sense of the words and manipulated by means of stick or carrot strategies. But whereas in the first case there's consequences can be traced back to concrete persons as actors, in the second case this is no longer meaningful. There may not be any person who directly harms another person in the structure. The violence's built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently and unequal life chances".[31]

The Conflict Sensitivity Resource pack examined for this report contributes to the wider discussion suggesting that conflict is a complex term often used interchangeably with violence. Their approach is to understand conflict *as a "multi-dimensional social phenomena"* essential to social change, and transformation.

Violent conflict is used to describe acts of open hostility. Latent conflict is used to describe situations of tensions, which may escalate into violence.

The opportunities required in addressing direct or personal violence, regardless of its context, requires collaboration between all those agencies and groups involved in the criminal and community justice sectors.

The Building United Communities document refers to objectives to

- Work closely with local communities and across government to address community safety issues at interfaces
- Tackle all forms of hate crime through prevention, awareness and education and support victims and communities[32]

Opportunities exist within the initiatives and desired outcomes explicit in the document for communication and capacity building with existing community assets and networks to be commissioned to carry out these initiatives in specific areas, based on an assessment of the level of their knowledge, understanding and skills to do so. In this way community capacity building can become focused and relevant to the identified need of both community and government.

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[31] Galtung, J. (1969). *Violence, Peace and Peace Research.* Journal of Peace Research, vol. 6, no.3.
[32] *Together: Building a United Community.* OFMDFM. May 2013.

This report suggests that a similar argument might also be made in identifying the need to address the structural violence that impacts in particular upon interface areas and communities.

Structural violence is defined by Galtung to describe situations where unequal, unjust and unrepresentative structures prevent humans from realizing their full potential, thus extending the definition of violence beyond direct physical harm to the organization of society.

The recent NI Peace Monitoring Report seeks to provide a framework and mechanisms to monitor *"Northern Ireland's journey out of violence and of the efforts to create a society in which all can live free from fear and in relationships of trust and safety with their fellow citizens"*[33]

The inclusion of concepts such as freedom from fear and relationships of trust and safety referred to in the statement above also contributes to the differentiation suggested by Galtung in terms of direct and structural violence.

Regardless of the type of violence experienced there is one core concept; violence in any form has an adverse impact upon human security. Placed within this context human security threats are then recognised as those that threaten the lives of individuals and communities through both direct and structural violence.

"As defined by the United Nations in the mid-1990s, human security embraces the twin objectives of "freedom from fear" [referring to the threat of violence, crime and war] and freedom from want [referring to economic, health, environmental and other threats of peoples well-being[34]*".*

The consequences of a more holistic view of human security as freedom from want as well as freedom from fear links social, economic and cultural development with a rights –based approach that is required also to be conflict sensitive.

The process and practice of a rights based approach to human security demands that all key stakeholders and representatives act accountably and encourage participation

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[33] Nolan, P. (2013). *Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report. Number Two*. Belfast, Community Relations Council.
[34] http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/sites/default/files/Conflict-sensitive%20Approaches%20to%20 Development,%20Humanitarian%20Assistance%20and%20Peacebuilding%20Resource%20Pack.pdf

and inclusion, supporting local capacity building for the peaceful management of conflicts. These are further addressed in the conclusions and recommendations to this report.

This suggests that *all* development stakeholders concerned with interface communities and the initiatives that take place within those communities understand the need to focus on broad definitions that focus on 'freedom from want' as well as freedom from fear'. In this way regeneration and renewal is seen as a focused response to latent structural violence allied with the efforts to address the direct conflict that results in direct violence.

This report suggests that another type of violence is recognized as impacting on interface areas i.e. the structural violence that results in the presence of want as well as fear which impacts adversely on the physical and emotional security of individuals and communities threatening opportunities for economic independence and rights.

Reference has been made previously to a number of reports available on a city wide and local community basis on the impact of the interface structures on community safety and security. This report would argue that the indirect violence of poverty and deprivation need to be addressed with the same rigour by the Interdepartmental Working Group and within the overall Government response.

It is the combination of direct and structural violence in so far as they threaten the lives of individuals and communities that need to be equally addressed as ways to deconstruct violence and to build peace in sustainable communities.

1.1.5 Social and Cultural Factors

Previous work assisted by local, regional and global funders has led to a myriad of available information in terms of the legacy of the conflict in interface areas, the impact on local resources and on the health and well-being of individuals and communities

The Aid for Peace framework provides a useful set of indicators to map the social and cultural context that can be drawn for each specific location. These include [in adapted form]

- Legacies of conflict in the area (physical security/ fear/ economy/ infrastructure/ intergroup relations/ health/ psycho-social trauma? Changes in family dynamics)
- Relations between and within main communities in location (cooperative/ inter-dependent/ competitive)
- What are the dynamics within these relationships (gender, religious, cultural, economic, etc.)?
- Cultural factors that may affect the initiative (fear of external control; rejection of particular values/ roles/identity)
- Economic relations within the location (mutually dependent/Competitive/ corrupt/ exploitative/growing/shrinking/war-dependent)
- Impact of conflict on local resources (resourcefulness and creativity;/leadership capacities; enterprising spirit; hope)

This report would suggest that a key indicator that needs to be included in this framework is the level and degree of social capital generated within each interface area. Social capital is *the social 'glue' which makes local communities work – the informal networks which are often invisible to outsiders, but which are such a vital component of community life.*[35]

While much has been written in terms of the negative impact of conflict and violence in interface areas there is also a need to recognise the resilience of the individuals and families who live in the area creating neighbourhoods with a strong sense of identity and pride. The challenge remains to find ways in which positive expressions of that pride and identity can be expressed and shared in formal and informal settings among and between interface communities and also between those communities and the wider population.

In 2006 Duncan Morrow[36] in his comprehensive article on sustainability and social capital theory in Northern Ireland concluded that *"The building of real social capital at the interface will require investment. Networks should include cross-community representation, links to developments elsewhere as well as appropriate government and funding bodies. Social Capital depends not only on inter-community bridges but also on investment in real relationships in marginal areas. Social policy should be woven into social capital policy. Trust building should be a visible theme of social services, healthcare and education".*

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[35] *A Handbook for Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA)*. Bush, K. (2003) Hands-on PCIA, Part 1, October 2003.
[36] Morrow. D. (2006) Sustainability in a Divided Society; Applying Social Capital Theory to Northern Ireland http://www.community-relations.org.uk/fs/doc/issue2introduction.pdf

It is essential that the assets of the current networks and community groups contribution to social capital is more fully understood by others outside those groups and networks. Interviews and focus group discussions for this report suggest that the investment and return in social capital that has been maintained and built among community organisations and networks in interface areas is often not fully understood nor valued in terms of additionality and "value for money" by some other stakeholder groups. In the same way, the work to date in community capacity building within community groups themselves needs to be assessed and utilised.

> *When there is disconnection we need to bring people together to build trust and relationships. We need to bring people together for workshops on common issues such as social deprivation , peace walls but others need to recognise that it takes a while to build the relationships necessary to do the work.*
>
> [Interface Network Worker]

> *A lot of conversation has taken place with people who already see the potential benefits of addressing the barriers in interface areas but there is need for more conversations and involvement with residents. It is important to bring communities along because they have to see what's in it for them and how their life chances will improve.*
>
> [Statutory Rep]

There was also an understanding that while connections and relationships had been built among and between paid and voluntary workers and activists in interface areas that there still remains a need to bring together the "ordinary people on the street".

The new Good Relations Strategy acknowledges the need to "*identify suitable assets within interface areas and at contested spaces that can be transformed from places of division and separation to places of sharing and mutual enjoyment*". [37] The mechanisms

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[37] Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. (2013). *Together: Building a United Community.* http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together_building_a_united_ community.pdf. Belfast. Accessed May 2013.

for the roll out of the support package need also to be influenced by the "assets" of the existing community networks and residents groups that already exist within interface areas and to directly address the need for regeneration, and social and economic development that are central to the findings and conclusions of this report.

One focus group respondent commenting on their experience of some "joint working" initiatives with public agencies and staff stated "T*hey say they're involved and working in interface but whether they are or not is a different thing. Are they really working with groups in an area?"*

Another reported "*We went to a recent conference on interfaces and with the exception of ourselves there was not one person in the room who actually lived in an interface area".*

Many regeneration policies, masterplans and research recommendations refer to the need for community capacity building. The challenge can be that the actual indicators and initiatives required to build that capacity may not be fully articulated.

One definition suggests that *"Community capacity building involves development work which strengthens the ability of community-based organisations and groups to build their structures, systems, people and skills. This enables them to better define and achieve their objectives and engage in consultation, planning, development and management. It also helps them to take an active and equal role in partnerships with other organisations and agencies*"[38].

The issue of active and equal and what that means in the practical outworking of joint community/public and private sector collaboration is addressed later in the report in regard to best practice and subsequent recommendations.

1.1.6 Economic Relations

Previous reference has been made in this report that it is the desire for freedom from want as a basic human right that is the driving force that mobilises BCRC and its constituency of interest in seeking to address regeneration as a primary need.

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[38] http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/jr071-neighbourhood-regeneration-community.pdf, Accessed May 2013.

Evidential information demonstrates that between one third and one half of the socially excluded are in neighbourhoods with concentrations of acute multiple deprivations with a high concentration of these within the Belfast City area.

- 9 out of the 10 most deprived wards in Northern Ireland, in terms of multiple deprivations, are in Belfast.
- 7 out of the 10 most deprived wards in Northern Ireland, in terms of health deprivation, are in Belfast.
- There are pockets of health inequalities across the city and the gap in life expectancy is not reducing between the most affluent areas and the most deprived.
- The average life expectancy in Belfast is lower than the Northern Ireland average:
  - Males: 74.4 years, compared to NI average of 76.4 years.
  - Females: 80.1 years, compared to the NI average of 81.3 years.[39]

The recent statement from May 2013 on the new framework to address community relations including interface communities outlines a series of key strategic projects that offer some opportunities to formulate solutions across diverse Government Departments. These include:

- Education
- Young People not in Education, Employment or Training
- Regeneration and Deprivation
- Housing
- Learning from the Past

A similar range of strategic issues had previously been identified in a series of workshops facilitated independently by BCRC[40] and Belfast Interface Project and published in their respective reports.[41]

- Anti-social behaviour
- Physical barriers preventing connectivity

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[39] Belfast City Council Investment Programme 2012-2015. http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/investment/docs/InvestmentProgramme_web.pdf. Accessed May 2013.

[40] Blomkvist, J and Hackett C. (2008). *Issues and Strategies for Conflict Transformation at Belfast's Interfaces.* Belfast, Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium.

[41] Goldie, R and Ruddy, B. (2010). *Crossing the Line; Key Features of Effective Practice in the Development of Shared Space in Areas Close to an Interface.* Lisburn. Roz Goldie Partnership and Belfast Interface Project.

- Lack of qualifications and skills
- Poverty and educational disadvantage
- The need for community ownership and community development approaches
- Contested interpretations of the shared space concept
- Increasing polarization, segregation and violence
- Lack of physical regeneration and economic development
- Reinforcing the financial and social costs of division

BCRC Workshops Results:
- community safety and policing,
- youth,
- education,
- employment,
- health,
- housing
- development

Other
- Representation and 'Voice'
- Peace Walls [42]

Interface areas need to be understood within a wider contextual understanding of the conditions and environmental setting that result in a concentration of deprived' households and individuals living in close proximity. These in turn create economic and social barriers that disconnect them from their more affluent neighbours and the positive opportunities and well-being that influence their lives.

The reality of those economic and social barriers and good relations are inexorably intertwined and were illustrated in comments from one of the interviewees.

It is perhaps comments like this that succinctly describe the impact of conflict upon the hope and ambition [or lack of it] of some individuals living in interface communities.

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[42] Lewis, H, Dowds, L, McGivern, Y, Hamber, B and Robinson, G. (2008). *Communities in Transition: An exploration of attitudinal barriers to the development of intercommunity relationships in a post-conflict society.* Belfast, BCRC and INCORE.

Reference has been made throughout this report to the range of barriers that contribute to the lack of regeneration in interface areas. The qualitative responses from the research survey, the focus groups and individual interviews identified specific socio-economic factors that contribute to the most significant challenges to the regeneration of interface communities.

These are listed below with each illustrated with comments that reflect the perceptions and thinking of diverse individuals as to the cause and impact of those challenges.

Too Many Plans and Not Enough Results

This became a recurring theme in a number of the focus groups and interviews. Some community workers and activists posed their own series of questions that they would want answered by local and regional government, its bodies and development agencies

What regeneration initiatives are happening or have happened in interface areas?

Has an audit been done of these to date?

Who's managing, monitoring what's happening?

Where is the accountability when money for work is not put directly into the projects that are working on the ground?

What do we tell the ordinary person in the street that it all means?

One focus group respondent asked "*Tell me from ten years ago what investment and extra resources private or public have gone into this interface area? It's all short–term.*"

Another community worker commented "*Task forces are concerned with big areas and some interface locations fall between the cracks, we have put together more than enough reports and they're still going over the same ground*".

One interviewee illustrated the need for specific action noting the positive impact upon individuals and groups. "*Whenever I see the digger started and the regeneration begin then it gives me the opportunity to go back to some of the harder to reach members of my community. The digger hitting the foundations is a concrete sign of intent and how far we have travelled down the road towards regeneration.*"

No Co-ordinated Road Map or Integrated Approach

Conversely discussion in the focus groups and interviews made reference to the lack of a co-ordinated road map that would operate across the interface areas in an integrated way.

It's [referring to regeneration in interface areas] in the very difficult drawer and it can be easier to close that drawer, things are being done but not with a high amount of coordinated and orchestrated response.

There are things being done but not in a co-ordinated way. The Interagency Working Group is trying to make sense of it all. Complex and challenging is the best description I could give you as to why it's not being dealt with.

[Statutory Rep]

There is no doubt that given the recent OFMDFM statement [May 2013] and the comments during the interviews with public sector representatives, that there is clear evidence of a robust level of public agency support and planning among diverse departments of local and regional government for the creation and sustainability in an integrated manner of physical and economic opportunities that will contribute to the regeneration of areas blighted by interface violence in the past.

The opportunity exists for current networks and groups working 'on the ground' to provide robust monitoring and arrangements for mutual accountability to ensure that the plans and opportunities are realised.

Similarly the need for an integrated or multi-strand approach within community settings was recognised by one community worker "*We need to do two things; address cross community activities while still continuing to meet our "internal" community need. We have to work together collectively to improve living conditions, to see that some of the conditions that impact on "them" might well impact on "us here". So when you improve all living conditions it opens up the mind to those so called difficult conversations.*"

Individual and Community Barriers to Change and Transition

There was consensus among many of those participating in focus groups and interviews that fear, safety and security are three of the primary issues that need to be addressed and they need to be understood as key factors that impact upon regeneration, community safety and good relations.

Interface walls and barriers won't come down without the agreement of local residents. Otherwise they will put them up again; we need to create the conditions where local resident's fears and concerns can be addressed and then offer better alternative options.

[Interface Community Worker]

Reference has been made in previous sub sections of the report of the evidence of the types of direct and structural violence that cultivate those fears and concerns. Some suggestions have also been made as to how these might be addressed.

Lack of Private and Public Investment in the Areas and Impact of Dereliction

Each focus group was asked initially to consider how deprivation and disadvantage is compounded by being an interface area no matter where it is across the City. One of the focus group participants responded with a succinct answer *"it's not about deprivation, it's about dereliction".*

The context and impact of the dereliction, lack of investment and potential solutions were also explored by diverse research respondents.

There needs to be increased awareness that most interface areas are linked to high levels of deprivation, there is significant blighted space and dereliction and it goes hand in hand.

What on earth would make people want to move their children into an area behind an interface wall?

[Focus Group Respondent]

> *The derelict sites should be in the hands of statutory agencies and where it isn't should be vested and brought under the control of those prepared to invest to partner with local communities*
>
> [Interface Network Worker]

> *There is a stigma of living in the areas, a post code discrimination that affects things like mobility into and out of the area and even insurance*
>
> [Community Worker]

Associated Lack of Employment Opportunities and Social Investment

The "multiplier" effect of deprivation, dereliction and lack of investment was also considered by respondents in terms of employment and educational achievement.

> *People need to understand that unemployment and youth unemployment in particular is one of the biggest multipliers that increase deprivation and dissatisfaction across communities.*
>
> [Statutory Rep]

The introduction of social clauses and their potential positive benefit was contrasted by one community worker with the situation that they had experienced to date

"We have had twenty one and a half million come into this area including a new Health and Well-Being Centre and a sheltered facility. In terms of direct jobs in the community there were 4 people employed; 2 night watch men; a cleaner and a labourer. That's value for this community? That really shocked me and us into action. Is it any wonder that we find it hard to get buy in for regeneration from local residents"?

Despite the challenges of living and working in areas affected adversely by deprivation and dereliction, one focus group respondent emphasised the resilience and strength of some individuals and families within those communities *"People want to stay here rather*

than move out of the area. We still boast generations of family, large networks and a large sense of belonging".

The challenge also remains however, whether that same sense of belonging and community identity can be extended in the future to others from diverse and different communities of interest, who might come to the same area to live and work.

1.1.7 Partners/Stakeholders

The current level of co-operation and collaboration of individuals and groups investing in developing sustainability in interface areas and in specific projects was apparent in the focus groups and interviews undertaken for this report.

BCRC's contribution to that work was recognised by one public sector rep who commented *"they have been vitally important in working closely together effectively with open, honest and constructive dialogue. But it might be helpful if their Steering Group invited some statutory partners to participate on it.*

Another respondent commented *"They're one of the few organisations that are working city wide with city wide vision. They are connected into local communities at grassroots level but at a city wide level and they should utilise that.*

The research also found a number of formal working groups such as the Black Mountain Shared Space, the Blythfield School Working Group and the TAC IT Project that provide opportunities to engage in a significant level of collaborative working across the areas.

The contribution to policy, research and interagency working by the Belfast Interface Project was also acknowledged by many.

Where possible the work of diverse projects have been described briefly in different sections of the report. However, it is acknowledged that this report, given its limited resources has been unable to comprehensively capture the significant level of collaborative partnerships and positive projects undertaken in interface locations across the city.

This report would echo the recommendation from one of the focus group respondents that an audit is undertaken to scope the level of investment in specific interface locations across the city to date and the sharing of the best practice initiatives and projects that might be adapted and contextualised for other specific interface communities.

This completes the findings and overview of the analysis of the factors that contribute to the interface communities examined remaining within the most deprived wards in the city.

The sub-section that follows assesses these factors in terms of risk and opportunity to better inform the final conclusions and recommendations.

1.2 Assessing Risk and Opportunity Factors

In order to assist future risk and opportunity assessment a list of generic factors that influence both has been included in the table that follows.

Risk	Opportunity
Longevity of experience of interface tensions and violence. Lack of shared spaces within specific locations.	Current networks, resources and expertise to prevent and create earlier intervention if violence escalates and to address some types of violence in partnership with others.
Prevalence and impact of different levels of violence experienced in interface communities. Legacy of violence upon individual economic independence, health and well-being.	Resources available currently and in the future to enable projects to build confidence and capacity across all elements to build sustainability i.e. social, economic, environmental and cultural capital.
Conditions of want that are the context of impact of structural violence as well as experience and impact of direct violence that impact adversely in the lives of individuals and the sustainability of	Willingness of community workers and voluntary activists to maintain relationships and drive towards progress in challenging times. Cultural competence of key workers and

communities.	volunteers within the community and willingness to share this with others.
Competition for scarce resources and impact upon relationships and networks.	Willingness of social partners to build their own cultural competence in order to work effectively within and for interface communities.
Diverse levels of confidence, capacity and capability to engage in renewal and regeneration.	Mechanisms available to acknowledge and implement steps towards transition as well as the change management.
	The review of existing arrangements by Government for engagement with communities including those in interface locations.
	The stated intention by Government set out in the package of significant and strategic actions linked to the new good relations strategy to provide a framework in which local interface communities can integrate their current and future work more strategically with regional government actions.
	The stated principles underpinning the package of strategic actions and the opportunities that arise for mutual accountability.

This first section of the report concludes with a diagram that illustrates the key factors outlined in this research that contribute to an enhanced understanding of why interface communities remain within the most deprived wards in the city.

Poverty, multiple deprivations and impact	Restricted access to education and training skills development	Poor physical environment Derelict shops and houses Neglected open spaces	Adverse housing conditions including segregated communities	Competition for scarce resources and impact upon relationships and networks
Levels of physical, emotional and mental health and well being	For some, absence of leaders, influencers and community advocates	Access to employment opportunities	Relationship with criminal justice agencies and/or community safety initiatives	Lack of inward investment in housing and employment
Current Impact of militarized violence	Legacy of militarized violence	Prevalence and impact of different levels of violence experienced in interface communities	Low levels of social capital investment	Sectarianism and other forms of non-militarised violence
Too many reports and not enough action	No roadmap	Visible and invisible barriers to change and transition	Community voices not heard, understood nor utilised effectively	Diverse levels of confidence, capacity and capability to engage in renewal and regeneration

It is acknowledged that each specific interface location can best use the list of factors identified to present the relevant context for their own community.

In the same way, the second section of the report that follows sets out a framework of key characteristics of best practice in relation to regeneration processes and a brief profile of the stage of readiness of three regeneration processes in designated parts of the city, to identify potential physical and economic opportunities within each of the designated areas.

2.0 BEST PRACTICE REGENERATION TO RECONNECTION

The evidence and analysis provided in Section One of this report has sought to examine why interface communities remain within the most deprived wards in the city. Having identified the need and key factors that contribute to this situation, this section goes on to look at potential solutions including examples of best practice.

In 2004 Callie Persic suggested that *"unless interface communities are addressed with strategic and long-term action, the legacy of the conflict will be poverty, social exclusion and multiple deprivation".*[43]

It is the nature, principles and best practice that impacts positively upon regeneration and reconnecting interface areas with each other and on a City wide basis that are the primary concern of this section of this report. This report found that there were no shortages of examples and resources to illustrate all three.

2.1 Regeneration Projects and Development Opportunities in Interface Areas

The individuals who responded to the research survey helped to identify some of the potential social, physical and/or economic opportunities that existed within their areas that could have a tangible beneficial impact to the local community. These were cited as:
- Dunnes Complex. Flax Street /Crumlin Road
- Black Mountain Shared Space Programme Centre
- Springfield Cottonmill Dam
- Invest NI site Flush Bend
- Belfast Met new E3 complex
- Social economy tourism project [Lower Shankill]
- Crumlin Road Courthouse
- Girdwood
- BCC Community Hub on Clifton Park Avenue
- UUJ Campus York Street
- Beechfield Primary School site

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[43] Persic, Callie. (2004). *The State of Play*. http://www.peacewall.org/pdfs/stateofplay.pdf. Belfast: Inter Action Belfast.

Several more were identified during the focus groups, interviews and desk research. These included;

- The Whitewell Youth Mediation Project.
- Cromac Regeneration Initiative
- North Belfast Community Development and Transition Group
- The Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project (SRRP), the sister organisation of the Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG)
- Skainos urban regeneration project in inner East Belfast

Desk research found a range of previous projects that had been funded previously by Belfast City Council to address "contested space[44]". These included;

Organisation	Project Name
Belfast Interface Project	Interface Mobility Project
Cavehill Antrim Road Regeneration (CARR)	Creating the Local Conditions for a Shared Society
Forthspring Inter Community Group	Mixed Gender Engagement Group
Forthspring Inter Community Group	Diversionary Youth Officer
Glentoran Partnership	The Respect Initiative
Good Relations Unit-Engagement (Intercomm)	Engagement Capacity Building
Good Relations Unit-I Citizen (Scoutlink)	Youth Intervention
Good Relations Unit-Interface (Falls Community Council)	Inter-community Forum Including Dialogue on Removal of Interfaces
Good Relations Unit-Mediation (Mediation NI)	Local Mediation Capacity Building Processes
Good Relations Unit-Physical Manifestations	Dealing with Physical Manifestations

[44] http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/goodrelations/transformingcontestedspaces.asp. Accessed May 2013.

Organisation	Project Name
Interaction Belfast	Interface Reconciliation Project
Intercomm	Shaping a Shared Future
Mount Vernon Community Development Forum	Concilium in Skegoniel Glandore
North Belfast Community Development and Transition Group	Leadership, Empowerment & Development - LEAD
PeacePlayers International	Rising Stars - Bridging Divides, Developing Leaders and Changing Perceptions
Public Achievement	The WIMPS Peace Channel
South Belfast Malecare	Connections
Stadium Projects	Higher Force Challenge Programmes
Workers' Educational Association	Getting to YES - Negotiation Skills Training For Trainers

Other desk research found examples of community led initiatives that outlined other good practice resources and initiatives including;

Template for Interface Intervention: produced by a number of experienced interface workers as a Sinn Féin discussion document in June 2004 and has been widely circulated among interface workers in both nationalist and unionist communities. It is described as providing a "practical mechanism to deal with the various types of violence that might occur". It has been used as a framework for responding to interface interventions and for training volunteers working in interface areas, setting out a range of short, medium and long term objectives and three "modes for intervention".

A Model of Good Practice: This was produced by Springfield Intercommunity Forum in September 2005. The document highlights the work of SIF and identifies the core areas of work as: transforming relationships and resolving differences; reducing conflict and violence; exploring diversity and increasing community capacity. The document also has sections on the different strands of work of SIF including the mobile phone network,

environmental issues and cross cultural exchanges and finally includes sections on "what works" and "what doesn't work".

Community Charter: Published by Ardoyne Focus Group in March 2005, is described as a "cohesive attempt through which all residents can have an input into strategies that will impact on their quality of life". The charter emphasises the importance of taking responsibility in relation to issues such as the behaviour of young people, drugs and alcohol, the local environment and social relations in Ardoyne.

Anti-Sectarianism Charter: This document was produced by Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum in March 2005, and designed to be a response to sectarianism. It encourages people to make a commitment to anti-sectarianism by challenging attitudes and behaviour that exclude; promoting attitudes and behaviour that include; promoting toleration and equality; respecting diversity; removing visible evidence of sectarianism; promoting dialogue over cultural conflict and working against institutionalised sectarianism.

North Belfast Conflict Transformation Forum Charter: The North Belfast Conflict Transformation Forum was made up of a diverse range of individuals and organisations working in North Belfast on an inter-community basis. Those involved reached agreement on working within the guidelines laid down within an agreed Charter. The Charter was publicly launched in April 2006, although the Group as formulated then is no longer in existence.

In addition to those highlighted above, a significant number of global, European and other research reports and resources for best practice in urban regeneration and in developing shared space in or near interface areas are also available.

This report would suggest that given the myriad of best practice reports and projects outlined to date in the Belfast City area alone that a process of scoping these reports and resources is undertaken to collate in one virtual site, a synopsis of the range of regeneration and interface resources and best practice that can be used to inform similar work locally, regionally and internationally.

2.2 Mapping Best Practice Regeneration and Shared Space Projects

Work undertaken for this section of the report found a number of identified factors that can be used to map best practice in urban regeneration and shared space. The information is presented in outline form below and, for the regeneration practice in detail; see Appendix 3.

A report commissioned and published by the Belfast Interface Project set out a list of factors that promote shared space. These included;

- Visible improvements to the physical environment
- Community dialogue
- Strategic long-term youth work
- Economic development
- Community planning for regeneration
- Learning from the mistakes of the past
- Need for political support and leadership
- Importance of an overall vision

The report concluded[45] that core ingredients in promoting shared space, of a physical, social or organisational nature, include successful mobile phone networks, effective long-term (inter-community) dialogue, strong local/community leadership (and political support for this), a robust and agreed vision for transforming interfaces that integrates interfaces into the wider strategic redevelopment agenda and implementing CSI, and shared knowledge of good practice.

Similar but also distinct factors have also been collated in promoting urban regeneration;[46]

- Understanding and using economic development and funding
- Integrating environmental factors with regeneration
- Influencing and informing property and physical renewal
- Capitalising training and educational development opportunities
- Addressing the stages and process of strategy development

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[45] Goldie, R and Ruddy, B. (2010). *Crossing the Line; Key Features of Effective Practice in the Development of Shared Space in Areas Close to an Interface.* Lisburn. Roz Goldie Partnership and Belfast Interface Project.
[46] Adapted from BURA regeneration training programme outline *www.buralondon.plus.com/*

- The planning and operational management of programmes and projects
- Developing partnerships and meaningful engagement
- Optimising existing information
- Developing succession and progression strategies
- Working with Communities

This report suggests that information such as this useful list of indicators could be utilised for practical capacity building in specific locations and for specific projects and initiatives. As referenced in an earlier section of this report in regard to location, the analysis of the information suggests there is no one size fits all solution to specific location need. The same conclusion needs to be made in terms of the capacity building needs analysis of networks, partnerships and individual groups involved in regeneration in interface areas.

This can be demonstrated in terms of two of the skills and knowledge issues recommended for capacity building in regeneration i.e. strategic development and developing succession and progression strategies.

It would be a disservice to the many community groups, particularly interface network partnerships, not to recognise their extensive experience in undertaking strategic development of large and small, short to medium term projects and initiatives. Any needs analysis for capacity building in this regard would need to be assessed in terms of the specific need of smaller perhaps less experienced groups.

On the other hand, developing succession and progression strategies is often an area placed on a backburner as organisations and groups attempt to cope with short-termism from policy makers and funders, often leading to the loss of experienced staff.

Larger interface networks might wish to provide support for individual projects and partnerships through facilitating robust training and development analysis based on the stage of readiness of the particular partnership members, their own assessment of need alongside signposting and/or the provision of appropriate interventions to meet those needs.

Examples of previous best practice in capacity building were also found during the desk research for this report. One of the most effective initiatives undertaken to assist capacity building in interface areas that emerged during the desk research was the work

undertaken by Participation and Practice of Rights [PPR] in relation to the regeneration of Crumlin Road Goal and the Girdwood Barracks site[47]. The mechanism of the Residents Jury and the range of international and local expert's evidence present to inform the resident's jury are impressive and accessible through written and digital form.[48]

One of the community workers who experienced the PPR work and practice commented "*PPR have a wealth of experience and an uncanny ability to bring together people from different backgrounds to work on a collective gaol. Examples for me were around Girdwood, welfare reform and most recently social inclusion clauses in government capital projects.*"

Previous sections of this report have referred to the need for interface communities and public sector representatives and agency staff to access specific and focused opportunities where aspects of cultural identity can be explored with safety and support. It is essential for those representatives and staff to enhance their "cultural understanding and knowledge" in regard to the fears and hopes of diverse communities and the stage of readiness of the same communities to participate in discussion and work on shared space needs.

This notion is encompassed in the skills, knowledge and ability to work effectively with diverse individuals and communities of interest. There is a persistent need for agencies and staff who do not live or work in interface settings to develop capacity to bring into its system many different behaviours, attitudes, and policies and work effectively in cross-cultural settings to produce better outcomes for all.

This report would also suggest that given the expertise and experience of the BCRC Steering Group Members, its staff and member groups they have a valuable contribution to make to increasing the cultural competence of others in regard to regeneration and promoting shared space based on their knowledge of community need and in their roles as transformational leaders working day and daily to implement local and regional policy, consultations and initiatives.

In the same way that external consultants and academics are commissioned to deliver specific scoping and research papers for Government ,many community networks and

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[47] http://www.pprproject.org/content/urban-regeneration-resourcesFindings and Indicators from the Residents' Jury on the Regeneration of Crumlin Road Gaol & Girdwood Barracks (Oct 2008).
[48] Videos from the Residents' Jury on the Regeneration of Crumlin Road Gaol & Girdwood Barracks: Part 1. Part 2.

transformation leaders are capable of delivering skilled negotiation, consultation and informed decision making opportunities in a way that provides added value for Government procurement at a local and regional level.

Similarly, public representatives have the opportunity to share in a practical and pragmatic way the "the route map" to negotiating the twists and turns of compliance, funding, policy and legislative pathways required to move freely through the planned strategic plans and actions for promoting good relations, community safety and shared space in interface communities.

An example of the competence of networks such as BCRC and their ability to deliver informed interface practitioner expertise can be seen in the development of best practice principles when engaging in discussion on interface barriers or "defensive architecture".

A previous discussion paper published by BCRC in 2010[49], sets out clearly the underpinning principles of their knowledgeable expert practitioner approach to addressing the future development of interface areas beyond that of the presence of the "defensive barriers" whether physical or mental. These principles are;

- Residents must be at the heart of decision-making about interface areas.
- The regeneration of interface areas is at the core of addressing the problems experienced by residents.
- Residents have identified their priorities and should be listened to.
- The focus on walls/barriers in isolation from other issues is detrimental.
- The walls/barriers are a symptom rather than a cause of division.
- Public policies (including planning, education, health, and housing) should support the regeneration and sustainable development of interface areas.

In the period since this discussion paper was published Government statements are seen to reflect some of these key principles into practice as evidenced in the Statement from the First Minister and Deputy First Minister Together Building a United Community[50].

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[49] Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium. (2010). *BCRC Position Paper on Interfaces.* Belfast, Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium.
[50] http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/media-centre/executive-statements/statement-090513-together-building.htm. Accessed May 2013.

Key Principles
- Local communities should come together to produce a phased plan of how to reduce and eventually remove the barrier
- Maximum consensus should be achieved from both sides of the wall
- Community, family and property safety is a core issue and consideration for the plan

Interface Barrier Support Package

Interface barriers will only be reduced and removed with local agreement and support. Local communities around the interface will be encouraged to come together and decide if they want to be part of this programme. If there is agreement to become part of the programme then the area immediately surrounding the barrier will be able to avail of a range of support and help over a 10 year period, provided agreed targets are met throughout the period.

The support package is designed to encourage communities to come together and agree to take action. The package would include the following benefits;

- Community interface workers to support the putting together of the plan, ensure the implementation of key actions on the plan and to support the local community to create the conditions to reduce and remove the barrier over an agreed and specified time frame
- Establishment and funding support for an on-going community forum to implement and monitor the plan
- Capital improvement package which will be designed to change and improve the barrier while ensuring walkways and gates are included that can be used as part of phased opening
- Community capital and project grant specifically targeted at the local community in addition to the community interface workers.

Senior public sector representatives interviewed for this report while acknowledging their commitment to *"actively seek local agreement to reduce the number of peace walls"* also emphasised their commitment to do so in a way that enables the perceptions and security of people living in interface communities to be comprehensively addressed.

We are prepared to go out and listen to communities directly and to ask them 'What are the conditions that need to exist to enable your communities to participate confidently in interface discussions and work?'

[Senior Public Sector Rep]

BCRC, its Steering Group, staff and members are in a primary position to enable Government to speak directly to communities to hear their answers to this question, to collate and analyse results and to work with Government in an equitable partnership to ensure that progress is underpinned with participation, mutual accountability and inclusion.

This report however, would also suggest that a key aspect missing from the Government statement, as referenced previously, is an understanding of the transition as much as change that is being asked from individuals, groups, networks and communities in interface areas to undertake these developments.

Transition is involved with identity, not only cultural and political identity but the identity that is embedded within a community's character - a character that in and of itself is an important catalyst for redevelopment activity. Interface communities and their "supporters" whatever sector they come from understand the social value of identity to the people who live there and seek ways to have these distinctive elements acknowledged and valued. In looking to progress regeneration and reconnection in interface areas and potential shared space projects, it is essential that cultural approaches are developed that relate to people as well as buildings. If interface areas are to consider the removal of their "defensible architecture" it is essential that space is also provided for shared and single "cultural memories" to be expressed in a positive and equitable manner.

The need to address social, economic, environmental and cultural sustainability is essential. The state of readiness to do so is not a "one solution fits all" scenario.

For the purposes of this report, three of the potential/actual shared space projects examined during the focus groups are outlined briefly in terms of their own distinct settings.

2.3 Shared Space Projects

2.3.1 Black Mountain Shared Space Project

Black Mountain Shared Space Project was established in 2009 to tackle acute deprivation, interface tension and anti-community behaviour in the interface area of Moyard/Springfield Park and Springmartin. Collectively those involved in the project work to address the deep-rooted division, deprivation and disadvantage that has been the hallmark of the area for many years. The Black Mountain Shared Spaces is an innovative project being developed on a cross-community and cross-sectoral basis. The project has a number of elements including education & employment, youth provision, building good relations and development of a social economy project of benefit to the area, Belfast and beyond.

One statutory sector representative described it as an example of best practice *"Some of the work done and continued to be done quietly behind scenes could have a huge impact in terms of building good relations, creating employment opportunities for younger and older people and offering facilities that that would result in "shared space" for these communities but also accessible to people across Belfast and across the region. There is a clear plan of what is possible"*.

Similar positive responses were expressed by the project Steering Group members during a focus *group "We want it to be different. It can be a positive legacy, not just bringing people together but increasing access to the areas and creating 'positive stuff that neutralises the walls".*

Plans are well developed with digital representation and "flythrough" animation of various views of the site available to inform others. Recent funding accessed will see the recruitment of paid staff to progress the work further.

2.3.2 Beechfield Primary/Bryson Street

Beechfield Primary is an interface school situated in the east of the City. A brick wall with a fence above runs the length of Bryson Street from the junction of Lower Newtownards Road to Madrid Street. A brick wall with mesh fencing above, to a total height of 7.5 metres, runs 275 metres along the length of Bryson Street from the junction of Lower Newtownards Road to Madrid Street.

A focus group of representatives from diverse communities of interest in the east of the city came together to share their hopes and aspirations for a potential shared space project on the Beechfield Primary site.

The project would target young people 16-25 years who are not in education, employment, or training. The group were clear that any potential project would be additional to the provision offered by the Belfast MET in the Titanic Quarter as it would be focused on confidence building; work readiness and offer programmes linked to skills deficit surveys and the information from INVEST NI in optimising places and programmes for those wishing to enter employment.

There was clear evidence in the focus group of the negotiations and work undertaken to date in considering issues such as access to the site from different areas, the range and type of programmes to be considered and the requirements of partnership development as the project reaches the next phase of development. The group are currently seeking funding to develop a feasibility study.

2.3.3 Dunnes Complex Flax Street/Crumlin Road Site

The focus group held explored the hopes and aspirations of the many diverse communities of interest participating in the discussion. These included;

- Something that provides both communities with income

- Creating appetite for parents to get involved
- Find a way to have a decent supermarket on the road without a distance to travel
- Seek ways to regenerate through renewal
- Develop a sense of hope rather than the politics of despair
- Seek new investment into the area
- Build commitment and desire to move collectively and transparently.
- Creating shared space for the youth sector to assess and respond to opportunities for development and growth.

During the focus group, participants, some of whom were meeting for the first time, had the opportunity to share the thinking and understanding of their diverse communities of interest. Discussion took place on the potential opportunities available through the development of a shared project on the site. These included;

- The site is currently derelict
- There is community agreement that something more positive needs to happen in terms of the site. Suggestions included youth initiatives e.g. Super Hub; commercial businesses, childcare facility, employment and vocational training site, overall better connectivity including to public transport.
- It is a location with a good footfall
- There is a willing customer base who would find a development on the site desirable
- Any regeneration project could serve the needs of everyone across all communities
- There is political support on a cross party basis that could be harnessed

The group also considered the challenges;

- Impact of the conflict both current and from the past
- The need to "entice" business partners such as Invest NI and Business in the Community and to create Business Champions for the project
- Need to be aware of what groups and organisations are doing in the area and beyond through a scoping study

Constraints in terms of feasibility and achievability were also considered and named.

- Regenerate realistically

- Develop relationships between industry and the community population
- Investigate property and land ownership
- Consider local consultation and seek funding to do so
- Investigate opportunities for investment from the private , statutory and public sectors

Steps were to achieve progress were explored including;

- Creation of a cross–community, cross sectoral Steering Group
- Promote market pilot on a Sunday
- Investigate ways to generate income and employment
- Look at "gaming" design and development skills as need career/ employment development opportunity
- Understand quality assurance requirements
- Consider ways to attract larger corporate employers and to build "proper skills for proper jobs"
- Prioritise short – medium term plans and seek funding for technical assistance to prepare feasibility/business case

A follow up phone call after the focus group found that some further discussions had taken place on the issues outlined above.

2.3.4 Similarity and Difference

The three focus groups and potential shared space projects collectively illustrate aspects of some of the findings and analysis made in other sub sections of this report;

- The factors identified in the first section such as location, political context, partnership working etc. could be used to enable each potential project to create its own profile and outline its state of readiness to progress shared space projects further
- There is evidence of capability and cultural competence among and between the residents, workers and community activists in each area to contribute fully to any consultation and decision making process involving the potential shared space project within their own area
- Relationships have been built to varying degrees on a cross community and cross sectoral basis to progress the projects.

- There is a need to secure funding to assist the projects through the different aspects of regeneration and for each project this may involve a distinct capacity building programme

Opportunities exist, as referenced previously, within a number of identifying relevant policy developments and funding initiatives to assist potential regeneration projects in the future. Undoubtedly one of the most significant is the new good relations strategy "Together: Building a United Community". This will also impact positively on an agreed package of significant and strategic actions referenced previously in this report in regard to;

- A "United Youth Programme" offering young people in the NEETS category structured employment, work experience, volunteer and leisure opportunities along with a dedicated programme designed to foster good relations and a shared future
- 100 Shared Summer Schools for post primary young people
- 4 large scale Urban Village Regeneration projects in targeted areas of deprivation
- 10 Shared Educational Campuses
- 10 new Shared Neighbourhood Developments.
- Cross-Community Sports Programme
- A 10-year Programme to reduce and eventually remove all interface barriers, working together with the local community

In the final section of this report brief conclusions and recommendations are made that might assist BCRC and key stakeholders to formulate strategies and actions that dovetail with the opportunities available with the needs of interface communities across Belfast.

3.0   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the Regenerate to Reconnect report, commissioned by BCRC and carried out by CMWorks, is to examine potential barriers that persist regarding the regeneration and development of interface communities and to make recommendations for overcoming these.

The conclusions are presented in a summative style, integrating the findings and analysis from all aspects of the report into an accessible format.

In brief, the report has concluded that it is possible to understand the distinct nature of the factors that impact upon interface communities remaining within the most deprived wards in Belfast. The statements that follow provide a summary of the findings and analysis set out in the previous sections of this report. It also informs the recommendations that follow.

Regeneration and renewal must be addressed with a focused response that acknowledges the multiplier effect of latent structural violence as much as the efforts to address the impact of direct forms of violence.

Violence in any form whether direct or latent has an adverse impact upon human security. Approaches to addressing violence in interface communities need to consider freedom from want as well as freedom from fear as a human rights issue.

The consequences of a more holistic view of human security as freedom from want as well as freedom from fear links social, economic and cultural development with a rights–based approach that is required also to be conflict sensitive.

The process and practice of a rights based approach to human security demands that all key stakeholders and representatives act accountably and encourage participation and inclusion, supporting local capacity building for the peaceful management of conflicts.

It is the combination of direct and structural violence in so far as they threaten the lives of individuals and communities that need to be equally addressed as ways to deconstruct violence and to build peace in sustainable communities.

This report would argue that the indirect violence of poverty and deprivation and its impact need to be addressed with the same rigour by the Interdepartmental Working Group and within the overall Government response.

Roles and responsibilities, policy and practice regarding interface areas has to date been addressed within three distinct strands; good relations, community safety and economic regeneration. This report would suggest that other Government Departments such as Health, Education, Employment and Learning, Trade and Investment need also to "come to the table" to outline their contribution to the integrated package of actions announced in May 2013.

The creation of an Interministerial Working Group to address the needs of interface communities as established already to address Domestic and Sexual Violence, would increase information sharing and mutual accountability placing locally elected representatives at the heart of the process and ensuring that the Government Strategies deliver on their objectives on a cross party and cross Departmental basis.

There is a need for robust mechanisms to ensure that the concerns, aspirations and plans voiced by local community residents and other stakeholders in each area are heard, understood and most crucially *used* in order to deliver regeneration, good relations and community safety initiatives in each area in order they too are placed at the heart of the process

This report found that the attitudes and understanding of the public representatives interviewed for this report emphasised the need for an integrated approach and their openness to hear from networks and areas willing and able to work together and with government to address the issues in interface communities. Indeed this report would further suggest that there is a shared and common vision among public sector and community representatives as to the issues that need to be tackled in terms of multiple deprivation, its causes and impact within interface spaces.

The analysis from this report would indicate that, at this moment in time, interface practitioners and networks have the opportunity to "push at an open door". However, there is no point in going through an open door without a clear focus for conversation and planning when you get there. This report would suggest that those same practitioners and networks need to consider their own strategic roles and responsibilities and future direction. It is recommended that they consider strategic and operational requirements to enhance their potential contribution to capacity building, economic, cultural, environmental and social development, and information sharing as well as the

management of change and transition within interface locations and shared space projects throughout the City. Larger interface networks might wish to provide support for individual projects and partnerships through facilitating robust training and development analysis based on the stage of readiness of the particular partnership members, their own assessment of need alongside signposting and/or the provision of appropriate interventions to meet those needs.

The development of social capital and the contribution of interface practitioners and community and residents groups to its investment and return is often not recognized in terms of additionality and "value for money" by some other stakeholder groups.

Social capital is "*the social 'glue' which makes local communities work – the informal networks which are often invisible to outsiders, but which are such a vital component of community life*".[51] This report would suggest that a key indicator that needs to be included into this framework of success indicators is the level and degree of social capital generated within each interface area through bonding, bridging and linking initiatives. It might also be utilised by BCRC and other social partners as a focus for identifying strengths, opportunities and limitations in some of the current and previous initiatives. The report found that there still remains a need to bring together the "ordinary people on the street" and to "knock on every door".

The report also acknowledges the resilience of the individuals and families who live in such areas creating neighbourhoods with a strong sense of identity and pride. The challenge remains to find ways in which positive expressions of that pride and identity can be expressed and shared in formal and informal settings among and between interface communities and also between those communities and the wider population.

The report found that one of the most effective initiatives undertaken to assist capacity building in interface areas that emerged during the desk research was the work undertaken by Participation and Practice of Rights [PPR] in relation to the regenerations of Crumlin Road Goal and the Girdwood Barracks site[52]. The mechanism of the Residents Jury and the range of international and local experts evidence present to inform the residents jury is impressive and accessible through written and digital form[53] It provides an excellent model that can be facilitated and delivered by expert practitioners while utilising opportunities to enhance learning and skills from others.

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[51] http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/resourcing-community-involvement-neighbourhood-regeneratione
[52] http://www.pprproject.org/content/urban-regeneration-resourcesFindings and Indicators from the Residents' Jury on the Regeneration of Crumlin Road Gaol & Girdwood Barracks
[53] Videos from the Residents' Jury on the Regeneration of Crumlin Road Gaol & Girdwood Barracks: Part 1. Part 2.

Interface areas need to be understood within a wider contextual understanding of the conditions and environmental setting that result in a concentration of 'deprived' households and individuals living in close proximity. These in turn create economic and social barriers that disconnect them from their more affluent neighbours and the positive opportunities and well-being that influence their lives. The context and impact of segregation is not confined to interface areas alone and in acknowledging that there needs to be a more comprehensive approach to City planning

It is this multiplier effect compounded by the range of levels of violence experienced heightened lack of mobility, the poverty of hope for some individuals and groups and the lack of private and public investment that has a compounding negative impact beyond that of other communities in the city who are also adversely affected by deprivation and violence.

Interface locations are often the site but not always the source of different levels of violence that impact upon individuals, families and communities

The report concluded that individuals and communities in interface areas experience a range of levels and forms of violence that exceed those of other "deprived" communities and groups in experiencing trauma, hurt or harm as a result of direct or latent conflict and violence. This includes "recreational", "event-linked" "casual proximity-related" orchestrated and premeditated violence and other forms of non-militarized violence including the 'lived experience' of sectarianism.

The involvement of local community activists, workers and networks provide an essential safety mechanism for shared space discussions and negotiations to take place to take place within each area. They contribute significantly on an ongoing basis to prevention, earlier intervention, protection and support interventions to address the "hotspots" and "hot events" that might potentially or actually flare up in a particular interface space. The preventative and earlier intervention aspects of reducing interface violence often is unrecognised in terms of resource allocation to the "on the ground" community organisations and networks that respond to the "flare ups" on an ongoing basis.

Specifically, this report acknowledges the contributions from ex-combatants from diverse communities of interest; inter and intra republican and loyalist groupings in their role as skilled community advocates and "tension monitors" in practice. The report

concluded that the level of negotiation and working agreements reached inside and out of the formal structures of consultation and decision making goes a long way to explain some of the progress that has been made in the regeneration projects and sometimes the challenges they experience from others. This history of their previous and current initiatives to work to create earlier intervention at times of unrest and to work with others to contribute to safety planning is apparent although not always recognised overtly in policy documents and strategic statements.

The individual and community barriers to change and transition need to be addressed with the same consideration and understanding as the physical structures of "defensive architecture".

The use of different forms of language and words to describe the same structures , for example "defensive architecture", "contested space" or a barrier that keep communities apart reflects differences in thinking and attitudes that needs to be acknowledged and considered particularly in regard to the pace and process of progress to respond to the same structures.

In the same way there is a need for those who live and work outside those communities to understand both the cultural history and experiences of individuals and groups living within the physical environment of "interface spaces" as well as the non-visible mental barriers and prior planning decisions that impact upon segregation in the city. The report affirmed previous studies that state that there is "no one size fixes all solution" and the need for cross sectoral engagement to formulate those solutions.

In addition this report suggest that there is a need to give consideration to the management of transition in order to acknowledge the "mental barriers" that individuals and groups are being asked to "dismantle". It states that change "works" only if it takes root in people's minds and hearts. Effective change management alone is not enough; the reality is that it's often transition, not change that people resist. It suggests also that existing networks and in community resources are best equipped to assist that transition.

Their "cultural understanding and knowledge" in regard to the fears and hopes of their own and the "other" communities, the stage of readiness of the same communities to participate in discussion and work on shared space, particularly that might involve the removal or downgrading of some of the defensive architecture, was particularly notable in its contribution to progress. This interface practitioner expertise and their networks

need to be harnessed and resourced to sustain the work developed to date and for the future.

Interface communities and the network organisations that support them are frustrated with too many plans, reports and not enough results. Conversely, there has been a lack of an integrated "road map" approach. Emerging opportunities exist to integrate current and future work more strategically with regional government actions and vice versa.

Interface communities are experiencing survey and consultation fatigue. For some there is a concern with some of the Government commissioned surveys and reports as to the authenticity and depth of consultation and decision making initiatives. There is a great deal of frustrations that despite the extent and range of the reports, surveys, masterplanning etc. that little positive benefit has been experienced in the lives of individuals and families in interface communities. In the same way there is an extensive catalogue of research in relation to the study of peace and conflict and interface areas in Northern Ireland with a subsequent array of recommendations as to mechanisms and strategies to address cause and impact. There may be some merit in creating a virtual library of the resources to aid those involved in regeneration and the development of shared space locally, on a European basis and globally.

The OFMDFM announcement [May 2013] of the package of significant and strategic actions linked to the new good relations strategy provide a framework in which local interface communities can integrate their current and future work more strategically with regional government actions. Key principles have also been set out to ensure that a robust and inclusive approach is in place to ensure ownership and inclusivity of the consultation, planning and implementation process. Issues such as the authentic rather than tokenistic implementation of social clauses is essential to provide practice and tangible benefits to individuals and communities in interface locations.

This report suggests that it is essential that resources and mechanisms for the delivery of capacity building to ensure effective and efficient implementation are designed in collaboration with the networks and community activists best able to articulate community needs and proposed solutions. The involvement of community networks from interface areas in monitoring the outworking of these principles is essential as is the mutual accountability from community projects and networks to fulfil the commissioning and quality assurance requirements required to deliver on the ground initiatives.

BCRC, its Steering Group, staff and members are in a primary position to enable Government to speak directly to communities to hear their answers to this question, to collate and analyse results and to work with Government in an equitable partnership to ensure that progress is underpinned with participation, mutual accountability and inclusion.

Opportunities to integrate the growth of social, economic, environmental and cultural sustainability with developments in social policy and specific funding and commissioning opportunities are being pursued to varying degrees by some of the projects examined for the purpose of this report.

The three focus groups and potential shared space projects collectively illustrate aspects of some of the findings and analysis presented in other sub sections of this report;

- The factors identified in the first section such as location, political context, partnership working etc. could be used to enable each potential project to create its own profile and outline its state of readiness to progress shared space projects further.
- There is evidence of capability and cultural competence among and between the residents, workers and community activists in each area to contribute fully to any consultation and decision making process involving the potential shared space project within their own area.
- Relationships have been built to varying degrees on a cross community and cross sectoral basis to progress the projects.
- There is a need to secure funding to assist the projects through the different aspects of regeneration and for each project this may involve a distinct capacity building programme.

The models, resources and tools used as a framework in this report and the significant level of existing reports from others may be of future use to assist identifying evidence of need, assessing risk and opportunity and planning development in specific interface locations and potentially to a wider audience

The use of the Aid for Peace framework can assist the mapping of peace and conflict within each specific interface setting. Interface communities and potential regeneration projects within those areas may wish to utilise the themes and tools identified within this

report to produce a profile of their own interface community, including the level and types of violence they experience.

Similarly, public representatives have the opportunity to share in a practical and pragmatic way the "the route map" to negotiating the twists and turns of compliance, funding, policy and legislative pathways required to move freely through the planned strategic plans and actions for promoting good relations, community safety and shared space in interface communities.

The current level of co-operation and collaboration of individuals and groups investing in developing safety and sustainability in interface areas and in specific projects is significant.

This report concludes that opportunities have, do and will exist for partnership working both formally and informally to deliver safer sustainable communities in interface locations. However the need for longer term regeneration initiatives needs to be balanced with the need for some "quick wins" informed and influenced by local groups to address the impact of deprivations including the poverty of hope and the apathy that can result for some individuals and groups.

It is essential that the contribution of expertise of interface practitioners' is recognised and resourced.

It is a crucial time in terms of opportunity and risk to address renewal , regeneration and reconnection in interface areas on a cross sectoral basis and in an integrated way that reflects hopes, aspirations and tangible benefits for all social partners.

It is in the context of regeneration and reconnection that the recommendations that follow are made.

Recommendations

Commission existing expert interface practitioners such as BCRC to contribute to increasing the cultural competence of other social partners delivering regeneration in interface locations and to assist transition.

Create opportunities for public and private sector representatives to share their knowledge and skills to enhance the work of interface practitioner groups and partnerships.

Commission an audit to scope the level of investment in specific interface locations across the city to date.

Share best practice initiatives and projects developed within interface locations within a virtual library for use by others locally and globally.

Consider the formation of an Interministerial Group within Government to aid integration, inclusion and transparency to assist regeneration and reconnection in interface areas.

Create further opportunities within the good relations package announced by OFMDFM to address the need to manage transition as well as change within interface locations.

BCRC, review their own strategic role and future direction and their opportunities to contribute positively to regeneration as well as peace-building and reconstruction in interface locations in Belfast.

Appendix One: Adapted from Aid to Peace [54]

Key Factor	Sample indicator
Location	Geographical extent of the initiative
	Where the initiative is located within this geography of violence
	Status of territory where initiative e.g. contested or newly accessible
	Level of Infrastructure & accessibility
Timing	Current stage of the conflict in the context of its' history of the conflict
	Current or future political, economic, social-cultural developments that might affect the initiative
	Increasing or decreasing opportunities to work in the area? (Are others working in/or leaving the area? If so, why?)
Political context	Relationship between local communities, political, and security services e.g. cooperative/ difficult
	Conflict-creating. Who are the allies, "enemies," scapegoats, beneficiaries? How will this affect the initiative?
	Level of political support for the initiative/ project locally, regionally, nationally?
	Predictability (or stability) of the political, legal, & security environments?
	Presence or absence of peace initiatives (formal & informal/ local & national) Are they inclusive? If not what are the major omissions?
	Nature of the political system & possible impact on initiative. Are leaders' accountable?
	Are politically, economically, or socially sensitive issues affected by the initiative?
	Are there any external political conditions that might affect the initiative?
Military context	Relationship between armed actors e.g., feuding within & between armed groups Current level of militarized violence Intensity, targets, & patterns of violence in initiative/project area?

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[54] www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/pdfs/Handbook-Aid_for_Peace-2009_Dec.pdf. Accessed May 2013.

Social and Cultural Economic Factors	Legacies of conflict in the area e.g. physical security, fear, defensive architecture health, psycho-social trauma? Relations between and within main communities in initiative location and the dynamics within these relationships Cultural factors that may affect the initiative Economic relations within the initiative site Impact of conflict on local resources (resourcefulness & creativity; leadership capacities; enterprising spirit; hope;
Partners /Stakeholders	Capacity of implementing organization, including qualified & suitable staff Involvement of implementing organization in conflict or peace processes; and its "political" position or acceptability to other partners/stakeholders within the area of the initiative Choice of "beneficiaries": the political implications, inclusion of marginalized members of the community. Conditions for effective implementation (leadership; coordination; access; trust; technical capacities; gender sensitivity Ability of stakeholders to make choices & willingness to make changes.

Appendix Two: Sample Questions for Assessing Risk and Opportunity When Building Peace and Deconstructing Violence. Ref – Aid for Peace Project[55]

- Did/does/ may the initiative or project create or support equity and justice.
- Did/do/ will the benefits of the project be shared equitably by both genders?
- Did/does/will the initiative include female and male members from all communities affected by violent conflict, or just one or some communities? Why and how were they chosen? How will tensions of non-benefiting groups be managed?
- Did/does/will the initiative seek explicitly to "build bridges" between the different communities? If so, how?
- Did/does/will it help to create an inclusive - rather than exclusive - sense of community? Did/does/will it facilitate the ability of individuals and groups to work together for mutual benefit?
- Did/does/will the initiative contribute to positive communication/interaction between and within groups?
- Did/does/ will it provide/create / strengthen the skills, tools, capacity for individuals and communities to (1) *identify and define* problems and (2) *formulate and apply solutions* to those problems?
- Did/ will the initiative or project take into consideration the history/legacy of conflict in its design? Did/does/will it consider the specific impact on children, women and other vulnerable groups such as displaced populations, and the politically, socially and economically marginalized.
- Did/does/will the initiative or project increase contact, confidence, or trust between the communities? Will/does/did it dispel distrust? Did/does/will it create common interests, or encourage individuals and groups to see their common interests, and did/does/will it help to modify behaviours so that they can achieve shared interests?
- To what extend did/does/will the initiative incorporate/privilege the views and interests of affected indigenous populations?
- Did/does/may the initiative help to the "demilitarize minds"? That is, does it enable individuals to develop and use non-military means of thinking about and resolving conflicts and disagreements. This includes the cultural and socio-psychological tendency of individuals and groups to accept and use militarised ways of managing conflict and disputes.

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[55] www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/pdfs/Handbook-Aid_for_Peace-2009_Dec.pdf. Accessed May 2013.

Appendix Three: Best Practice Regeneration Indicators[56]

Understanding and using economic development and funding
- Understanding how to target economic development and funding based on specific issues e.g. area partnership plans, sectoral/themes e.g. young people, programmatic e.g. IFI.
- The development of funding approaches including the role of public and private sectors, European and Government initiatives.
- Key principles of financial planning and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.
- Building sustainability - capital and revenue expenditure, exit strategies for long term funding stability.

Integrating environmental factors with regeneration
- Understanding the importance of environmental quality to economic regeneration-attracting businesses and investment.
- How to build sustainable growth through the use of brownfield sites, mixed-use schemes, eco-friendly initiatives, addressing individual attitudes, community recycling, legislative frameworks
- Raising awareness of the social benefits in creating a better quality of life for residents, to improve public health, revitalise derelict and deprived areas and to attract and integrate new residents.
- Influencing architectural and urban design quality, sharing inspiring city and area image**s**, raising expectations and improving the public realm.

Influencing and informing property and physical renewal
- The role of buildings, open spaces, utilities, transport, telecommunications in the urban system - land and how to use these to meet future demand - e.g. housing, office space, retail, transport links.
- The role of physical renewal in urban generation - i.e. economic, social and psychological impacts.
- How to lead and facilitate renewal and regeneration - 'flagship projects' - from major developments to smaller, community schemes. Installing infrastructure as a trigger to further development.

Capitalising training and educational development opportunities
- Understanding opportunities and impact of both education and training. Social issues, social inclusion, educational underachievement low pay, part-time

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[56] Adapted from BURA training programme information http://www.historictownsforum.org/node/428on

working and targeted initiatives and in interface areas social mobility. Future trends, education and skilling to meet requirements

Addressing the stages and process of strategy development

- Strategic analysis - scan of operational environment and context; identifying key factors; change and key drivers; internal and external considerations; sustainable development.
- Steps, stages and activities and methods of strategy-building - how to devise a strategy; steps and stages in development; consultation and participation; sectoral activities, designing the system.
- Evaluation developing and evaluating alternatives; strategic choice, strategic review and monitoring; intermediate and ex post evaluation; scanning the internal and external environment; monitoring

The planning and operational management of programmes and projects

- Organisational issues - developing a portfolio of activities; relating this to a structure; developing timetables and identifying milestones; review and assessment.
- Developing the project programme structure - identifying the big issues and tasks; assigning responsibilities; identifying and managing interrelationships; delivery issues.
- Personnel and financial issues - developing job structures and specifications; recruitment, training and professional development; financial activities and procedures; financial management.
- Monitoring, review and evaluation - basic methods and techniques; importance of integration into delivery; selecting and managing data; operational considerations.

Developing partnerships and meaningful engagement

- What is partnership? - definitions of partnership; key characteristics and features; evolution of partnership modes of working; identifying partnership opportunities.
- Types of partnership - classifications and typologies; structures and methods of operation; timescale and scope; changing original intentions; financial and legal issues.
- Strengths and weaknesses - strengths and areas of opportunity; weaknesses and limitations; how to convert weaknesses into strengths; legal and financial aspects; wider application of partnership.
- Partnership experience - measuring achievements and success; leadership, key actors and collaboration; specific, generic and area-wide arrangements; engaging the wider community; networks and continuity.

Optimising existing information

- Sources of information - standard sources; types of data and information; access to sources; availability of published material; bespoke and restricted sources; costs and skills. Establishing a database - selecting an overall method and procedures; computer-based and manual systems; G.I.S. and other expert systems; ensuring compatibility; cost and skills.

Developing succession and progression strategies

- Problems of project-based approaches - short-termism; lack of continuity; limited funds; restricted mandates; revenue implications, ownership; loss of experienced staff.
- Mainstreaming projects - budget implications; management of activities; identifying key characteristics and activities; matching projects to mainstream organisation.
- Staffing issues - identifying key personnel and rolling contracts forward; establishment and structural issues; training and professional development; structures and re-organisation.
- Succession issues - consultation with funding bodies; designing change processes and procedures; transfer of ideas, information and assets; continuity and delivery; institutional learning; extending portfolios and activity areas.
- Accountability - democratic issues; community involvement and ownership establishing and validating new structures, embedding activities

Working with Communities

- Definition and roles of community in regeneration; Understanding key social issues from a community perspective: e.g. health, crime and violence, education, unemployment, and how these factors combine to create further decline and social exclusion.
- Identifying community needs and aspirations- processes including consultation, meetings, workshops, surveys and community groups submitting their own project proposals. Creating shared visions and giving people a say in the design and running of projects, housing, facilities, etc.
- Capacity Building - training and equipping both local communities and regeneration professionals.
- Representativeness, Empowerment and Ownership - engaging local communities, involving representatives.

Appendix Four: Interface Survey Questionnaire

Building Sustainable Communities: The Regeneration and Development of Interface Communities

Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium has commissioned research on the regeneration and development of Interface Communities in four areas of Belfast. It is hoped that this research will examine potential barriers that persist regarding the regeneration and development of interface communities and make recommendations to overcome them. We would appreciate your time and contribution and ask you to complete the survey and return it either electronically to *helen@cmworks.co.uk* or hard copy *to the relevant BCRC area representative* by **31 January.**

1. Please indicate the area of Belfast you are completing this survey for:

North Belfast	☐	South Belfast	☐
East Belfast	☐	West Belfast	☐

2. Please indicate your community background:

I am a member of the Catholic/Nationalist/Republican (CNR) community ☐
I am a member of the Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist (PUL) community ☐
I am neither a member of the CNR or PUL community ☐

3. Please indicate community status:

I am a resident of the area ☐
I am a community worker/volunteer in the area ☐
I am a representative of a Statutory Agency ☐
Other ☐

4. Please rate the impact you think being located in an interface area has on the following categories in your area of Belfast:

	Strong Negative Impact	Some Negative Impact	No Impact/ Don't Know	Some Positive Impact	Strong Positive Impact
The standard and availability of housing					
Employment levels in the community					
Physical health of individuals living in the area					
Mental health of individuals living in the area					
Levels of anti social behaviour					
Levels of crime in the community					
Private investment in the area					
Public investment in the area					
Business' being located in the community					
Shops being located in the community					
Sports facilities being located in the community					
Social/entertainment facilities being located in the community					

5. In the last five years, please rate the change your community has undergone in the following areas:

	Very positive	Positive	No change	Negative	Very Negative
The standard and availability of housing					
Employment levels in the community					
Physical health of individuals living in the area					
Mental health of individuals living in the area					
Levels of anti social behaviour					
Levels of crime in the community					
Private investment in the area					
Public investment in the area					
Business' being located in the community					
Shops being located in the community					
Sports facilities being located in the community					
Social and entertainment facilities being located in the community					

6. Please rate how connected you feel to the following:

	Very Connected	A Little Bit Connected	Don't Know	Not Very Connected	Not Connected At All
People living in the same street as me					
People living in the same community as me					
People living other side of interface area					
People in my area of Belfast e.g. North, South, East or West					
People living in the greater Belfast area					
Belfast city centre					

7. What , if anything, would make you feel more connected to other parts of the city? Please comment:

_____
_____
_____

8. Can you identify any recent regeneration projects/processes in your area?

Yes: ☐   **No:** ☐

8a. If yes, please outline these:

_____
_____
_____

8b. If yes, please rate these regeneration projects/processes on the following:

	Very Good	Good	Don't Know/ No Opinion	Poor	Very Poor
Inclusivity					
Participation					
Communication					
Impact					
Delivery					

9. How influential do you think the following categories are in preventing the regeneration/ development of the local area?

	Very Influential	A little Influential	Not Influential At All	Don't Know/ No Opinion
Intercommunity tensions				
Attitudinal barriers				
Lack of investment				
Training/education/employment opportunities				
Apathy within the local community				
Low academic attainment				
Low expectations				
Dependency culture (benefits trap)				
Poor service delivery from statutory providers				
Lack of community representation/leadership				
Lack of political representation/leadership				
Crime levels/fear of crime				
Interface walls/barriers				
Youth provision				
Community infrastructure/capacity				

10. What do you consider to be the most significant external barriers/challenges to the regeneration of the local community?

_____
_____
_____

11. Can you identify any potential social, physical and/or economic opportunities that exist within your general area that could have a tangible beneficial impact to the local community:

    Yes: ☐   **No:** ☐

    If yes, please outline these:

_____
_____
_____
_____

13. What regeneration/development projects and processes would you like to see happen in your area, if any?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.

Feedback will be provided upon completion of the research.

Appendix Five: Focus Group Questions

- How is deprivation and disadvantage compounded by being an interface area no matter where it is across the City? E.g. community safety and policing, disconnected youth; educational underachievement; employment opportunities; inward investment; physical health; housing development; representation etc.

- How is deprivation in your own interface area affected by; Its location; Intercommunity tensions; attitudinal barriers; lack of investment; training/education/employment opportunities; apathy within the local community; low academic attainment; low expectations; dependency culture (benefits trap); poor service delivery from statutory providers; lack of community representation/leadership; lack of political representation/leadership; crime levels/fear; interface walls/barriers of crime; youth provision; levels of connectedness; community; infrastructure/capacity, etc.

- What are the deprivation and disadvantage issues in your own area that you are trying most to positively affect and target over the next five years?

- Where do you think that your area is at in terms of readiness to progress shared space/interface projects at the moment?

- What is your knowledge/understanding of any recent regeneration projects/processes that you would consider best practice and why have you chosen them e.g. Inclusivity; Participation; Communication; Impact; Delivery?

- What are the opportunities/interventions that have been created in the past that you wish to develop further and/or that you wish to develop now to tackle deprivation in your area?

- What are the hoped for results from your intervention?

- What is important about the process of what you have done in the past to achieve progress in tackling deprivation as an area that needs to be sustained?

- What are risks that affect existing and new opportunities and how would you try to reduce those?