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Statement by Residents Jury

The Residents' Jury came together in April 2008 to focus on the upcoming regeneration of a 27 acre site in their area of North Belfast - Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol. Their intention was to ensure that the regeneration of the site made a real difference to the lives of the communities around the site, who suffer some of the worst deprivation and inequality in Northern Ireland.

On 28th May 2008, the Residents Jury, supported by the PPR Project, held an event called 'Residents Jury on Regenerating Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol: A Human Rights Based Approach'. They heard evidence from a range of international and local experts on regeneration, human rights and how communities in other parts of the world have brought the human rights principles of equality, participation and accountability through their own experiences with regeneration.

This publication is the transcript of the Residents' Jury event and their recommendations for how the process will be moved forward. It is intended that the Residents Jury is convened at periodic intervals to monitor the progress of the Girdwood Regeneration in addressing both local inequalities and fulfilling international human rights standards.

Participation and the Practice of Rights Project

Wednesday 28th May 2008, Belfast

Residents' Jury Regenerating Girdwood Barracks & Crumlin Road Gaol, A Human Rights Based Approach

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Introduction from the Chair

Inez McCormack:

Welcome to the Participation and Practice of Rights Project's Residents' Jury. I will be chair for today's proceedings alongside Aideen Gilmore. I am Chair of the PPR Project itself, while Aideen is a member of the Management Committee of the Project and also Deputy Director of the Committee on the Administration of Justice, a local human rights non-governmental organisation.

You are all very welcome. What we are going to do first is to show you a video which will describe the purpose of the day and then we will give you some information on the practical development of the day.

DVD

Narrator:

Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol is a 27-acre site in North Belfast which has been designated for regeneration. An estimated 231 million pounds will be invested in the site.

Girdwood lies at the heart of some of the most proud communities in Northern Ireland. These communities are characterised by long-term inequality and deprivation, which impact on health, employment, housing and education of those that live there.

In November 2007, the Department for Social Development launched a consultation on the draft master plan for the site, which included a variety of proposals. There were significant concerns among communities that the proposals did not address the inequalities and poverty in the local areas of government policy and legislation required.

Another major concern was that local residents had not been able to participate effectively in the regeneration process or in the decisions that could affect their lives. The purpose of the Residents' Jury is to ensure that the human rights of local residents are central to the regeneration process.

Members of the Jury were selected to ensure that its composition reflected the broad range of diverse identities across North Belfast. These residents took part in a development programme with the Participation and the Practice of Rights Project on a human rights based approach to regeneration.

They focused on particular core principles central to a human rights based approach – participation, accountability and equality. The Residents' Jury will be considering verbal testimonies and following events will develop recommendations on how human rights can be main streamed into the entire regeneration process.

These recommendations will be based on international human rights standards and will be monitored and developed at different stages throughout the regeneration process.

The regeneration of Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol represent a unique opportunity to remedy the severe deprivation and inequality which exists in the communities surrounding the site. This Residents' Jury is about making sure that actually happens.

This DVD is available on:

www.youtube.com/PPRProject

Inez McCormack:
That is what the Residents' Jury will do. They are members of their local communities and you have their bios in your packs which give you information on them. They are working today as a collective team – as a Jury. They will be listening to the evidence given to them and asking some questions. After today, and over the next few months, they will be working with others to bring on board the evidence given here today in order to make recommendations that will take this work forward.

This process puts their right to be heard, which has been established under law, policy and practice at national and international level, into practice.
It does so in a context of a cautious, constructive, and cooperative way forward in order to ensure that this once opportunity in North Belfast, of 200 million pounds, makes a difference to the lives of the people in these communities and their children.

We will be listening as the day goes forward to the speakers who have come here and they are all extremely welcome. There are some who have come from just down the street and there are some who have travelled thousands of miles and taken time out of their schedule because they think it is worth it.

The people who will be giving evidence today are experts both in human rights standards and in regeneration practices. They know what works and what doesn't work. The important thing that we are saying to government today is that the evidence coming from here is not just about fulfilling people's right to be heard; it is about filling the pause that exists while the equality impact statement is being worked on, with the kind of evidence that is thoughtful and useful. Evidence that can ensure that this opportunity for North Belfast is used wisely and that in five, ten or fifteen years time it has changed the realities of local communities so that they are part of process of making it different.
That is what today is about.

What I would also like to do now, and as the day goes on, is to show you some messages which demonstrate the kind of support this process is building nationally and internationally. Mary Robinson, as many of you know, was with us last week and met a number of people involved in this project and also in other projects that we are involved with in North Belfast. Her perspective was very clear. As far as she is concerned, this work is innovative; there are no footprints for it. The work is difficult but it is good and she is very interested in using the process as a pathfinder for other communities throughout the world. She is a member of a group called The Elders, with Nelson Mandela, Graca Machel and others, and she is interested in using this kind of practice to work with other communities. You don't just lift something and put it somewhere else, but there is work here that is useful and there is learning that can be transferred.

Bill Thompson, the New York Comptroller, was here a few weeks ago and we brought him to the Girdwood site. They made a decision to make a major investment into Northern Ireland and while we cannot guarantee that it is going to go into the Girdwood site, the Comptroller has made a major commitment to using investment opportunities to make a difference in areas of deprivation and in local communities. He also wants to keep in touch with the work we have done with the Jury and the local communities to see what he can do to support it. The first step is to work out what you want and then to talk to people like people Bill in terms of how he can help.

Paul Hunt, UN Rapporteur on the Right to Health, has worked with us from the very beginning of the project to use the international standards in health and also international standards on participation which match the local legislation that went through after the Good Friday Agreement on the right to be heard. He has said that this is an innovative method of ensuring the principles are central to the regeneration process;

the principles of equality, participation and accountability. So in a sense, as we move forward, those are the principles that are applied to any proposals and any process.

Those are some of the messages of support that have come from international actors and we will be talking about others as we go on. However, don't think that you are all going to sit there for the rest of the day and do nothing, because there is a written contribution form in the conference pack and that offers you the possibility of making written contributions so that you can also be part of evidence collection, or if you would like interviews to follow-up. We would like to involve as many local communities or anybody who is interested in being involved in this process. It is a living process. It is only started and we want to take it forward with you.

The structure of today will be a number of panels in which the speaker will be called give evidence after which the Jury will ask questions of the panel. When they have finished their questions, that panel will then go back to their table and we will move on to the next panel. We will be interspersing the panels with videos on issues around the right to health and work that is being done in local communities which gives you some sense of what local communities feel what needs to be done. After the first panel we will then have Virgínia Brás Gomes, who has come here from the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to give a keynote speech on how this work not only fits into the international standards but also how international standards fit into this work. It is a living process of exchange between those who are working at international level and those who are working at local level; how international standards can make a difference.

I am going to pass over to Aideen now who will take you through some of the practical points.

Aideen Gilmore:

This project always has novel ways of doing things and I think it is a novel project in general. One of the novel ways that they adopted for presenting information is producing DVDs, which I personally have always found very, very powerful and moving. There are going to be a number of DVDs today as part of the evidence which will look at health, employment, education and housing in the area. The first is a short video on health to begin the presentation event.This DVD is available on:

www.youtube.com/PPRProject

Along with short films on education, housing and employment in North Belfast.

Aideen Gilmore:

As Inez has already mentioned there are three key principles that we are looking at today; equality, participation and accountability. The first of these is equality. I think it is timely to be looking at these three themes and equality in particular, given that this is the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The first Article of the UDHR says that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" so that really provides the core of where equality comes from and it links it very much to human dignity. It talks about people being born equal but what happens then? Do they experience life equally? I think a lot of the discussion we will have today will make it clear that they don't, despite the fact that in Northern Ireland we have probably some of the most progressive equality legislation in the world.

Today's speakers are going to look at what the situation is in and around the Girdwood area and then looking at, generally, the impact of inequality in people's lives, and finally, what the tools are that exist here to do something about it and how they can best be used.

I will hand over now to Inez to introduce the speakers.

Inez McCormack:
In that video there was one comment that actually sums up what this is all about. One of the speakers said, 'there's ways around it'. This is one of the most deprived areas of Northern Ireland, it has been the heart of the conflict, and many people have been killed and damaged in this area. This is about saying something can be done and the people in the communities are determined that what will be done will make a difference. It is all hard but it can be done and there are ways around it.

I would like to start off the evidence by calling Nicola Browne who is the Research and Policy Officer at the PPR Project to start the process of giving evidence. She will be speaking about inequality and deprivation in north Belfast.

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Inequality and Deprivation in North Belfast

Evidence

Nicola Browne:

My purpose today is to provide the context around the regeneration of the Girdwood site. I am going to focus on the five electoral wards which surround the site and are the areas where the Residents' Jury are coming from. Using government statistics I want to try and capture the kind of experiences that people here living in those wards would face on a daily basis.

Girdwood Barracks is a 27 acre site in North Belfast which is publicly owned by the government. It is in the Water Works electoral ward but also borders five electoral wards in North Belfast, which are Ardoyne, Crumlin, New Lodge, Water Works and Shankill.

A Masterplan of how the site was going to be developed was published in July 2007. It said that there would be approximately £213 million put into this site as investment. In terms of communities that live here and community differentials, Ardoyne, New Lodge and Water Works are predominately Catholic wards and Crumlin and Shankill are predominately Protestant wards. A common feature across the wards is the presence of a higher than normal number of what would be known as vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. In Ardoyne, Shankill and Water Works there is at least double the number of lone parent households than there would be, on average, in Northern Ireland. In Shankill and Crumlin there is more than twice the number of lone pensioner households than there would be in Northern Ireland.

The main evidence that I want to provide for the Jury today is about deprivation levels in these five wards surrounding Girdwood. To provide a perspective on how this £213 million which is referenced in the Masterplan can actually be used to the best effect in these communities.

The Programme for Government forms the basis of everything the government is going to do over the next three years. Their strategic aim includes a commitment to develop new and innovative measures that address existing patterns of socioeconomic disadvantage, target resources and effort towards the greatest objective need. That sounds great but actually that commitment isn't anything new.
That issue is one which has run through policy and law here for a long time. Northern Ireland is actually quite well equipped in terms of well-written policies which are designed to ensure that deprivation and inequality is tackled. I will be covering this in a bit more detail later but an example would be that the government are required to promote equality of opportunity in all of their programmes and policies between nine named groups. They are also required to target objective need wherever it exists. These policies and programmes should mean that money and effort is targeted to where it is needed most. We are actually doubly fortunate here. We also have a wealth of information which can indicate where that objective need is and where the need exists and where the need is greatest in the communities.

Figures are produced by an organisation called NINIS which is the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service. They use government statistics to map where deprivation is greatest in all of Northern Ireland. The information is publicly available, robust and is a big asset for the country. A lot of other states don't have this kind of desegregated information which breaks down people's experiences. They are really vital as a measurement of objective need because they are tools which government can look at in order to direct them to where the objective need is – to where they need to target their resources.

What NINIS did in their work was they ranked all 582 the wards in Northern Ireland from 1 to 582, with 1 being the most deprived and 582 the least deprived. The higher a ward's ranking in the tables the greater the problems are that should be addressed. This was also done thematically. As mentioned in the last DVD, people's experiences can have different impacts on their lives; their income, employment, their health or their housing. NINIS have therefore done thematic reports which look at those issues.

The first of these themes is income deprivation, which is measured by the number of households that are in receipt of benefits, including income support and income based job-seekers allowance. When you look at the five wards surrounding Girdwood, New Lodge is the second most deprived ward for income deprivation. You need to bear in mind that these figures are throughout all of Northern Ireland, so that is the second most deprived ward out of 582 in income deprivation. All five wards are in the top 5% of the most deprived in Northern Ireland and two of them, New Lodge and Shankill, are in the top 1%.

Income Deprivation

Ward Name	Rank of Income Deprivation (out of 582)
New Lodge	2
Shankill	5
Ardoyne	9
Crumlin	15
Water Works	21

Next is employment deprivation. This looks at the number of people who are of working age who could be working but are involuntarily out of the labour market. This is people who don't have a job but want one. Crumlin and Shankill are the second and third most deprived for this measure. They are in the top 1% most deprived, again, in all of Northern Ireland. All five wards are in the top 5%, and looking purely at unemployment– the rates in these five wards alone is double what the Northern Ireland average is. The Northern Ireland average is four while these are coming in around 7% and 8%.

Employment Deprivation

Ward Name	Rank of Employment Deprivation (out of 582)
Crumlin	2
Shankill	3
New Lodge	8
Ardoyne	16
Water Works	21

Housing and living environment deprivation combines a number of measures. It looks at access to housing and housing quality, but also the outdoor environment of the area the housing is in to try to get a proper sense of the overall picture of a living environment. Ardoyne is the most deprived ward in all of Northern Ireland for living environment with Crumlin also in the top 1%. Ardoyne, Crumlin, New Lodge and Water Works are in the top 5% of most deprived for housing living environment. A further indication is the housing waiting lists in the area. Housing need in Belfast is growing but there are three times as many Catholics as Protestants on the waiting list for social housing in North Belfast and they have to wait a lot longer to be housed.

Housing & Living Environment Deprivation

Ward Name	Rank of Housing &Living Environment Deprivation (out of 582)
Ardoyne	1
Crumlin	5
New Lodge	16
Water Works	20
Shankill	32

That gives a glimpse of the reality that the people living in these areas are facing in terms of their housing. They have had a lack of hope created in part by the length of time people have to wait.

The education measures consider young people and their education but also that of adults. It looks at education but also at the training and skill levels that exist in the communities. Again, Shankill and Crumlin wards have the unworthy distinction of being first and second in the league tables of the most deprived in Northern Ireland in terms of education. They are in the top 1% of the most deprived. The Shankill statistics are most worthy of note; only a third of people in Shankill, compared to the Northern Ireland average, leave schools with five GCSEs. The rate in the Shankill is a third of what Northern Ireland's average is.

Education Deprivation

Ward Name	Rank of Income Deprivation (out of 582)
New Lodge	2
Shankill	5
Ardoyne	9
Crumlin	15
Water Works	21

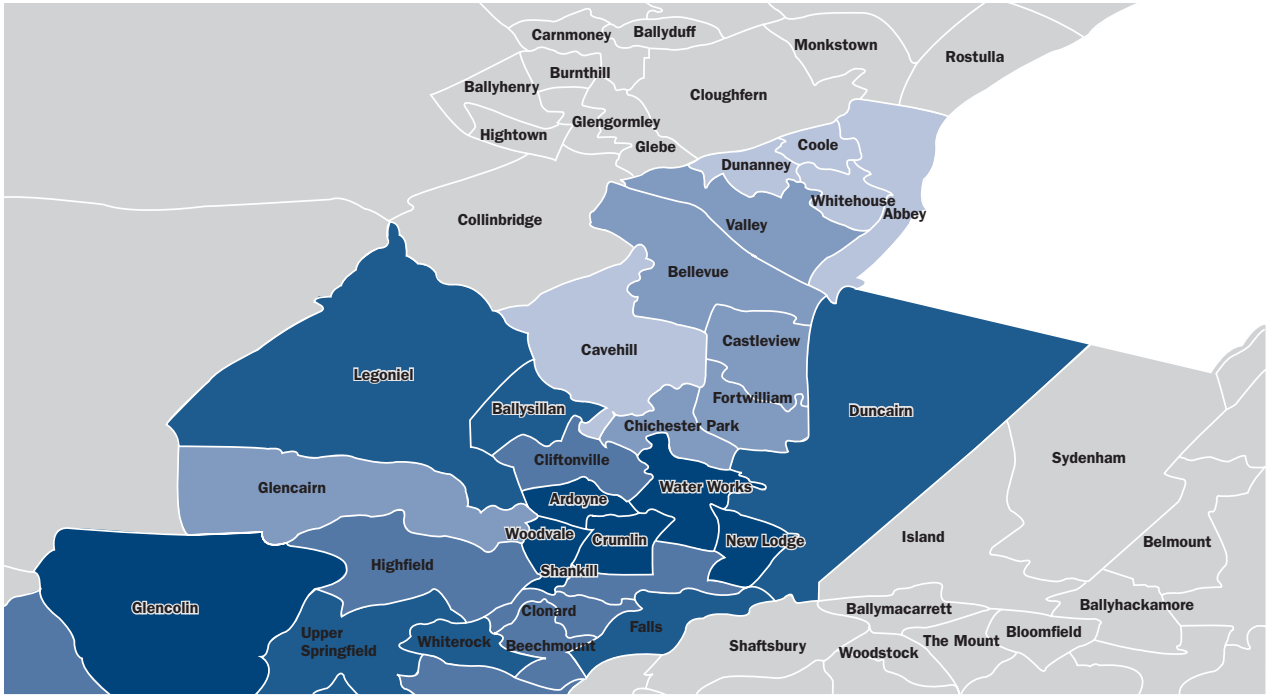
Finally, here are the figures for health deprivation. These identify areas which have a higher number of people with a limiting long-term illness. This includes those who die prematurely or whose quality of life is impaired by poor health or are disabled. Shankill and Crumlin are first and third. All the five wards are in the top 5% for health deprivation in Northern Ireland, and three, Shankill, Crumlin and New Lodge, are in the top 1%.

Health Deprivation

Ward Name	Rank of Health Deprivation (out of 582)
Shankill	1
Crumlin	3
New Lodge	5
Water Works	6
Ardoyne	12

The following is really a visual way of reinforcing what has been already said. It relates to households in North and West Belfast who have one or more people with a limiting long-term illness or disability.

Limiting Long Term Illness



Ranges

1,221 to 1,515	(6)
1,112 to 1,221	(8)
1,013 to 1,112	(7)
657 to 1, 013	(7)
516 to 657	(8)

The navy blue squares are where the highest numbers of limiting long-term illness are. The darker the squares the worse the situation is. We can see from this that the areas suffering most from limiting long-term illness actually encircle the Girdwood site. This includes four of the wards that we are looking at – the Water Works, Ardoyne, Crumlin and New Lodge, in addition to Woodvale, which is just next door, and Glencolin. We can see from these figures the deprivation in terms of people's unmeant needs is really the lived experience of people who are living in the wards around the Girdwood site. And, it shows that experience in a number of ways, as it said in the video, in terms of people's income, their employment, their housing, and the impact on their health that it had.

It should be acknowledged, however, that this lived experience may not be the experiences of all people in North Belfast. A closer look at the statistics shows that there is actually a great deal of inequality within the area in terms of the deprivation. These figures relate to multiple deprivations. It is ironic that North Belfast is home to Crumlin there which is rated first in the list of most deprived wards in Northern Ireland for multiple deprivation yet it is just down the road from the Cavehill ward which is one of the least deprived wards in the whole of Northern Ireland.

To conclude; that is just a snap shot of the statistics that the government have collected. They have access to this information when they are putting policies and programmes in place, but it is really just one of the tools that government has at their disposal when they're drawing up policy and programmes. They are trying to target objective needs in line with the commitment that they've made in the programme for government. You will hear other evidence throughout the day on different tools that do similar work.

The statistics are clear, however, and are irrefutable in terms of the objective need and the disadvantage which exists in the communities around the Girdwood site. They provide the context within which regeneration of the Girdwood site should be carried out and against which the Jury can measure whether it's been successful or not.

Inez McCormack:

I would like to thank Nicola on behalf of the Jury for the detailed evidence that she has presented. I will now ask Richard Wilkinson to give evidence. He is currently Professor of Social Epidemiology at the University of Nottingham. He has spent a lifetime working on health inequalities and the social determinates of health. His latest book, The Impact of Inequality: How to Make Sick Societies Healthier, has been seminal in this work. I would like to introduce Richard.

Prof Richard Wilkinson
University of Nottingham, Speaker

Evidence

Richard Wilkinson:

What I am going to try to do is explain what the inequalities Nicola has been talking about do to people in terms of their health and all sorts of other outcomes.

Everyone knows that poorer areas seem to have more of almost every problem. They do worse educationally, their lives are shorter, they have the most number of illnesses, there is often more violence, more teenage pregnancies and this kind of thing. Almost all of our social problems gradually get more common as you look to the poorer areas. As for why that happens, people have always had quite different ideas about it. Some people think that it is because they are absolutely poor; that if you improved housing or everyone had better cars or fridges or whatever, it would all be solved. Other people think that people with problems end up in poor circumstances. What the evidence I am going to show you says, very clearly, is that the more inequality a whole society has, the worse all these problems get.

You can look at different countries such as Sweden or Japan or Norway where income differences are much smaller and as a result they have fewer of all these problems. Then you look at countries like Britain, the United States, Portugal, the ones with very big income differences between the rich and the poor and they have many more of all these problems.

You can also see that although the United States is very rich, much richer than us, it doesn't reduce the number of these problems. What the evidence shows is that what matters are the differences between us. Not the average standard of living. We can all get richer. The whole society can have economic growth and we will still have just the same amount of these problems.

Let me show you some of the evidence.

We have collected internationally comparable data so that we can see how more or less unequal countries do. We have collected data on the kind of social problems that are more common in the poorest areas of North Belfast. We have collected data on violence, on imprisonment, on how kids fail at school, on bullying, on mental illness, physical health, on people being overweight, obesity, on how common drug abuse is, and the teenage birth rate. I am going to talk soon about how these compare with the amount of inequality there is, but let me just first talk about the health differences in Northern Ireland between different social classes.

In our work we have examined the death rate in different social classes in Northern Ireland. We have found that people who are long-term unemployed or never worked have very high death rates. We set the scale so that the death rate of the healthiest group was 100, people like doctors, lawyers, professional business men etc., and in doing so we found that the comparable death rate for people in lower social classes was over 300. That means the death rate is three times as high at the bottom of society compared to the top. You might say 'how does that work? everyone can only die once, you cannot die three times'. To illustrate; think of 50 people you know by name, if you are in the upper classes for every one of those people 50 people who dies, someone in the lower classes will know of three people in a group of 50 who die. That is what it means to say the death rates are three times as high.

All of these social problems that we have looked at are incredibly closely related. Researchers, governments, government departments and policy makers treat them all as if they were all quite different from each other, so one lot of people work on teenage pregnancies and

another lot work on health, another lot work violence or drugs or whatever it is and the different policies on each, but they are all rooted in inequality.

As part of our work we have also looked at men's life expectancy in neighbourhoods of Chicago, which has produced similar results. We found that in neighbourhoods of higher social class men's life expectancy was 75 years, whereas in the poorer areas of Chicago it was only 55 years. We also looked at homicide rates in those same areas. Incidentally, we took homicide out of our survey of life expectancy so that life expectancy reflects things like heart disease, cancer, strokes and every other cause of death. What we found is that the areas which have high rates of death from heart disease and cancer etc, i.e. a low life expectancy, have high homicide rates. It is a very close relationship and what that means is that a social environment that produces a lot of violence also produces a lot of heart disease, a lot of cancer, diabetes and everything else. These problems all go together.

We look at all these problems and we think – we need more doctors, we need more police, we need more social workers - but actually none of these services make a very big impact on the problems they are designed to cope with. You might think that we are healthier now than we used to be in the 19th century because of modern medicine but that is not true; the reason being that the social and economic environment has changed. Death rates started to decline long before medicine knew how to cure anything or knew how to immunize us against any of the great infectious diseases of the 19th century. Police similarly don't make very much difference to crime. You can have more or less numbers of police but it doesn't actually relate to how much crime there is. We, therefore, use all of these services to try to cope with the endless problems that are being created, which are expensive but not very effective.

Another part of our work has been the examination of life expectancy in different countries. We have found that the rich, developed counties do not necessarily have high levels of life expectancy. We looked at how rich they are – gross national product per capita, which is a measure of the average income. That richest country is probably the United States but we found that despite this, it doesn't have the highest life expectancy. One of the highest life expectancies is in Japan yet it only has middle income. There is no relationship amongst the rich countries between how rich they are and their life expectancy. Economic growth doesn't help them. Greece has better life expectancy than the United States even though it is only half as rich. Everyone getting richer together doesn't make any difference once you are no longer in real poverty in the third world.

Within each of those countries there is a comparable gradient in health. In the US the richest areas have the lowest death rates while the poorer areas have the highest death rates. So, although the whole country is getting richer it doesn't actually make any difference; within each country income matters very much. The implication of that is that we are dealing with relative income. It is how you compare it with others that matters. It is the difference between us that matters, your social position or relative poverty, but all of us getting richer together does not actually solve the problem.

We put together all that data for different countries on life expectancy, but it is possible to do the same for things like children's maths and literacy scores. There are now international tests that enable you to tell whether French children do better than British children. You can also compare mortality rates, homicide rates, the proportion of the population in prison in each country, the teenage birth rate in each country or how much people feel they can trust each other. You can also look at the proportion of the

population who are obese, the proportion with mental illness or drug addiction and you can also look at social mobility.

We have put all those things together in one great mixed bag. We called it an index of health and social problems. You might think, how on earth can we put together homicide rates and obesity and so on? But it is like a mixed bag of fruit – apples and oranges and pears – all together and you are just told how many pounds of them there are. You combine them.

What we have done here is related to how common all those problems are on a vertical scale; the higher up a country is, the more of all those problems it has, and the lower down it is, the fewer of all those problems it has. We have related that to income inequality in each country.

The measure we have used is simply to compare how much richer the richest 20% of people are than the poorest 20%? In more unequal countries we have found that the richest are about eight or nine times as rich; therefore all people in professional occupations are eight or nine times as rich as people in unskilled manual occupations. The differences are biggest in countries like the US, Portugal, UK, and New Zealand, which all experience a lot of inequality. Countries where the inequalities are smaller include Japan, Norway and Sweden. In these countries the top 20% are only three or four times as rich as the bottom 20%. You can see very clearly how the amount of inequalities there are and how big the income differences are, can be closely related to every social problem.

We have looked at these relationships, not only internationally in the data I have spoken about, but also in a separate test bed to see if this picture holds up; whether what I have been telling you is true just by chance or whether there is something more to it. We have therefore looked at it within the 50 states of the United States. We tried to establish whether the more equal states would do better and whether the more unequal states would do worse, and we found just the same patterns. We used the same index of health and social problems and income inequality and found that the more unequal states, such as the southern states of Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, California, Florida, all had more social problems and worse health. Then there were states like Nevada, New Hampshire, Wisconsin and Vermont which had more equality and fewer social problems and better health.

The theory therefore holds up in both settings. In case you think I have chosen the problems just to fit my argument I will refer you to the UNICEF index of child well-being in rich countries, which came out last year, that showed Britain doing worst. Of course we find, again, that child well-being is related to inequality. UNICEF made an index, a mixture of all sorts of indicators of child well-being such as how well they do at school, whether they have friends, whether there is much bullying in playgrounds and things to do with family life and their health. From this they found that the countries that tend to do well in child well-being have low inequality while the countries where inequality is high do badly. It is apparent that if you look at the index of child well-being in relation to average income, there is no relationship. Child well-being does not improve amongst rich countries as we get richer still.

What that is telling us is that the problems you find in the poor areas of Northern Ireland or any other country is not actually because they don't have very big television sets or because they have old cars or because they are over-crowded, it is because they are poorer than other people. It is because they're at the bottom of the pile. There is, in effect, a feeling of inferiority, of being looked down on upon.

I am going to take you through some of the separate parts of my index of health and social problems. The one on mental illness examines the prevalence of any mental illness, i.e. what proportion of the population are suffering at the moment of any mental illness? In the best or more equal countries only about 5% of the population have any mental illness. In the USA however that rises to 25% or nearly 30% and there is a similar trend in other more unequal countries. This is not simply saying that the deprived areas do worse – the whole society does worse even in the rich countries. However it is not a perfect fit, none of these relationships rely exactly on a line. There are countries, like Italy, that are way off the line.

There are other things that influence mental illness, it is not just inequality, but you can see that there are strong tendencies. Statisticians can tell you how likely a relationship like this is to occur just by chance and actually it will occur by chance, something like one in a thousand times.

In terms of child conflict, how much fighting and bullying there is or children feeling that their classmates are not kind and helpful, there has been international surveys of kids of 11, 13 and 15 years old that show that the UK does worst. Relationships between children in the UK are worst but all the most unequal countries have scored worst. At the more equal end, in countries such as Sweden, Finland, Germany, children's relationships are better, demonstrating a powerful relationship with equality.

Another issue is the percent of the population who is overweight or obese. It was actually women's obesity that was measured, which included those women with a body mass index over 30. In the most equal countries about 5% of the population of women are obese while in the most unequal countries it is about 35%. Obesity is therefore six times as common in more unequal countries as in more equal ones.

I am showing mainly international data but we find the same patterns when we look in the separate test bed at the 50 states in the USA. There have been about 40 research papers done by different groups of academics showing that violence, homicide rates, etc. are more common in more unequal places; in societies where there are bigger differences between those at the bottom and those at the top.

In a comparison between the American states and Canadian provinces, the Canadian provinces have been found to be more equal than the American States and also have lower homicide rates. The difference goes from about 15 homicides per million population a year up to about 150 homicides per million population, so homicides are ten times as common in the more unequal places.

In terms of prison populations there are huge differences and there is a close relationship between income inequality and the proportion of the population in prison. It goes from about 40 or 50 prisoners per 100,000 population up to about 400 prisoners per 100,000. All the news stories recently about our prisons being overcrowded in record numbers have been happening while our crime rates have been falling and the same thing has happened in the US where they have record prison populations. In the US there are several bits of research looking to see how much can you explain of the rising prison population in terms of rising crime and they say only about 20% of it is rising crime while most of it is more punitive sentencing. In more unequal societies something goes wrong in the relationship between top and bottom of society, between classes. There is less of an ability to understand each other or empathise with each other and so in more unequal societies it looks as if sentencing has become more punitive. Violence goes up but property crime doesn't seem to.

You might think that there is not much relationship between income inequality and levels of trust but the tendency for them to lie along this line is very unlikely to be happening by chance. It could only happen by chance about once in 100 times. There are surveys that ask people if they feel that most people would take advantage of you if they got they chance? Would they rip you off if they could? Or, do you feel you can trust people? These are government surveys in the US and international surveys that I have used here which ask questions like that, and it shows that how much people feel they can trust each other declines with inequality. In more equal societies approximately 65% or 75% of the population feel that they can trust other people, whereas in the more unequal societies it falls to perhaps to 10% or 15%. That feeling of your relations with other people seems to break down. You can also measure people's involvement in community life and compare that to inequality. What inequality seems to do to a society is damage the quality of social relationships. Not only does violence get worse, as I've shown you, and trust goes down and involvement in community life weakens.

There is evidence that racial prejudice, or prejudice against women increases, and all the things to do with social placement and social hierarchy, being better or worse than other people, all those problems increase with more inequality. Once you get some group thinking that they are better than another group they tart to have prejudiced attitudes to poorer people. In the United States there are surveys which ask people why the Black population is poorer. You are offered multiple choice; is it because they are less well educated? is it because they don't get the opportunities? are people prejudiced in job interviews? Or is it because they are lazy or stupid or something like that? More prejudiced answers become more common in unequal areas, and that also relates to more punitive of sentencing and the break down in community relations.

Although I have talked about the poorest areas as suffering more of all these problems, greater equality seems to benefit not just the people at the bottom of society, it actually benefits almost everyone in society. I'll explain this to you; in the UK we would always measure social class in terms of occupational categories – from social class one, the top professional occupations, down to clerical occupations and then skilled manual, semi-skilled and social class five is the unskilled manual. Some Swedish researchers classified their infant mortality rate using our social classification and we can therefore make exactly the same comparisons. Their doctors went into the same classes – their skilled welders went into the same classes we had put them in. We found that in Sweden, a more equal country than us, all their infant mortality rates in every class are lower than ours. The differences are biggest at the poorer end – at the lowest class end but even in that social class you find that the Swedish infant mortality is better than in England and Wales.

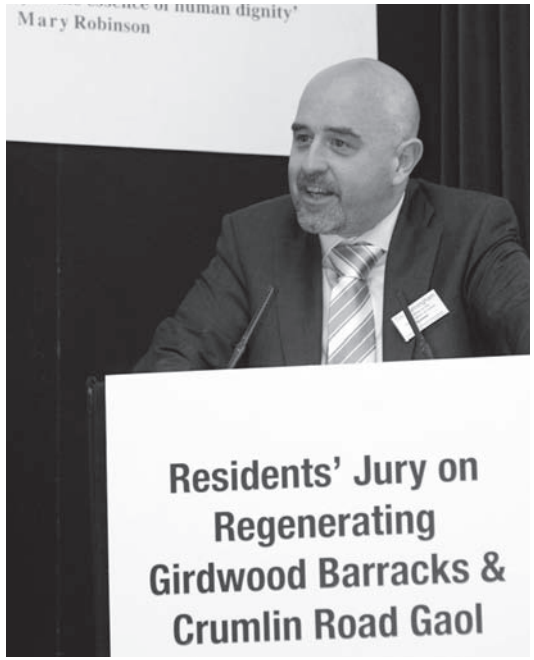
We have now looked at that in a number of different ways and I am pretty convinced that the differences that equality makes are biggest amongst the poorest, but even at the top greater equality benefits people. Why we are we so sensitive to equality? We know that stress is an important cause of disease; long term stress like worrying about things for weeks, months and years. That is because it changes physiological priorities and it affects the cardiovascular system, the immune system so your body is held in fight and flight mode all the time and doesn't do the sort the things that are essential if you are going to escape from a lion or something like that. You just want to have all the energy pumping round you and be very alert. But, growth, tissue maintenance and repair, immunity, digestion, reproductive functions, all that doesn't matter if you're facing an emergency. What stress does to you is that it puts all those things on hold; all those things to do with health maintenance

and the long term effects of stress increase your vulnerability to all sorts of diseases, particularly later in life. Some work has been done looking at what kind of things people find most stressful. We know that things to do with early life, a difficult childhood are important, not having friends and low social status is important. Friendship is particularly important because if you have friends they are people who value you, they like you, feel relaxed with them. If as a result of your low social status you feel you are being looked down on, people disrespect you, whatever it is – those kinds of feelings.

In lots of experiments they have invited people into a physiological laboratory and have subjected volunteers to some experimental stressor such as nasty noises, writing about unpleasant experiences, video you to make you self-conscious and embarrassed, getting you to do public speaking or asking you to do nasty mathematical problems and maybe having to say what mark you got and embarrass yourself in front of others. They then measured levels of one of the main stress hormones to see how much they were affected by these different sources of stress. What they found was the tasks in those experiments that included a social valued threat, such as threats to self-esteem or social status in which others could negatively judge your performance, provoked larger and more reliable changes in cortisol, the stress hormone, than stressors without these particular threats.
They say humans are driven to preserve the social self and are vigilant to threats that may jeopardise their social esteem and status. You worry about how you are seen, how you appear to others, how others are judging you, whether they think you are unattractive or stupid; all those kinds of self-doubts that we all have. I think, as the research suggests, that these are the most important drivers of chronic stress and the illness that goes with low social status, and inequality heightens all these senses of being judged and feeling like you are a failure. I think that is what is driving it and it is certainly what is driving the tendency for violence to be more common in more unequal societies.

James Gilligan was a prison psychiatrist for 25 years in American prisons, talking to really violent men everyday. He said, "…the prison inmates I work with have told me repeatedly, that when I asked them why they had assaulted someone, that it was because 'he disrespected me', or ' he disrespected my visitor'". Everyone talked about being 'dis'ed'.

He also says, "I have yet to see a serious act of violence that was not provoked by the experience of feeling shamed and humiliated, disrespected and ridiculed, and that did not represent the attempt to prevent or undo this 'loss of face'. You know, 'what are you looking at me like that for?' One way I can get you to respect me is to thump you. That is rejecting being put down. It's rejecting inferiority. It's fighting against it with violence if you have no other means".
There is another response to being put down and that is to accept your inferiority. Alan Bennett went to Cambridge and is an important literary figure and he talks about his parents; they have a butcher's shop in the north of England. He says, "they put down most of their imagined shortcomings to not having been educated, education was to them a passport to everything they lacked to self-confidence, social ease and above all the ability to be like other people.
Put simply and as they themselves would have put it, both my parents were shy, a shortcoming they thought of as an affliction while at the same time enshrining it as a virtue. I assured them, falsely, that everybody felt much as they did but that social ease was something that could and should be faked.



Tim Cunningham
Committee on the Administration of Justice, Speaker

'Well you can do that,' Dad would say, 'you've been educated,' adding how often he felt he had nothing to contribute. 'I'm boring, I think. I can't understand why anybody likes us. I wonder sometimes whether they do, really." That's accepting your inferiority and believing in your inadequacy at the bottom of the pile. You can see how important social status and inequality is in that sort of way.

I would like to emphasise that usually when people talk about inequality, they are talking about whether there are equal opportunities. Can working class children get as good an education or get good jobs as well as children from middle class backgrounds. They are talking about, not the differences in society over all, but, equal chances from childhood; whether people of different ethnic groups of men and women have equal chances. The data actually shows that you cannot have equal opportunities with very big inequalities of outcome. The bigger the material differences, the more the social prejudices, the more the signs of class differences, in terms of the way people dress, their choice of books and films and music – all these markers of class and the prejudices that go with them make it harder for people to get up. You can see that prejudice against women or racial prejudices increase with inequality.

I finally just want to mention inequality in Great Britain from 1979 to 2006. This was a huge rise in inequality under Thatcher, then under Major and Blair there were little ups and downs but no real change. What we are experiencing in our societies now is really the long term consequences of this huge rise in inequality that happened, mainly in the late 80's, and of course, if it can happen under one government another government should be able to undo it.

Thank you.

Inez McCormack:
On behalf of the Jury I would like Richard very much indeed. He flew in today and has to fly out so he has taken a great deal of time to come here and present this meticulously detailed, devastating analysis. I would now like to call Tim Cunningham who is the Equality Officer for the Committee on the Administration of Justice to give evidence.

Evidence

Tim Cunningham:
To be honest, I am still trying to take in the last two speakers, particularly the last set of statistics from Richard which were absolutely devastating and the context set by Nicola. It was interesting listening to what Richard was saying; none of what he said was counter intuitive to me. It all actually makes sense, particularly within the context of Northern Ireland and the last 30 years. You mentioned at the end Richard about clothes and what people eat and books and so on. I grew up in Newry in the 1970's. There wasn't a lot of inequality in Newry in the 70's because there were only a very small number of people who had money. But even if they had it there wasn't much they could do with it; the army patrolled the streets and they closed the town down at tea time. There wasn't a cinema, there wasn't a restaurant, there were a few fish and chips shops and a few pubs and that was it. So, even if you had money there wasn't really very much you could do with it.

Moving to Belfast in the mid-80's you can look back then at what kind of city it was. I don't want to glorify the past, it would be terrible to do something like that when we consider where we have come from, but it is interesting to actually look at how Belfast as a city operated in the mid-80s. There were steel barriers around a city centre that closed at tea time and there wasn't anywhere you could go out to at night in the

city centre even if you wanted to. In terms of shops or restaurants, there wasn't sushi, Mexican, Italian, or Chinese. There were a few restaurants up around the university and a couple of pubs but that was pretty much it. The whole life experience of Belfast in the mid-80's was a very different one between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' because if you didn't have a lot of money at that time again, there wasn't an awful lot of obvious examples of where the wealth was.
If you go down to Newry at the minute you see BMWs and Mercedes all around. There are all sorts of new shopping centres, Newry is buzzing and it's now a city. You then look at the centre of Belfast and you can see the redevelopment. You see the kind of restaurants and consumer goods; you see the obvious economic growth that Belfast has experienced in the last decade. The 'peace dividend' it's called. Certainly, there is an awful lot more material wealth around Belfast now than there was 10 and certainly 20 years ago.

If your life experience right now is one where you don't have a lot of material wealth – you know it – because you are surrounded by it everyday of the week. The wards that Nicola put up there – the Shankill, the New Lodge – you can walk from either of those places to the city centre in 10 minutes. There are no longer steel barriers that go up at tea time. There is no longer a checkpoint. There is no longer a military presence or a security presence telling you that can't go in. But there is something which is quite different, in terms of the effects that Richard was talking about, like self-esteem; there is a financial barrier because now, if you don't have money, you walk into the centre of town you see all the wealth around you. You see what people do have.

Clearly the statistics on the UK under Thatcher, Blair and Major show the effects they have had but we also have the added consequence of the peace process. One of the unfortunate developments in the last decade is that for a lot of people the peace dividend has essentially been an exercise in showing how relatively worse off they are compared to the success story that has taken place around them. That is not to say that what has happened following the peace process is not a good thing, but it needs to be recognized the reality is that not everybody has benefited materially in the last decade. There have been changes certainly, but in terms of what Richard's talking about, we are actually seeing an increase in inequality.

What it also relates to is the context in which we are now looking forward to government policies. I would have loved to have had Richard go head to head with a member of the Executive when you read our current Programme for Government, which essentially is very much predicated on a notion of economic growth – a rising tide lifts all boats – and "trickle down" is going to do it. As you have shown very clearly in your statistics, "trickle down" actually doesn't do it. What we are seeing is the increase in relative inequality that Northern Ireland is currently experiencing.

That's the wider context within which we are talking about inequality in Northern Ireland. It can be quite difficult and sometimes we can get lost in the statistical analysis but I don't think we can ignore Richard's points, as well as the statistics in terms of homicide. Statistically, in terms of the conflict, if you were to put up a map of deaths and injuries as a result of the conflict, the very places that Nicola outlined as top of the league of multiple deprivation are the very places that would be top in terms of deaths and injuries as a result of the conflict. These are the very areas that experience most in terms of the violence over the last 30 years and these are the very areas in which life experiences now are relatively worse off than they were a decade ago and two decades ago.

What is the answer then? Can things be done to try and reverse it? At CAJ we certainly believe they can but it is going to take a recognition of a number of factors, first of which is recognizing the increase in relative deprivation. It is not too difficult to identify it because most people do not disagree with the idea that this whole life experience, peace process, peace dividend for them has not seen an increase in their relative position in society. It is also a recognition looking at what government said it was going to do in the Programme for Government, a context within which we do see, for example, a freeze on rates, which means those who are at the upper end of the market in terms of contributing to society by way of their rates, aren't actually paying any more, in fact they have been effectively offered a tax cut over the next three years.

We are also seeing a context within which we have a legislative framework here for addressing inequality. It is a tool called an 'equality impact assessment' and essentially the process of an equality impact assessment model is framed in the same kind of context as an environmental impact assessment. If somebody's going to build a damn in Indonesia they should actually be looking at what the impact of that is going to be in the environment and, where possible, how they can turn it around and lessen the consequences in an environmental context. The same principle applies here. What does that mean in the context of Girdwood? What it means is effectively you have an equality impact assessment which provides a template for looking at the particular project and saying, okay, how can we maximise, bearing in mind we are in a tight fiscal environment, i.e., we will have to rely on the money that we get from across the water by way of the Treasury. It also means effectively looking and mapping out what the level of need is in the current area then looking at how procedures and processes can be put in place to maximise the positive benefits for those in most need. It means looking at procurement processes to see how they can be tinkered with and altered so that we can actually come up with a system that is going to deliver equality in terms of procurement. It means looking at how, where, when, and in what way we are actually going to be moving forward with a process like this.

It is looking at every aspect; it is not just a case of building something, it is looking at how it is built, who is going to build it, maybe looking at amending the procurement contract to ensure that whoever is building it has to provide employment to a certain percentage of people who are unemployed. It means doing all these things. But we are very pleased at the minute with the equality impact assessment that has actually been commenced now in terms of this process. For us, a proper equality impact assessment, in relation to this site, is certainly one way forward in terms of trying to redress this current pattern that we have seen over the last decade, of the rich getting richer and the poor moving further behind.

We initially expressed concern when the draft Masterplans came out because it had stated in it that given that this was at a conceptual stage and given the conceptual nature of the draft master plan that an equality impact assessment wasn't necessary at that stage. Reading that I was reminded of the opening sequence in the movie Annie Hall. It shows this posh Manhattan party with everybody sitting around and chatting and all the arty crowd and all the rest and the camera hones in on these two guys talking and one says to the other, 'right now it's only a notion but I think I can get the money to turn it into a concept and later turn it into an idea'. I was wondering in terms of the equality impact assessment if it is not at the conceptual stage, does that mean we will get it at the idea or before the notion?

Our view is as soon as any thought goes into what we are going to do here or how it is going to move forward, the equality impact assessment should run alongside it, like a seam throughout the process. So that whenever a conceptual image is put up of how we can move forward, it is not just a case of looking up what we have but at how we have it and how it is going to be delivered.

A very good model which I would suggest if I could submit it by way of evidence is the Olympic Delivery Authorities proposals for the Olympic development in London for the 2012 Olympics. It very much focuses on every aspect of the construction that is going to go on in terms of the delivery of that project. It looks at who is going to be building the processes and at how they are going to provide it in a way that can address the terrible inequalities that exist in London, for example, in terms of the construction industry. Particularly problems in areas like Tower Hamlets in terms of minority ethnic communities and their low levels of employment in certain businesses. There is a template out there that I would respectfully suggest that the Jury consider as a way of trying to integrate, and look at along side the data that Nicola put up and alongside the data that Richard spoke about because there is certainly a way of actually trying to turn this around.

As Inez has pointed out, and one of the contributors in the earlier videos said, there are ways around this – things can be done. The important point, from our point of view, is the legislation on its own; we have the tools here in terms of an equality impact assessment but legislation on its own is meaningless unless it's actually delivered, unless you actually work through the processes and deliver on it. That requires everybody at every stage of the process looking at what's going on and saying, okay, in terms of our equality impact assessment framework how are we here? How are we in terms of identifying the needs and how are at ways on trying to deliver on those? I was struck the recently by a notion about historic documents, they're absolutely fascinating because if you read the US 1866 Civil Rights Act and what it tried to do and then you actually look at what it really did achieve and the fact that almost 100 years later it had to be followed-up by another Civil Rights Act, you see that passing laws and having legislation out there is and can be fairly meaningless unless they are actually worked through and followed through at every stage. I certainly hope in terms of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act that we are not looking back saying and thinking about what might have been. It should be a case of looking back at what it did deliver for everyone in terms of this project.

Thank you.

Inez McCormack:

I would like to thank Tim for making equality live and how it should work. We are now going to get questions from the Jury.

Members of the Jury you have heard the first evidence given by these two speakers. Do members of the panel have any questions? If so, could I ask you when you are making the questions perhaps you could indicate who you're directing the question too? That would be very helpful.

Questions from the Jury

The Residents' Jury

1. Margaret Valente:

I have a question for Nicola Browne. Did the government make sure the proposals for the Girdwood site and the draft Masterplan were aimed at addressing the figures and statistics you presented?

Nicola Browne:

Looking at the draft Masterplan it is quite hard to see where the figures that have been presented in terms of the objective need in the area have actually been taken into account. I think it probably ties in to the point Tim made about the delivery of it. There is mention of it in the draft master plan and there are a number of paragraphs which outline, quite briefly, the social, economic needs in the area. But if you look at how the proposals are then set out throughout the rest of the document it is hard to see how they relate to addressing that need and how they are targeted. That is the issue – they don't seem to have been targeted towards addressing that need throughout the plan.

2. Nadine Morgan:

I have a question for Tim Cunningham. You talked about equality impact assessments. Is there a step-by-step process that the government bodies have to follow when doing these? In other words, can we check to make sure that the equality impact assessment at Girdwood has been done properly?

Tim Cunningham:

Yes. There is a legal framework outlined by the Equality Commission that outlines, actually in some detail, the processes that are required. It is fairly easy actually to look at what is happening and compare that with what the statutory guidance is in order to assess the extent in which you are satisfied that what is happening is in line with the law. There are also mechanisms available, and hopefully it will not come to that, but there are mechanisms available for redress if you feel that the process is not being followed in terms of compliance with the Equality Commission guidelines and for possible legal action etc. It's very clear and certainly it is in everyone's interest that the guidance and the processes for carrying out an equality impact assessment are as widely known as possible.

One of the things we would see as unfortunate in that the seven steps for an equality impact assessment are not more widely known. It is mainly a few equality train spotters like ourselves that follow these things but certainly the more people who know about them the better because it is in everyone's interest to see them followed.

3. Nadine Morgan:

I have actually got another one for Tim Cunningham. There has been a lot of talk about the Girdwood Regeneration and how this can improve relations between the two main communities. How does this fit within the government's duty to ensure that the regeneration tackles inequality?

Tim Cunningham:

The legislation is very clear about the requirement to have due regard to the need to promote equality and also have regard for good relations. Clearly the promotion of equality and good relations are linked in that respect. However that does not effectively mean that something should not happen because it may be felt that good relations are going to be disturbed even though there is an equality need. To give you a very obvious example, and this is something that is true not just in Northern Ireland but certainly across the water, particularly in England, there has been problems in relation to some trouble in the north of England between minority ethnic communities and local white communities. In some respects there were arguments made that the good relations in the area were being disturbed by the influx of migrant workers into certain areas and the fact migrant workers should not be given houses in certain areas because it would disturb the good relations in the area. That is nothing about good

relations – that is just discrimination and racism. It is using and very unfortunately is distorting this very valuable concept of good relations and turning it on its head and trying to use it to effectively justify keeping people out of a certain area. That is essentially racism and discrimination and should be seen as such and should be called as such and has no place in any society.

Provided what is being done is being done through a framework that is based on addressing need then essentially that is the criteria that should be used, rather than effectively people having a veto over who can live in a certain area or the quota or how many people can live in a certain area or anything like that.

4. Margaret Valente:
I have a question for Richard Wilkinson. There is going to be around £231 million invested in the Girdwood site. You talked in your presentation about investment not automatically leading to more equal societies. Can you talk more about this please?

Richard Wilkinson:
Economic growth can create inequalities as easily as it can create greater equality. It depends where it goes in society. I have wanted to mention something I feel is relevant. These problems seem to me to be much deeper and more fundamental than I suspect proposals for this development have touched on.
I have been interested recently in employee owned and controlled companies. There is an example in the early 1940's in an area of northern Spain that had been very badly affected by the civil war – huge damage, loss of life, extraordinarily high unemployment. A Catholic priest came into the area, in about 1941 or 1942, and he started a democratically controlled people's college and then a cooperative movement.
Since then that cooperative has grown to be the 7th largest company in Spain employing 83,000 people in lots of different sectors. There is now evidence actually that employee ownership and control of businesses leads to higher productivity – that they are more successful economically.

It is at work that these divisions are really created, it is where the pay differences are set and where we are ranked most rigorously in terms of bosses and subordinates and so on. In a company that is employee owned, certainly the management become the servants of the employees and have to report back to the employees and can be dismissed by the employees and the whole relationship changes. I have heard people say it turns a company into a community, and I think one needs thinking much more on that kind of scale, thinking more fundamentally about how the institutions work.

People often ask me about taxes and benefits and so on which appear to be the easy way of dealing with inequality, but if you manage to persuade one government to improve benefits and to increase taxes on the rich the next government along can just undo it. But if you get your institutions actually working differently, with different rules, different constitutions, more democratically, then, it seems to me, the greater equality has a better chance of enduring and making a real difference to the community.

5. Nadine Morgan:
I have one last question for Tim. You had spoke about the Olympics Delivery Authority's plans on equality and diversity and how this could bring real and lasting benefit to communities. Could you explain a bit more about this and how it affects Northern Ireland?

Tim Cunningham:
To be honest, I don't know the details of how this has rolled out and the politics of London but what I do think is that whatever happens in London and whatever happens to the Olympics, the template in terms of their equality and diversity strategy is out there.

I actually think that template applied to North Belfast at the moment would be a very useful way forward. It is interesting to read the equality and diversity strategy, which was actually signed off by Roy McNulty who is also the Chairman of Ilex in Derry, because there is a similar regeneration up there in terms of Fort George. There are things out there that you can use and that you can look at, regardless of necessarily what might happen with the new Mayor, but I would certainly recommend that they are worth looking at.

It is in everybody's interest to look at that kind of stuff and ask what were they trying to do there. Maybe actually the principles are exactly the same because in one case they were saying we are going to build something, we only get one Olympics in London and we are only going to get one go at this. Similarly there is only one Girdwood. The work that is coming on line now in terms of places like Girdwood and places like Fort George and all the rest, you know, these are one off opportunities. So, it is absolutely vital that we get it right because we are not going to get another go at it.

Inez McCormack:
On behalf of the Jury I would like to thank all the members of the Panel. What I suspect has happened is that your evidence has just touched the fascination and interest in terms of what can be done here and put it into a context. When I look at the members of the Jury's faces I think they would actually like to go on and on with you but unfortunately we do not have the time. Thank you members of the panel very much indeed for your evidence and we will be following it up.

Aideen Gilmore:
The next stage of this mornings proceedings is our keynote speaker and we are delighted to have with us here today, Virgínia Brás Gomes, who is a member of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The UK Government has signed up to the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Virgínia is a member of the Committee at the UN who monitor how the government is actually protecting those rights. Virgínia is also Head of the Portuguese Department for Social Research and International Relations and through her work, she coordinates and participates in the preparation of EU, Council of Europe and UN reports on the implementation of international instruments and statutory requirements.

I would like to hand over to Virgínia now and I look forward to hearing what she has to say.

04

Keynote Speaker: Virgínia Brás Gomes

Virgínia Brás Gomes:

Thank you very much. I am very honoured to be here today and participating in this Residents' Jury. I am looking forward to a learning experience that will certainly enable me to better interpret the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in its ultimate role, and that is to provide states with guidance on how to best fulfil the economic, social and cultural rights of all persons, in particular those that, for a variety of reasons, are more deprived or disadvantaged in this changing world. Many thanks for the invitation and for this opportunity to engage in the moving process of making economic, social and cultural rights real.

Economic, social and cultural rights entail full compliance with the Limburg Principles, that is, that human rights impose three types or levels of obligations on states – the obligations to respect, to protect and to fulfil. The obligation to respect requires states parties to refrain from interfering directly or indirectly with enjoyment of the right. The obligation to protect requires them to take measures to prevent third parties, and it could be, for example, preventing corporate business from interfering with enjoyment of the right. The obligation to fulfil can be further broken down to the obligation to provide for those who are unable to do so for reasons beyond their control. The obligation to facilitate by putting into place positive measures and the obligation to promote through education and information campaigns in order to raise awareness. This may sound like I am trying to put rights into boxes to tick for implementation and I would agree that it is rather restrictive, but at the same time it is an effort to bring the levels of obligations of states closer to everyday life, so that all of us can think of examples of respect, of protection and of fulfilment of rights.

In preparing myself for this exchange with you I tried to work on how I could best carry the spirit of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights into the PPR Project. In other words, how I could best use the Covenant to reinforce a rights based methodology for local development and regeneration. From the conceptual point of view the exercise is not difficult because from what I have read about the PPR, and its work on the practice of rights, we share the same component of a rights based approach although we may use a different terminology. It is not new to speak of a changing world in which such sweeping changes have occurred within such a short time period. In many parts of the world the crumbling of the welfare state has been at the heart of efforts to rethink and reorganise the role of government. In most cases these efforts are far from being successful and states are still grappling with the need to balance long-term financial sustainability concerns with the fulfilment of the overall function of controlling an acceptable level of social protection to all its citizens, especially to the most vulnerable.

At the international level, globalization is a complex and politically influenced process that still poses threats to national, political and social institutions and decision making powers. Furthermore, social development policies have been mistakenly considered as being contrary to economic growth and international competitiveness and the establishment of social safety nets as being absolutely necessary to cushion the unwanted or unexpected effects on poor persons, families and communities of what we could call development induced regeneration or displacement or beautification or gentrification as I saw written yesterday on one of the walls in Shankill.

Virginia Bras Gomes
UN Committee on Social, Economic & Cultural Rights, Speaker

The fact is that these social safety nets, to cushion these negative effects, have not been considered a national, political priority. As a result, individuals, families and social groups have new needs. Social inequalities grow in urban and suburban deprived neighbourhoods and numerous groups are faced with poverty and multiple deprivation. They have little or no access to resources and their needs cut across sectors.

The many challenges in overcoming poverty and multiple deprivation calls for a new understanding on the part of public authorities and private actors of accountability, non-discrimination, gender equality and involvement and participation of all interested stake holders of whom the most important are obviously the rights holders. What is important to keep in mind for all of us in relation to the rights based approach is that where states have to cover traditional risks as well as face new ones in an active manner within a context of dwindling resources, they also need clear goals and strategies for integrated economic and social policies. Central to these goals and strategies is a principle of equality of rights, conditions and opportunities which looks broadly to ways in which people are able to participate in society as citizens – to exercise their entitlement to resources and the ability to contribute to the well being of themselves, their families and their communities.

They could have tried to establish a link between international human rights standards and the three concerns of the Residents' Jury – equality, participation and accountability. Let me begin with the accountability of state parties through the fulfilment of immediate obligations, on one hand, and through the progressive realisation of government rights. These rights, just by way of a reminder, relate to the right to work in just and favourable conditions, the right to social security, the right of the protection of family, the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, the right to education and the right to the enjoyment of benefits of cultural freedom and scientific progress. Two crosscutting principles apply to all government rights: the principle of non-discrimination and the principle of equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights.

Ratification of the Covenant implied the acceptance of threefold immediate obligations on states parties: one, to take measures for the materialisation of the core obligations, and we will talk a little about the core obligations later. Two, to enable the exercise of Covenant rights without discrimination of any kind and three, to ensure equal rights of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights. These core obligations of states are at the heart of the respect, protection and fulfilment of government rights, particularly for the most disadvantaged and marginalised individuals, families and groups.
Core obligations are those that ensure the satisfaction of at the very least, minimum essential levels of each of the Covenant rights. Given the nature and the amplitude of economic, social and cultural rights and the amount of time and resources necessary for progressive realisation, it is clear that if there were no more obligations to be fulfilled the Covenant would remain an instrument of very little or no effect.

Legislative measures constitute the foundation for the implementation of Covenant rights. They are always desirable and often indispensable. That is why one of the core obligations repeatedly indicated in the committee's General Comments is the introduction of the national strategy and plan of action for the right in question respecting the principles of non-discrimination, gender equality and full participation of rights holders. The draft Masterplan for Crumlin Road Gaol and Girdwood Barracks would have qualified as such a strategy and plan of action had it undergone the equality impact assessment that would and I quote

from the document called, Unlocking the Potential:

'The impact assessment that would serve to highlight existing inequalities between groups and set-up the plan to address them by drawing up proposals for inclusion in the Girdwood plan to target groups most in need.'

Had this equality impact assessment been done at the outset then the plan of action, the Masterplan, would have qualified as one of the plans of actions that the committee considers as giving effective implementation for rights. Unfortunately, that was not the case, but we were heartened to know that this could be the case in the future. In order to ascertain how successful the proposals would be at targeting inequalities and deprivation in the area, they would have to be subject to an ongoing assessment on the part of the residents to monitor compliance with qualitative and quantitative targets.

Ratification of the Covenant always begins with the core obligations. It also implies an obligation to states parties to take steps to ensure the progressive realisation of economic, social and cultural rights by developing medium and long term policies and programmes to the maximum of the available resources included through international assistance and cooperation.

At the committee we have reiterated that in order to achieve progressively the core realisation of the Covenant, states parties must take deliberate, concrete and targeted steps within a reasonably short time after the Covenant's entry into force.

And across the board a constraint invoked by all states parties is a lack of resources, but the principle of progressive realisation takes into account the level of development as varied as the current economic situation of each state party. The availability of resources, although an important qualifier to the obligation to take steps, does not alter the immediacy of the obligation, nor can resource constraints alone justify inaction. Even in times of severe resource constraints states must protect the most disadvantaged and marginalised individuals or groups by adopting relatively low cost targeted programmes. In addition, what comes out of our dialogue with state party delegations frequently is that insufficient fulfilment of economic, social and cultural rights is not due to the lack of resources alone but also, and above all, to the development of domestic priorities that do not actually build sufficient relevance to these rights, and very often to the fact that material and financial resources, in themselves scarce, are not targeted and used to the fullest extent possible for the implementation, in particular, for target groups most in need.

The progressive realisation of Covenant rights by states parities is also difficult to monitor for lack of disaggregated indicators over an unspecified time frame. At the committee we are now working on the IBSA project on indicators, benchmarks, scoping and assessment. The idea is to develop a set of indicators on each of the rights and then to engage in a spoken exercise with the state party, between the state party and the committee, to establish measurable benchmarks for five years. When the state party presents its report after the five year period it can either have achieved its benchmarks or it may have failed to do so and there would be acceptable reasons for that, or not. This assessment is the final link of IBSA chain before the process starts anew. We haven't progressed as far as a practical example of this with any state party but we are looking forward to doing this in one of the coming sessions of the committee.

The indicators unit of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is also developing lists of illustrative indicators on some of the rights.

Although still a work in progress I brought you an example of the list on the right to housing that is important in the pockets of regeneration. I know you look at this and it looks terrible – it looks huge – it looks difficult – it looks complex, but in fact, most of the information on what we are asking for here is information statistical offices already have. What we are trying to do is to use this information in a rights based approach direction, that we could use information that state parties have on policy development and how could we use this information to verify the implementation or non-implementation of the rights. Of specific implementation benchmarks at the local level, the Residents' Jury has been provided a good example of the methodology by residents of the Seven Towers and the drainage and sewage indicators and benchmarks that I have read as part of my information pack. Perhaps the illustrative indicators can be useful in mainstreaming the human rights perspective that we think is reflected in the characteristic attributes identified for each of the rights. Each of the rights can be broken down into some attributes that we consider important from the human rights perspective, and perhaps this could bring some useful information to mainstream the human rights perspective into your own indicators.

Let me now go back to the other two key sections – equality and participation. We use the concept of equality in relation to gender equality because of Article three of the Covenant. Equality in its broader understanding, as we heard in today's presentations, is reflected in the principle of non-discrimination in the Covenant which I have said before is one of the crosscutting principles applying to all the Covenant rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets forth a broad list of grounds for discrimination, race, colour, sex, language, religion, public or other opinion, national or other status, birth or any other situation. This list does not attempt at being exhaustive since its reference to 'any other situation' leaves open the possibility for the inclusion of other grounds for discrimination that they may eventually become necessary, and this has proved to be the case.

The list of the grounds for discrimination has been evolving and our last general comment on social security has a much broader list of the grounds of discrimination than the one initially included in the Universal Declaration. Non-discrimination is an essential component of the rights based approach. It prohibits unjustified differences when similar situations are treated differently and it also prohibits unjustified comparisons when situations that are different are treated in the same manner. Covenant ratification implies that state parties must immediately eliminate former discrimination established by law by amending such discriminatory legislation and must adopt measures for the elimination of real discrimination in practice as soon as possible.

While direct discrimination is easy to identify, all of us have seen examples of direct discrimination, indirect discrimination is rather more complex. Of particular concern is multiple discrimination and culturally ingrained discrimination. Multiple-discrimination is the result of the community independent effect of discrimination on several grounds. For example, you could be a woman and you could be discriminated because you are a woman. You could belong to a minority language or religious group that would add onto discrimination. You could then also have a handicap and that would be another ground for discrimination. Since the cumulative effect gives rise to the violation of a number of rights the elimination of multiple discrimination calls for a wide range of measures in the various areas of economic, social and cultural development and the guarantee of judicial and other effective remedies in case of violation.

The latter, that is culturally ingrained discrimination, is the most difficult to be eliminated because it results from the explicit or implicit imposition of dominate society values on those who do not share them, for example, in the case of ethnic minorities or in the case of sexual orientation. The enjoyment of human rights on the basis of equality between men and women must be understood comprehensively to include formal equality and to include substantive equality which is a result of the measures taken to overcome discrimination between men and women.

In this context it is important to refer to the principle of positive discrimination; this is when the criteria for unequal treatment is legitimate, reasonable and objective, as in the case of temporary special measures in favour of women with the objective of reducing and or eliminating the causes and circumstances that give rise or contribute to situations of discrimination in everyday life. An example of a temporary special measure very common now is the use of a quota system for women to be represented in parliaments, in governments, in corporate business. It is sad that you need a quota system for something that is inbuilt in men and women – the right to be equal – but unfortunately, when it doesn't work that way you need to have a quota system by way of pushing for something that should be normal.

Finally a few thoughts on participation and involvement of all stakeholders – what is generally known as civil society. All over the world citizens organise themselves formally and informally around common interests. You are a good example of such an organisation. Then there are the formal social movements of the more structured type such as charitable organisations or as informal networks. There are also more ad hoc groupings where people are allied less by predetermined purpose than by shared experiences coming together in response to an immediate stimulus as in many local development community associations. In this sense civil society is fluid, reacting to change and seeking to direct change in this dynamic environment.

Community associations – I am even lucky enough to have visited some yesterday – have an enormous role to play in assuming their role as partners of public authorities and in pushing for the realisation of economic, social and cultural rights. Their participation is two-fold. On one hand, it implies their involvement in the decisions of social and economic policies at the different stages of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. This entails more than providing them the voice or asking for an opinion in the later stages as if what is expected is evaluation of the decisions already taken by the public authorities. On the other hand, due to the proximity to local communities, especially to the most disadvantaged, such associations are well placed to identify violations of Covenant rights and to provide victims with information and support necessary for them to seek redress or restitution, compensation or reparation.

A difficult issue is to find measurable indicators for participation. In the illustrative list an example of the structural indicator for participation is the number of registered and or active civil society organisations involved in promotion and protection of a certain right. However this is an ongoing discussion and we are far from having come to the end of it and I do look forward to the presentations on participation later today.

To conclude, states parties have not yet moved away from a needs based approach to combat poverty and deprivation to a rights based approach of social inclusion. It is true that in the families living in deprivation are often unaware of their rights and certainly at a loss of information on what the system offers by way of support to enable them to demand solutions to their problems. The problems may be different but they all have a common root force and

that is the lack of policy articulation and coordination that allows individuals to fall through the cracks of sectorial policies. The recognition of the multiplicity of the forces that lie at the heart of poverty and deprivation have not yet been fully translated into a rights based approach that calls for integrated inclusion policies, equal access to individual support benefits and services and local development that brings about economic and social change.

What the PPR Project is doing is ground-breaking because it brings together these different components in a structured participatory project for real social, economic and cultural change. You are involved in ongoing debate on the welfare state, the welfare society and the welfare mix that has privatisation and decentralisation as its main features permeates our entire discussion.

The bottom line is that efforts to rethink and reorganise the role of the state – no longer as the sole provider but rather as the enabler of the overall right framework to ensure universal and equal access to benefits and services that allow all its citizens, but especially the most vulnerable, to live in dignity. These efforts in no way decrease the final responsibility of the states in assuring an acceptable level of economic, social and cultural development that allows for the materialisation of economic, social and cultural rights. That responsibility is for the states.

Thank you very much.

Inez McCormack:
I would like to thank Virgínia on behalf of the Jury and on behalf of all of us. The very technical, heavy language has been translated by Virgínia into how these rights can live on the ground. With Virgínia, I have to say, we get a treble whammy because she's responsible for coordinating the preparation of the EU, Council of Europe and UN Reports on the implementation of international instruments and statutory requirements. We got a sense of what she is about, and what is coming from the ground and how this all connects, and I have to say it just makes something that Richard Wilkinson said live in my mind. What Richard was talking about in a way, was digging deeper so that people can release their imagination and work out what can actually make their society live and I will tell you from a long experience that people need a sense of rights in order to release their imagination. What is coming out so far, even today, is how the practice of rights at international and local level is necessary and crucial to making the imagination live.

Aideen Gilmore:
Now we are moving onto the next section of today's discussion around participation, which is really at the heart of the project. As one of the staff once famously said, the clue is in the title. The title of the project is Participation and the Practice of Rights. The whole project is focused around the participation of people in decisions which affect them, which is key to a rights based approach. It makes common sense that if you are making a decision in life, how you do it or how you best do it is with all the information at your disposal. The same then applies to government decision making and policy making. You get the information that helps you make the decision and you share information. It is a bit like, even in the private sector, if somebody is testing a new product, they are going to talk to the people who have used the product. But it is more than just talking to people – it is about involving them in the decision while it is being made and not talking to them after it has been made. I think that is key to some of the deliberations here today. I will hand over to Inez now to introduce the speakers on participation.

05

Participation

Ronald Shiffman
Speaker

Inez McCormack:
First, I would like to introduce Ron Shiffman to come up and make a presentation. Ron is co-founder for the Pratt Institute and Centre for Community Environmental Development, which is an enormously respected centre. He has 40 years of experience providing programme and organisational development assistance to community based groups in low to moderate-income neighbourhoods. It is actually impossible to read this man's bio because, in a sense, he probably wrote some of the concepts in which all of the rest of us are working. You are very welcome Ron.

Evidence

Ron Shiffman:
Thank you very much and it is indeed a honour for me to appear before the Jury today and to share with you some of the experiences we have had in the United States, in particular in New York City. I do it with a caveat however, what I share with you I would hope will stimulate ideas but I ask you not to replicate it but adapt it – not to adopt it because I think what happens too often is we try to transfer one idea from one place to another when sometimes it is not appropriate to do all of those things.

I want to share with you a little bit more of an introduction of the Pratt Centre which I co-founded. We started in 1963. It was really a very important period of time. It was founded based on the principles espoused by our President at that time who was challenging many of us to go into government. That President was John F. Kennedy and someone who was very influential in my life. He challenged many of the young people to leave what they were doing and to address problems of our society. We originally started a training and capacity programme to work with community residents to help them articulate their own idea about how to develop their areas. It was based on the principle that people have the right to be represented in planning and development decisions regardless of their income, their background, religion or status. It emerged over the years as a university based, public interest, architectural, community planning and development organisation engaged in training, technical assistance and public policy issues.

My own background is really not as an academic but is in architecture. I was trained as an architect. I have actually practiced almost my entire life as a planner and I speak to you as a practitioner who is based at an academic institution. The values that we adopted and evolved were that all planning should be equitable and lead to qualitative development, that quantity is not the real issue. The real issue is the quality of the development, that it needed to have an inclusive, democratic process and the substantive participation and empowerment of people, and, I use the term empowerment very advisedly.

Earlier in the presentation we heard from Richard Wilkinson about the impact of poverty and actually the disparities that exist in our society and I think it was a very well articulated presentation. It reminded me of another great influence in my life that led to a lot of the work that we eventually did and it was done by an African-American psychologist by the name of Kenneth Clarke. I don't know if you know of his work but he was very influential and he wrote a book called, The Consequences of Powerlessness. He wrote that book after watching young African-Americans in Montgomery, Alabama participate in the bus boycott and he saw that people were motivated to move and fight for their rights because a woman was not allowed to sit in the bus. She was forced to sit at the back of the bus and as a result she wouldn't take it any longer and there was a bus boycott that lasted a number of months. During that period crime in the city of Montgomery dropped to zero – it dropped to zero – out of that he came up with the idea that if you organise people, if you empower people, then they begin to

have a sense of themselves and a sense of purpose and that really was the basis of a lot of our work from that point on. What we saw the planning process as addressing, was the consequences of being poor, the consequences of powerlessness and how you use the planning process to really empower them. We then looked at the participation of the poor to ensure that minorities, that the marginalised, the poor and future generations were involved.

In 1963 what we discovered that there was really another America – that there was an America that was segregated, both by law in some places in our country and while some of it existed in the South much of it still existed in the communities in the North. We saw the decline of the city. We saw increased crime rates. We saw that there was a great deal of unemployment and high rates of infant mortality. Many of the same figures that we saw earlier presented by Nicola – very articulately. There were growing rates of juvenile delinquency. The consequences of powerlessness was alienation – it was violence – it was self-destruction – the loss of self-esteem – the loss of identity.
Our response was to look at how we can begin to empower people and through that fight juvenile delinquency and through that we began to see the initiative launched by President Kennedy, picked up by President Johnson after the unfortunate assassination of John F. Kennedy. We began to see the implementation of the anti-poverty programmes in the United States. Many of them looked at the anti-poverty programmes as a failure but I believe it was not a failure, that a lot of what was seeded during that period of time led to a lot of the imagination and led to a lot of the programmes that followed later on. It was not really a war against poverty because we did not continue that war over time.

One of the things that came out of that period was what a woman by the name of Sherry Arnstein developed, what I think many of you in this room may have seen or heard about – it's called the ladder of participation. If you look at the ladder of participation here, you see at the bottom of the ladder that there are not participatory processes. Many governments, particularly in the United States, referred to this as participation but it is really just therapy and manipulation when people come to you and they say we are going to build a playground develop a project and ask simply what colour it should be. That is not participation. They sometimes move up the ladder to informing and consultation and placation. Most of what we see in our cities are around placation. They share information with you. They put out glossy brochures but there really isn't a substantive involvement in either the development of the programme or the aspects of what should take place.

Then you get your greater levels of citizen participation where you have delegated power and citizen control over the project. One of the most important pieces to me is that citizen power is achieved through organising and engagement in the process of programme development – the initial start of the plan. From that the development process is not only the development of the programme but really the development of the engagement of the people in that process. In writing the programme and in the evolution of the plan and then in the implementation of the plan itself.

One of the things we developed along the way and one of the things that helped us articulate what we were doing, was in one of the communities where we first started working we saw all this phenomena of powerlessness; it was in an all Black community called Bedford-Stuyvesant, and the city, the state and the federal government all tended to ignore it. What we decided to do there was not to wait for government to come and do it for the people but to form what we called the Community Development Corporation. Through that process and through the assistance then of the brother of the slain President, Robert F. Kennedy,

we helped form the first community based development corporation in the United States.

Through that process we learned quite a bit. One – that people can do it for themselves – that people can become the planners and that people working collectively can also become the builders and the developers and my colleague Joe McNeely will talk a little bit more about that later. What we did here is we began to look at what we called community based planning approaches that was a concept based on advocacy, pluralism and planning. It was one that borrowed from the legal profession that basically said that every community, particularly in a pluralistic society, had the right to be represented by people who had the technical knowledge to engage in plans. We believe all people have that right, whether they are rich or poor, whether they are in the minority or in the majority and we believe that they should participate in that process. It recognises that differences exist in conflicts in heterogeneous society and that pluralistic plans emerge still. Sometimes they are initiated by the people and sometimes they are in reaction to what government and other propose. The product and process are important. It is not only the end result but the means by which people engage in the process that becomes really important.

Planning is highly political and you cannot avoid it. But it is one of the assets of the process because in doing it, in building community, you engage people who heretofore may have been disenfranchised and you begin to enfranchise them. Planning processes engage both plans and issues. This is similar in addressing issues of mental health and all the issues that were raised earlier. While recognising the pluralism and the multiplicity of different groups that exist in the community, somewhere along the line you need a structure by which you resolve the differences that exist – that you debate them, you articulate them, but eventually, you need some sort of resolution to what that debate is all about and to resolve the differences that emerge. You need the resources to plan and implement. That becomes critically necessary.

What we believe planning is about is the tension between reason and democracy. Reason being our ability to believe in our capability to think about things, to analyse things, and democracy is really the trust in the capacity of people for self-governance. I think that becomes important. Reason is dependent on a rational, systemic analysis – a way of looking at things, looking at the charts, looking at the data and beginning to collect that data. But participation becomes crucial because what that data means is different to different people. How you interpret that data and what it really means comes out of a dialogue that engages people in the long run. Democracy is critically dependent on the participation of the people and the two are synergistic, they interrelate and they become really important. Democracy has one caveat and I really need to stress that – that it is not only the will of the majority but it is the will of the majority with respect for the minorities that exist there. This is what I think transforms this process into one that really talks about the human rights impacts. So it becomes critically important that we address it in that way as well.

Finally, I believe that the planning process leads to more and more imagination with the more people that are involved. The work of the Pratt Centre therefore evolved in a different way than it was originally looked at and I put it here because I think some model of this or some adaptation of this becomes important. You need to look at the synergistic or the interrelated connections between education and training – working with people so they understand and you learn from them as well so that the planners understand what they are doing; direct technical assistance, working out the plans, looking at the architectural options and the planning options as well as the programmatic

options and the public policy that will emerge out of it. Sometimes what you want to do, you can't do because there aren't public policies, but what we have to do is look at all three of these and begin to see how capacity building, how public policy and technical assistance can all be created in a way that creates change. The result out of this effort is a much more informed and engaged civil society where process is as important, if not more important than the outcome because the process here often leads to what really becomes the development and the building of community.

One of the important ingredients in the building of community is understanding what is the nexus between organising people and public policy issues. It is getting people together working jointly with them, organising and pushing the envelope. It is not only participation but also understanding the limits of what government can do and always pushing them a little bit further so they do and adapt programmes that are really important to their needs.

I have a picture I want to show you which a friend of mine in Berlin gave me, because it is very symbolic and I have used it dozens of times in New York City but it has its applicability here. It is two Berliners looking at where the wall came down between East and West and what they look at is they see that there is now a gap that divides them rather than a wall that divides them. This existed in New York City between the rich who live in Manhattan and the poor who live in Bedford-Stuyvesant or the South Bronx or in many of our neighbourhoods in our cities. Earlier you saw the dichotomy in our country between the very rich and the very poor, so this is a metaphor for many, many things. It is a metaphor for the special separation in our cities. It is also a metaphor for the divisions between groups that exist in our cities. It is also a metaphor for the economic gaps that exist in our cities.

I want to give two examples. One of them will be in Brooklyn and the first community I am going to talk about is called Green Point, Williamsburg, which was the first community we ever worked in. It was the largest African-American community in New York City with almost 500,000 people living in a contiguous area of Bedford-Stuyvesant. The university I work in is at the edge of Bedford-Stuyvesant. What we did with that community is that they were suffering from what we call environmental injustice. It was a community primarily of low-moderate income families, many of them subject to pollution, high rates of asthma, many times the rate of the average in the city. Infant mortality rates, particularly for children of poor people were much higher than the rest of the city. The community decided they wanted to initiate a plan. We have a process in New York that allows communities to initiate a plan. Part of it was an abandoned waterfront, an industrial waterfront, so they began to look at how they could develop that plan. They came to us at the Pratt Center and we began to produce the plan. Part of the production of that plan was to create a community outreach initiative.

That derelict site was very much a neighbourhood much like some of the neighbourhoods surrounding Girdwood and the development project. It was an area where poor people and middle and moderate income. People were living but they were living on very, very productive land and land that was very speculative. From there you can see the dramatic skyline of the City of New York and it was poor and moderate income people living on land with these views. What came out of that debate, and I think it is important to talk about this for a couple of minutes, was a number of major issues. The plan the community developed was very interesting. In the core of the community was the residential area in the middle. They never saw the waterfront because they had a barrier to the waterfront because of all the industry that was there. Many of the people who lived there walked to work to the industry

that surrounded them, almost like a belt around them. What they wanted was to gain access to the waterfront for recreational purposes, for leisure time purposes, but they wanted to keep the clusters of manufacturing that existed on the waterfront. They wanted the spine of manufacturing to stay protected because they didn't want to drive it out. They didn't want a city that only provided jobs that were jobs in the white-collar industries only on Wall Street. They didn't want jobs that were only connected to the knowledge industries. They wanted jobs that people could still use their hands in producing and, believe it or not, there are over a quarter of a million of those jobs in New York City. A lot of it is the interconnection between the creative types, the artists and others who produce the designs that are now in many ways fabricated in the plans along this way that employ people of variety of skills and a variety of different educational backgrounds.

The plan here was different than most others. They wanted to eventually come up with what they call the high performance manufacturing zone. High performance meaning that they wanted production there but they wanted clean production which didn't pollute the air. All of a sudden they discovered that if you create a green industry you create an opportunity for new products to be developed. As we want to create a sustainable world and sustainable cities and we want to survive global warming we are finding that we are going to need more and more products that are manufactured locally, that are manufactured differently and that can be manufactured by people who need the jobs. We fought for and we did win the manufacturing zone retention here. We did win a green walkway around the entire area. We lost a lot of the proposals for integrated housing on the waterfront. We wanted mandatory, what we call inclusionary, housing that every private developer would have to build 50% of the units, affordable. Not only affordable to the people of the City of New York generally but, affordable to the people who now live in the adjoining area. What we won in the end, for the first time in New York City, was a voluntary inclusionary programme that says 35% of all units here, should be affordable to the area median income, not the local median income. So we lost a little and we won a little, but over time we hope to change even that policy through the organisation of people.

In the area that I am to talking about we had maybe 300 meetings over a four-year period to develop a plan. We wrote the programme for the plan and it predated the city's action, so it was something that was initiated by the community. We put out a newspaper twice that outlined the plan and printed 40,000 copies. Every household received a tabloid version of the plan before we held our first public hearing and all of it came out of citizen's meeting to develop the plan.

The other part of the plan I want to talk about is in the South Bronx. What we tried to do there is, or what we actually established was what is called the Bronx Forum which was the primary vehicle for public participation in the planning of the Bronx Center. The Bronx Center was a portion of the Bronx but it included Yankee Stadium, including Hostos Community College, a two-year college serving primarily the Latino community that exists in this area. It had a large health services facility in the hospital, a shopping centre, and a very devastated area of the Bronx called Melrose Commons which everybody thought was a waste land and a court complex that was being proposed there.

We started this participatory process by having a series of meetings in every one of these neighbourhoods, and lo and behold, what we did is we drew drawings that were, I think, a little bit easier for the lay person to understand, for the community people to understand. Melrose Commons was where the large regeneration or what we would call an urban renewal plan would take place. We had dozens and

dozens of meetings in this area. At one of those meetings a group came out from Melrose Commons that nobody knew existed. It was led by a woman called Yolanda Garcia. She came out and started say 'you have developed this beautiful plan but we weren't consulted and yet we were the people who kept this area alive. When the fires struck in the area we were the ones who put them out until the fire department came. When our neighbours were hungry we were the ones that went out and got the food for them and when they were sick we brought them to the hospital'. And so they began to organise.

They did something that was very manipulative. A couple of us agreed to go out and meet with them and I was one of them and at that point in time I was not only working at Pratt but the Mayor of the City of New York had appointed me to the City Planning Commission. We walked into their office or a basement apartment at 811 Courtland Street and they started telling us their woes and all the problems that were taking place, which were very similar to the problems we heard when went to the community centre. There were no jobs. There was a welfare trap that engaged people. Many people there that owned their own homes wanted it rebuilt. They wanted new housing yet they wanted housing that they could afford. That shouldn't even be middle- income but they needed low-income housing, our equivalent of social housing. They really began to talk to us, so during the meeting I basically said I think you are right and I will try to do what I can to slow down the plan. What I didn't know is they had a reporter from the Spanish speaking newspaper there and the next day I got calls from the Mayor and from the Borough President of the Bronx, saying, what did you do? I argued with them saying that these people had substantive grievances and they said 'but we spent a year and a half planning for the area. It has everything they need. It addresses jobs. It addresses housing'. But, I said, they weren't involved and they don't know those plans and they really want to be involved.

To the Mayor's credit, it was Mayor David Dinkins, the first African-American Mayor in New York City, who basically said we will give you nine months. Over that nine-month period that community began planning. The planning establishment in New York was angry at me because they had put together at the Bronx Center Steering Committee, a group that had actually planned this area and they thought it was really a gem of a plan. What happened was those same planners who were angry started working with the folks and after a while they heard what the people wanted and they were liberated. All of a sudden the people started looking at the court complex and they said, you know, courts to us are a symbol of oppression. They are not a symbol of opportunity. How can you take that court and turn it into a symbol of opportunity? Then one of the women in the group said, what if you began to train our kids to become the lawyers there? So they started what was a high school for law and social justice – changing law from being an oppressive thing to a point of opportunity to the kids in the neighbourhood. That school exists today. It doesn't exist in the court complex because the court officials were too scared of letting the kids into the court building because of security reasons but they eventually started that high school. There are hundreds of kids now going to a school that focuses on law and social justice and it is in the South Bronx. They wanted the building not to have separate facilities for the lawyers and the judges. They wanted the cafeterias to be on the streets. They didn't want them to walk out of the court complex into a sanctuary to eat. They wanted them to walk on the streets. That changed. They wanted Melrose Commons to become mixed-income housing meeting the needs of the residents, so they began looking at that.

The plan that eventually emerged did a couple of things. It took the abandoned old civic centre, where the courthouses were, that had some beautiful old buildings that laid vacant for a great number of years and they called for the establishment of a civic and cultural centre. They asked for the re-creation of a street for better traffic control and the creation of a plaza for that civic centre. They wanted the modification of the courts so it provided education and economic development opportunities. They fought for mixed-income housing as I said. They wanted mixed uses. They wanted the old mom and pop shops to be put on the bottom floor, rather than only seeing buildings built only for residential purposes and they won that. We didn't have programmes to build mixed-use housing at that time but they got both increased density along the streets where buses and trolleys used to run so they could bring back the population back there, with stores on the lower floors. They won that and they changed housing policy.

They didn't like what the city was doing up until that point and that was the suburbanising of what was this high density and vital community, so what grew out of that was a completely different plan. The buildings that were built, were built, owned and operated by Yolanda Garcia's group, Los Cadamos, which translated into English is 'we stay' – we are not leaving. They did stay. They not only stood but they now have developed over 500 or 600 units of housing all in both the low-rise and high-rise buildings in the area. They derive their income from those buildings.

I want to finish by talking about an award that is given in Yolanda Garcia's name. She unfortunately died of asthma and heart attack a couple of years ago. It comes from New Orleans and it is a symbol of the people in New Orleans talking about how they wanted their city rebuilt. And, it says "Nothing about us, Without us, Is for us". I think that in the end is what participation is about. One of the things that I omitted to say about Yolanda Garcia was that at the end the planners who resisted engaging with her said that it was the greatest experience of their life, because what it did is that it liberated them to undertake new ideas, ideas that the bureaucracy wouldn't allow them to take. In working with people they learned, they expanded their imagination and during the process they were able to break new ground in terms of how planning could take place.

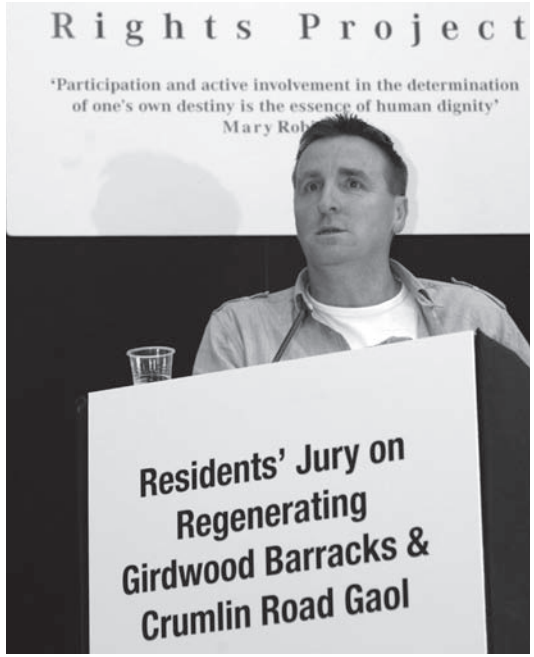
I really thank you all for your time. Thank you.

Inez McCormack:

I would like to thank Ron for his evidence and the modesty of the man is matched by the size of his reputation and contribution to the community and country in which he lives and many other communities across the world.

I would like to now ask Joe Donohoe from the Fatima Regeneration Project to come and give evidence. Joe has worked extensively with local residents groups and their negotiations for the state and private developers for the equitable development for their local areas. I think he has a story to tell both of where he has worked but also what is happening now.

Thank you Joe.



Joe Donohoe
Fatima Regeneration, Speaker

Evidence

Joe Donohoe:

Thanks. Dessie and a few of the crowd came down to Fatima recently and they asked me to do a presentation of participation over the last couple of years. I was thinking myself in terms on participation, how to really get involved in this game, this community development game. Ronald Reagan visited Rialto in 1984 when the community in which I lived was a very, very difficult place to be in terms of drugs, immigration, unemployment – all the poverty indicators that were being shown today particularly through the videos. I went over to the local youth centre looking for a job and it turned out there was a man there, a local youth worker from Wexford, and I was curious just to see how he was working there. He was playing cards with all of my friends but he was not really playing cards, he was winning and getting paid for it, and I was pretty furious about that.

Subsequently, an American television crew was in the youth centre and they were making a film on Dublin in the mid-80's, particularly in relation to the whole heroin problem. They were so angry and so fed up and I think it was mentioned earlier on in terms of people getting involved in these things; getting involved is usually around interest and usually when you feel you are excluded or you are marginalised you usually shoot from the hip. So, I says, I'll have a piece of that action, I'll tell your man, whoever he is, Ronald Regan, (even though I was quite young at the time) how it feels in terms of why our community suffers so enormously? He needs to come down and drink a pint of Smithwicks in Limerick or somewhere. From that very point I began to look around at what was going in my community and started getting involved in youth work and community work. That is how I got involved.

I think when people get involved in things it's usually because of a personal reason. I suppose the motivation that I had was very much based on what was going on in the area that I lived in, Rialto. In terms of Fatima Mansions, for those who don't know it, it's located in the South inner city of Dublin. It is basically an 11-acre site with blocks of flats. Built in the 1950's, Fatima itself is very much – for many people came to live there in the 50's – was a result of the people moving from tenements. There were about 350 units that were there at that particular time and people came and had their own front doors, their own toilets and things like that. Relatively speaking, from the 50's right through things were relatively okay. There were lots of large families but in the 1980's the situation, certainly in Ireland and particularly in Dublin, was that there were large numbers of unemployment. In Fatima itself the living conditions were pretty appalling in terms of the physical landscape; there was no central heating, dampness, all the things on the poverty indicators, poor health, asthma and obviously the things in terms of stress and mental illness were all factors. Along-side that there was an emerging heroin problem in Dublin, which has been well documented over the last 20 – 30 years. At that particular time there was a series of criminal gangs who were involved in heroin distribution. Within the small location in the south inner-city, between Fatima Mansions and Dolphin Hill, which is another large local 30-flat complex, you have a huge heroin problem because of major social and economic problems in the area.

In response to that the Concerned Parents Against Drugs was set up. You had an awful lot of demonstrations and meetings. I suppose I learned a lot, especially when the media would descend and you would have public meetings and then you would have somebody being marched on and subsequently evicted. So it was a very interesting period. It was a very stressful period for many who lived there, particularly my own mother. I was thankfully not actually involved

in the drugs but was veritably sucked into the whole unemployment and immigration situation. So that was the 80's.

In response to that, I would very definitely say the state responded – there is no question that it responded because of the situation that was happening up North. They responded and it was very much a knee-jerk reaction and a lot credit was given that wasn't actually justified. There was £6.5 million pounds poured into the development and it would be fair to say an awful lot of people participated in that refurbishment programme. To some degree there was no social investment money put into that project, so you had the likes of Bernardo's there for a year or two, building the capacity of the local community but subsequently pulled out because of this notion that in community development you can work towards a five year period and then people assume that you are done and that you're brand new, which wasn't the case.

Tragically enough, not long after the refurbishment problem the Fianna Fail government at the time had massive cutbacks in terms of social provisions, and, needless to say, communities like Fatima Mansions suffered. The refurbishment problem saw the potential of hope faded within a period of 12 to 15 months. I should also say that there was no central heating put in that refurbishment project as well as no social development plan. That's the background to the Fatima community. It wasn't until 1998 that ESRI, which is a national research body, was asked to commission research on social housing. It covered seven areas across the country and Fatima Mansions was one of them. We decided at that particular time that we would participate in the research because we wanted to ensure that residents participation was very much at the heart of it. Twelve lots of people were trained and every single flat was consulted in relation to their views and thoughts on the future development of the complex. I should also say the word regeneration was a completely alien word for many of us, I had never heard it before in my life other than refurbishing, which was usually the word used in those periods. The research didn't say anything we didn't know – that there was lots of deprivation. Certainly, 50% of the people living there wanted to give the place a chance, but critically 98% of the people in the complex wanted it knocked down. That was a critical decision which meant there was a significant mandate for going forward.

It was against that background that we got into formal negotiations with Dublin City Council, Dublin Corporation, as it was known at that particular time, and, to be very honest with you, myself and a number of residents participated in those negotiations and it was very clear those negotiations weren't going very far. They basically had the same agenda which was a top down approach. No real commitment to partnership and a 'we know best' approach. At that point we took the very, very brave decision of walking away and saying that we were going to establish a regeneration team. That regeneration team comprised of people from the voluntary/community sector and people from architectural backgrounds who advised us. I should also say, another key advisor was the whole area of communications within the hearts and minds of not just the local people but also, in terms of the policy makers, the funders, the private sector.

That regeneration team subsequently then launched a document called, 'Eleven Acres, Ten Steps'. Eleven acres was to do with the size of the site while ten steps was to do with the whole issue around social packaging; the areas of health, education, and employment. Critical to that was putting the right structures in place so that the structure would have authority; it would have an independent chair and most importantly, to have an executive that would be driven by a board that would be comprised of local community interests. The board was set up as part of negotiations

in 2001, and the Independent Chairman was Finbar Flood who happened to be at the time Chairman of the Labour Court and also Managing Director of Guinness. He had a very strong social conscience and came out and met many of the residents and agreed to become the Independent Chair.

I should also say that at that particular time the Regeneration Board negotiated a Masterplan. The master plan that was negotiated was designed by loads of people through dealing with architects and planners, and that was a critical part of the whole thing around participation. That was a very useful thing. Bertie Ahern, the Taoiseach, came out and told us that we had £100 million and everybody was delighted about that. We discovered later on there was no such thing as £100 million he just told us that because the national media were present on that particular day.

We then proceeded on the social and physical plan, trying to get more detail into the design, particularly in relation to the neighbourhood facilities. The issue around defendable space was important, where in Fatima, for many, many years, people only came in one way and went out one way and that was to come in and buy drugs. We were therefore very conscious that the design that we were working on with our architectural teams would begin to take on some of those challenges.

Then the PPP appeared, which means Public-Private Partnership and we were very frightened at that particular time. We had an agreement through the Board that the master plan would be delivered, both physically and socially, but the public-private partnership then came into being on the basis that the government had been telling 'porkie pies' that there was loads and loads of money because there was a general election coming up. Shortly after the election we discovered that there wasn't loads and loads of money and, in fact, the £100 million that was to build the Fatima project wasn't there. The only way they were going to get it was through the PPP.

We then took a very pragmatic decision on this and it was simply that we didn't care who was paying but if that master plan was delivered, the one that was agreed by local residents and the voluntary/community sector, we would sign up for the PPP arrangement. We brought in various experts, particularly from Britain, who were very critical of the whole PPP process because the Fatima project was being designed and not managed and because we were very conscious that we wanted the state to remain involved within the development post-completion. Thankfully, the demolition programme then began before the process on PPP. You could almost write a book on PPP and I'll come back to that at the end of the presentation, especially given what's happening at Dublin at the moment under a particular developer. Agreement was eventually secured under the PPP and to be very honest with you, for many of us who were involved from December 1999, that agreement of 2004 was a significant milestone for many of us, because at that point we had a fairly solid agreement and a solid basis for moving forward. Then the actual demolition programme of the blocks was underway and people could see progress.

Thankfully, Bertie, the Taoiseach, came back in 2005 to open phase one of housing. The woman there that opened it was called Margaret, a woman who participated in many of our programmes and who would have left school with no education but who was very much part of our training programme and was doing her Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate. I remember when she was selected to be the person opening the first house, she almost couldn't believe it because her family had been stigmatised over the years because of anti-social behaviour. It was a clear indication that participation should include everybody,

particularly those who are quite vulnerable. It was a marvellous day.

President Mary McAleese then came in November 2005 and she launched the social development plan which covered eight areas. The plan included provisions for a safe and sustainable environment, which is very much to do with the state and management, the poor track record of the Police, the poor track record of the City Council and the kind of partnership approach in making the place safe and clean for people to live there.

Education, is a very important ingredient in breaking the cycle. The plan established after school clubs and education projects around health and well being. Referring back to the first presentation today, on poverty, stress is very much related to health. A purpose built health and well being centre was therefore to be opened and resources put into developing that.

Employment Training and Enterprise; a really critical element in terms of the social development plan and particularly in relation to the development of enterprise. That was included to deal with creating your own economic stability, having your own source of revenue, which was very important. Then there was the local labour clause; there was a local labour club where people could get local employment, and not just your construction site and labouring jobs but real skilled jobs such as apprenticeships.

Arts and culture has been a key component of the work over the last few years and when it's completed there will be a music academy. An academy that will touch upon children and young people's skills and will open as part of the cultural programme.

The environment is critically important because phase one opened in 2005 and it's really important to keep on top of the physical space, particularly the public part of the site.

There were lots of measures in relation to poverty and inclusion, particularly in dealing with loan sharks. You can see brand new fortune was there and the city council put on a lot of interest free loans onto people's rents so they wouldn't get caught into the traps of loan sharks.

Moving quickly along, Fatima Groups United launched it's own regeneration document called Dream/Dare/Do. The reason we did that document was very much to counteract what was being said at state level. To a large degree, while City Council was very positive about the development of Fatima, it wasn't necessarily being replicated in other parts of the city, particularly in relation to power structures. We decided to launch that the document and hand it out in the last few blocks of flats. It's on our website. It goes into some of the strategic steps in relation to regeneration.

What was agreed from the community's perspective was £6.2 million given to the social development plan which covered all eight areas. A new neighbourhood centre to the tune of £8.5 million. The designer of that new neighbourhood centre was an English architectural company who came over and worked to the community's brief and rose to the challenge. The cost went from £3 million to 8.5 million and the developer and Dublin City Council almost had a heart attack when that process was concluded because it had to come out of the over-all financial package. There was a new purpose-built crèche, enterprise units, local labour clause and super affordable housing. You'll often hear of social and affordable housing and we agreed that the people who were living in the community could avail of a super affordable package where people could buy their house with 100,000 – 120,000 Euro where a

developer was selling them for between 500,000 – 600,000. That was a real incentive in terms of employment and setting up your own business and such.

From a community perspective, over the few years that we were working on the project, there was a lot of internal conflict going on and bad practices around community organisations. With many of the projects you have the usual suspects who get involved people only on the committee because she or he knows somebody. There was very much a lack of services and then the whole thing around getting involved. In local communities, especially when you're dealing with the police, there is a presumption that if you're on the committee you must be a rat or you're a vigilante. These are things that are very real for people. The problem with this mistrust from the City Council was that they were very happy to involve themselves in the early stages, but when things broke down in relation to the social development plan the knives started coming out. What the City Council and the Guards tried to do was to undermine the legitimacy of local residents and representatives.

It was against that background that we as a community began to build community capacity. New services were developed, particularly with a strong emphasis around training, around education. Then we began to implement community practice and transparency, so that you wouldn't just get a house because you knew someone on the committee – it was around transparency. Then we began to restructure our organisation around the green pages that work about residents and the red pages around strategy. From the state's point of view we began with the hearts and minds of local communities and in changing the perception of the community. We also set up a regeneration board that had the legal authority to make decisions.

What is the learning? From our point of view, for a rights based approach communities have to be resourced from the very start. That includes building the capacity of communities in terms of health, employment, education and taking the support from architects and planners because maps are very complicated but people have to understand them, you have to buy them and you have to design them. Residents also need to be fully informed in making decisions because at the end of the day the outcomes will be transferred back to the community. It is important to make decisions together.

I just want to say something about what's going on at the moment. In an area of Dominick Street where there is a PPP project some of the residents are living in some of the worst conditions that you could imagine. The developer, McNamara, has withdrawn, or is in the process of withdrawing, because he says the projects are not economically viable. He has basically left the residents in a vacuum because now this project may not happen and it could end up in legal limbo. You really have to be mindful of those kinds of issues when considering PPPs.

I have some key questions, like what have we learned from the Fatima project? What have we learned from the PPP policy implications? And, how do we ensure the residents aren't guinea pigs to the market? The Fatima Mansions has done very well because the project and the process was very well determined but the likely scenario in Dublin at the moments with these PPP projects is that people are potentially guinea pigs to the market. If the market's not doing well then PPP becomes fairly ineffective. How do we create a legislative base for good regenerations projects? That is why we want to engage with the projects up here.

Thanks very much.

Inez McCormack:

Thanks Joe, it is rather like with Ron and the previous participants, there is so much to understand and learn and assimilate and we are just getting a taster of it all, which is extraordinary.

What I'd like now to do is to show you a video that was done by the communities around the Gasworks, in terms of reactions by members of those communities and elected representatives, to what the regeneration of the Gasworks achieved or didn't achieve in relation to their communities.

Nicola will now introduce it.

Lessons from the Gasworks

Nicola Browne:

The regeneration of the Gasworks site in South Belfast began in the 1990's. The relevance of it is that it is around the same size as the Girdwood site and also to the communities involved it seemed to offer some kind of response to the problems they were facing at the time, in terms of unemployment and relative social issues. The language at the time is familiar as well. If you go back and look at the press releases and things that were coming out of the regeneration it talks about the importance of the involvement of local communities and it talks about putting investment into local education and training. As part of that there was a local employment initiative set up which was GEMS which is the Gasworks Employment Matching Service and that was providing public money to make sure employment was targeted to the wards and the areas where it was needed most around the Gasworks. The purpose of the regeneration was meant to be about serving the community and respecting human rights and diversity and affording equality of opportunity.

The DVD that we are about to show was commissioned by the Donegal Pass Community Forum and provides a slightly alternative view. It involves the workers and the residents of Donegal Pass, Lower Ormeau and the Market areas of Belfast. PPR is currently starting some work to make sure that the learning from regeneration such as the Gasworks in Belfast can be applied to benefit other communities who are going through a similar process. Hopefully it will be of some use to you in your evidence gathering.

This DVD is available from Donegall Pass Community Forum

Questions from the Jury

Inez McCormack:
The Jury has asked that Seamus Flynn, former community worker for the Markets Development Association and Ken Humphries, from the Inner-City South Belfast Group and he's worked there for over 20 years, would both join the existing panel with Ron and Joe to deal with any questions. We thank both Ken and Seamus for doing so.

Members of the Jury do you have any questions of the Panel?

1. Teresa Keenan:
This question is for Seamus and Ken. It is clear from the video that the community representatives were involved in the Gasworks regeneration, yet there was a huge disappointment about its results. Do you think your involvement or that of other community workers was just 'tokenism' or do you think it had some positive results?

Ken Humphries:
From 15 years before the Gasworks process actually got to where it is now we were drawn into a whole lot of processes. We were assured that the wishes of all the development agencies there including the Council was that the communities would have full involvement in the process. We sat down, we drew pictures with architects and designers and we drew up training programmes that would supposedly help people to get involved in the opportunities there. We designed the Belfast GEMS process.

In the end, we found ourselves dropped from the process, and we couldn't even pinpoint when that happened. We just knew we were. What was happening was that capital development, which works to the market values and processes, was meeting with City Council and City Council and they saw their architectural legacy in front of them. We were the ones who designed that thing and let it happen and they forgot that their purpose was to work for the benefit of the disadvantaged communities.

My crude principle now for the Girdwood and Crumlin Road Gaol is that for anybody from the disadvantaged communities, or working on the behalf of or with those disadvantaged communities, don't let the designs be signed off – don't let one brick be put on another brick - until the disadvantaged people of the local communities have been prepared to get meaningful benefit from the development. If it goes up, and it will fly up quickly, it will have no meaningful relationship with the disadvantaged people of the surrounding communities – none. That is what's happening with the Gasworks. We thought we would even get some naturally designed community-friendly spaces but local people aren't welcome, it's not their place even though it's right in the middle of three of the most disadvantaged communities in Belfast. Now, you have some great opportunities; you have this Jury and you have PPR but just watch out.

Seamus Flynn:
There is a supposition here that the Gasworks redevelopment project was brilliantly organised. It wasn't. It was a mish-mash development in which the Belfast City Council stuttered from one step to another. The whole Gasworks project happened more by accident than anything else. The local community were involved right from the very beginning in, I must say, a very patronising way. There wasn't just the Gasworks development but the Laganside development as well, and now we have a City Centre that people can be proud of. However, when they drew the parameters for Laganside and the Gasworks they excluded all the local communities entirely. Our first struggle was to get our communities involved within the regeneration project, and we did. We got onboard. I must say, however, that right from the very beginning there was a very patronising attitude towards the community sector. There was a lack of trust and engagement, and there

was a lack of respect. They knew it all.
They knew better. I am not saying that we knew but what we did know was what was wrong with our communities and what our communities needed.

In terms of the job enhancement programme – there is some fallacies that I have seen here. I actually went to Halifax when I discovered that they were going to build and I asked for some pre-recruitment training. I suggested that they could do that within the local communities themselves. They said, 'oh, we'll look at it' and then they said, 'no, we'll do it in Belfast'. And, I said, 'well, it has to be near enough to the communities' and they said 'it will be in the centre of Belfast'. It turned out that they trained people at Stormont. For people from the Markets that meant two buses and people from North Belfast will understand what getting two buses means.

I went over to England with some of my colleagues to look at best practice elsewhere in terms of urban regeneration. We had come up with things that happened in Hackney. We had proposed all these things in terms of local community involvement, not only as far jobs were concerned, but in terms of our environment as well. Through all of the meetings that I attended I got the distinct feeling that I was being patronised at all times. I got the distinct impression that I was some 'eejit' from the local community who was coming up and saying things that made sense to the local community and made sense to me but certainly didn't make sense to them because they had all the answers. It turned out they had no answers – absolutely no answers.

I can honestly say that in terms of Laganside, and indeed, the Gasworks regeneration, that they were successful in terms of the rest of the city and there is no doubt about it from an aesthetic point of view that it has been quite successful. However, the local communities have been victims in this. Not only did we not get anything out of the regeneration but we got disadvantages from it. Not just from the lack of jobs, not in the lack of foresight and just in relation to jobs and some of you have said it earlier on. I actually went to them and talked about local communities becoming employers and training in jobs like cleaning or security, and we could have been involved in it. We had people with expertise in these areas, but no, we were just a local community, what would we know. The GEMS came to me as a surprise. I had just come back from England when I found out about GEMS and I wasn't consulted about GEMS whatsoever. I would say that perhaps if we can look at some of the successes from some projects in Dublin and look at the lessons that have been learned, it is clear that the community sector must be strong enough, must be confident enough and must stand up for their communities because there is a big struggle ahead.

One of the big things that come out of the Gasworks, and I think that it is pertinent in terms of North Belfast, is that we realised that the problems the communities had in Donegall Pass, a protestant community or unionist community, and in the Markets, a nationalist community, were the same. Through our work together on the Gasworks when we discovered that we all suffered the same things. They had to have a very strong relationship that has come down through the past five, ten years, when two communities come together and they now stronger for it because we worked and fought together.

2. Nadine Morgan:

I have one for Seamus and Joe. Neither of the presentations went into to detail about how the regenerations were monitored to make sure they were tackling poverty and inequality in the community. Were your regeneration processes monitored and was the community involved in this?

Joe Donohoe:
Built into the Fatima agreement was an independent monitoring arrangement and that has been ongoing which involves a working group of the Board and has been quite successful. My view of it is that to monitor the project should take ten years post completion. You can obviously see a lot more people's outlook is very positive. Realistically, the final physical project is not actually due to finish until late next year. Our view is that there is a built in monitoring arrangement, not just for the quality outcomes for locals but also in relation to the PPP process, which has now become really important at this point.

I'll just say one thing just about the jobs. We had a logo and said to the developer and Dublin City Council that quite simply we were going to buy 200 tracksuits and we were going block all traffic into that site if they didn't deliver on the jobs. There is nothing like direct action in terms of a developer.

I would say that the local authority played a really, really big part in the local labour clause in Fatima because it actually took on local labour, particularly men who were years and years and years unemployed who weren't really in a strong position in relation to the physical nature of the construction site. They also took on young lads in terms for apprenticeships. So, if the developer of these projects have council involvement they should also be part of the solution.

3. Teresa Keenan:
I have one for Joe Donohoe. You outlined how a lot of regeneration projects are failing in Dublin now due to the private developer pulling away from the process but Virgínia said that the responsibility to fulfil human rights belongs to governments. What lessons do you think you learned in the terms of residents getting guarantees from government?

Joe Donohoe:
The five projects that I am talking about are now beginning to hit the wall. The safeguard in relation to the PPP tendering process is that you go the second bidder. The second developer then is given the option of taking the contract. Realistically, once the developer wins the contract they can drag it on for as long as they like. The current situation in three communities in Dublin, where half the site is emptied, is that people are living in dreadful conditions. The developer, McNamara, hasn't officially withdrawn because if he officially withdraws the state can potentially sue him on one of the projects. That is one course of redress, but the problem with that kind of redress is that if the City Council decides to sue the developer, it could take a number of years, and the residents who are already living in appalling conditions can't change that. My view of it is that if the first developer who gets the contract can't deliver that project there has to be state intervention immediately.

Ron Shiffman:
I did want to say one thing. I think what is really important is the programme of the development project itself. If the programme isn't structured properly, if it doesn't allow for diversification of the kind of jobs that exist, then the best you will get is the trickle down. The problem with the trickle down is that it tends to evaporate before it hits the ground.

Part of what I think needs to be done in the planning process and the human rights analysis is that it should be done at the beginning. You should in writing the programme for any site development make sure that the job opportunities are diversified in such a way that it reflects the diverse skill, the diverse education and the diverse needs of the people who live in the surrounding communities. Training is important and it should be made available but it shouldn't only be the training. There should be other things that inherently allow for jobs to be created that meet the skill levels

of the people that live there, and the economic opportunities that could avail themselves if capital were provided to low-income people so they had the resources to start new enterprises and if space were provided at reasonable prices.

4. Irene Drain:
In terms of what you have heard from the two other presentations what learning do you think we could take away especially about the responsibilities of government towards us as we have we to do with the private developer?

Ron Shiffman:
I think one of the things you could take away is that you have more power if you exert it than if you don't exert the power. I think that is the real issue and one of the speakers earlier talked about the formation of cooperatives, getting together collectively.
The relationship between organising and development should not be thought of as separate phenomena. It's part and parcel of the same thing. It's the point that Joe just made about sometimes needing to take direct action, both to change public policy as well as to address people and developers who don't meet their obligations.

I think the real lesson is that people have done it. People can do it. You should take full advantage of what is now occurring here. This Jury and this whole dialogue in really trying to form and influence the development that is going to take place at Girdwood but do it right from the outset. Not feel as though the ability to look at it retrospectively from the back end is appropriate but you should be engaged in every step of the process, including the monitoring processes at the end. That, to my mind, are the lessons to take; that people can really do it and in the process you really build community, you build skills and you build the foundation for a new economy.

5. Irene Drain:
From your evidence it seems clear that getting proper community participation takes time and is worth it. Can you expand on this a bit more, what steps need to be taken?

Ron Shiffman:
The first one is organising. I think you really have to get out and pull your neighbours together. The second thing is really making sure that all your actions are transparent so that you are really communicating to those who at first disbelieve that you can accomplish anything but really want you to succeed in many ways. You really have to communicate to them and find the mechanisms to communicate. You should reach out to those people who you feel can assist you in that effort, but when you bring in technicians or architects or planners, interview them carefully. Make sure that when you meet with them that they are as ready to listen to you as you are to listen to them, so that you really learn from each other. Let's remember that there isn't an architect or a planner that knows your community and your needs better than you know them, and what you need to do is make sure that when working with them that it is a two way educational process. They learn from you. You learn from them. Maybe you fight sometimes but you get to a resolution.

Then you begin to use the power of the community to make sure that the programmes and the ideas come to fruition, and that you get your fair share of any development project. It really should benefit the people who reside and live there and actually kept the area alive so that others now feel confident enough to come in and undertake the development project.

Seamus Flynn:
I think it is essential right from the very beginning that the protocols and the processes are in place to your satisfaction. There is an inherent danger within the community sector of raising expectations and not meeting them because that can be very harmful. To ensure that doesn't happen it is essential that the protocols and every thing is in place in terms of your expectations at the very beginning.

Ken Humphries:
Don't rely on things like the equality impact indicators because we all know that unemployment isn't at 4% in this country and it's not at 8% around these communities. Statistics are there to be twisted. Make sure that you are getting the results written in that you know will work with the timing that it will take to get those impacts in reality.

Joe Donohoe:
It is important to live in the now as well. I think when people talk of regeneration it almost implies that everything is going to be wonderful and sexy. I think it is really important that communities live in the now in terms of building the capacity to get services going, get social participation, the arts, whatever it is because I do think this regeneration almost implies that the area's going to be magnificent and beautiful and gorgeous. Sometimes you can set yourself up, as Ken rightly said, so I think it's about living in the now. For people living in these communities it is important that the resources, the need and the training is put in place immediately so that people can then make a decision based on how the quality of life is improving – not waiting for this magical regeneration thing to happen.

Inez McCormack:
Thank you very much. I think on behalf of the Jury and, indeed, all of us I would like to thank the enormous experienced analysis presented by this panel. Thank you very much indeed.

06

Accountability

Aideen Gilmore:
We are going to march straight on now to the final session which is on accountability. Accountability really is about answers and it is key to governance and good governance and decision-making. Under our system of democracy, we elect people into power and trust them to make decisions on our behalf but that system only works if they are then accountable and answerable to us for the decisions that they make.

Virgínia talked earlier today about the accountability that arises from human rights, so accountability also underpins a human rights based approach because the government is bound by obligations in international human rights law and it's therefore accountable for how it fulfils and protects the rights under those obligations. The human rights based approach and human rights fundamentally linked it to good governance and good decision-making. Hopefully we can explore a bit further in the final panel what that might mean in practice.

Inez McCormack:
Thank you. Could I call Joe McNeely to give evidence? Joe was Director of the National Office of Neighbourhood Development in the Carter Administration. He's currently President of the Development and Training Institute and Coordinator for the Central Baltimore Partnership. He is also, like Ron, one of the most experienced people in the business about what it takes to get ordinary people to be part of making change.

Thank you Joe.

Evidence

Joe McNeely:
I want to thank you for the introduction and thank you for inviting me. I am very honoured to be asked to give testimony before this Jury. I am impressed with the process that you have established with the help of PPR and I am impressed with the expertise that you already show in the community and in the testimony that's been given here. There is plenty of expertise here and I want to particularly thank the Jury for their commitment to service and to the preparation that I know goes into doing this well and to the work that you already did to build your capacity and ours to undertake the review.

I want to echo what Ron said, that models are fairly useless because local conditions are so different. Often we don't hear about model experiences or so called successes until they're 10 or 20 years old and by that time nobody can replicate them because you couldn't even replicate where they were 20 years ago. It is very important that we look at a model for the principles that we can adapt. I've tried to abstract these into a number of points to help you in looking at accountability and how accountability works in the implementation process.

I define accountability as making sure the projects succeeds. We're looking for success and we're looking for engagement. It involves reaching your original goals but also being able to participate in the modification of the plan. I can assure you that there's not one thing in regeneration that will ever be built the way it was planned, therefore the participation and accountability needs to lead on through the process through the series of inevitable decision-making.

You heard in the Gasworks example about the developer's response to changing market conditions and thus highlights that the community needs to be engaged all the way along because the community responds to market conditions as well.

We also need to distinguish between accountability and just collecting the evidence to prove somebody screwed up, sort of like some of our elementary report cards. We need to use all of our experiences as a learning tool to figure out how we improved from our failures – how we get back up and go forward. We want to be always testing, reflecting and perfecting and not necessarily just punishing the likely candidates.

There is a series of steps, I think, to good accountability and it starts with completing the overall plan and that is what we have been talking about this morning up until now. That is not always enunciated however and often at times the planners want to put off doing an implementation plan to some subsequent phase. We have learned over the years that a plan is not a worthy tool unless it has its implementation plan already in place and that includes the concrete steps for achieving the human rights and social objectives. It is not enough to make general references to the deprivation of the community, there have to be specific mechanisms and time tables spelled out, which include piecing where the indicators are going to be in the future. We heard several examples from Ken Humphries which demonstrated how if the Gasworks work force activity had been planned right from the beginning they would have known there had to be an earlier start on the development in the community. Often at times we are having to go back afterwards and say, it's too bad we didn't do that first. Well that only comes out when you do this implementation plan. To those who say the trickle down works, we say not if you haven't had time to build the bucket to catch it. If the rising tide is going to float all boats it's not helpful if we haven't built the boats.

We need some time and the implementation and accountability starts right at the beginning.

Also critical from the very beginning and I have heard this in both the Gasworks and the Dublin examples, is that there has to be a structure put in place right at the very beginning that is going to be the ongoing structure that will make the decisions, monitor the progress and make the changes in the plan. It also has to include all of the parties who were engaged in the original planning process and subsequently those who come in from the development community, if they're outside, to do the implementation. Without this kind of structure then you are constantly going to block the traffic. We don't want to have to block the traffic every week. We don't mind doing it a few times a year but it's not something you want to have to be constantly threatening. From the beginning putting the structure in place is critical.

With the structure in place in the implementation plan as our direction, there are then four steps in accountability that are constantly repeated. We begin our action. We observe and collect data. We reflect on and analyse that data. The community alone needs an opportunity to analyse that data and then there needs to be a common analysis and reflection with other partners. Then there is an agreement on the refinement of the methods of implementation and sometimes it requires going back to the original plan and agreeing on a refinement of the goals. Since it can go that deep it's incredibly important that this series of steps are repeated; action, observation, analysis and reflection, and agreement on change, and are always in place and that there is a schedule for it.

As we get to reflection I think the points made here by Ken and by Seamus and by Joe are that this is always a learning process. At the time of our reflection we need to ask some other questions. What have we learned? Not just what has been done

and accomplished but what have we learned so far? What have we learned that we need to learn because there's always the next step? What additional skills do we need to build before we can secede to the next phase of action?

We have often heard the word tools, but tools are useless without an appropriate level of skill to use them effectively. We are often given some resources and directed to find tools but we don't take the time to build the skills of the people that need the tools. This process of building the skills is not only at the community level but it turns out to be at the level of all of the other partners.

With the process in place we then ask ourselves, what is the role that community residents can play in accountability? This too is a bit like the ladder that Ron used this morning. It can be fairly minimal and passive or fairly active and engaged. We have the opportunity to just be spectators. We can react to the inevitable failures. We can be regularly consulted. We can lead regular consultation. Or, we can actually participate in a regular meeting of a decision making body that will lead change.

Finally, as in some of the examples, the community might actually be directly involved in the implementation itself. Not just monitoring and not just participating. We can sit on the side and be throwing the boos or leading the cheers. We can react to the inevitable failures. I tell you that you know there will be no development project that does not have failures and therefore I say inevitable. It will always come to be that we have to revisit them and change. We can be regularly consulted in a passive kind of way. It may not be token but it could be fairly passive in that we are not sharing the leadership.

We can share the leadership with others of a regular process of consulting everybody and reviewing. We can participate in that decision-making body or we can be involved directly.

Any of these roles require a couple of comments. First of all, I want to emphasise what has been said over and over this morning, that capacity building is crucial to participating in implementing and in accountability. These are skills that are not automatic for any of the parties, so we need the resources, time and the commitment at each stage to build the capacity of all of the partners. What are those particular skills? We need to call on those who want to take the process forward to make the investment in that kind of capacity building.

The capacity building may not just be at the community end. For 25 years I ran a national institute in the United States that trained grassroots leaders to understand the business, processes and financing of developing a business expansion in communities so that the communities themselves could be involved in and control development. We used to think that all we had to do was drag government to the table and beat up the private sector because they didn't care – they only cared about their bottom line. After we beat them up and dragged them to the table, after we got their attention away from the bottom line, we discovered that they didn't know how to do what we're asking them to do. They didn't know how to work in a context of a neighbourhood, like the neighbourhoods that we're talking about. They were winging it just like we were winging it.

We wound up within ten years training government officials, training people from private foundations and ultimately training bankers. We ran, with the American Banking Association, a national school for bankers in community development finance because that was considered something you did in the third world

but no bankers were specialised in that in our home communities. Development banking is very different than the straight up underwriting, so we found that we had to train the other partners as well.

As I said to the press this morning when they said, 'isn't there a risk that coming down to the lowest level, demeaning the community, would mean that the change is only as strong as its weakest link?' I guess I found over the years the weak link can occur anywhere. There would not be an architect in his right mind that didn't listen to the carpenter telling him it's not straight. Everybody has a perspective and we have got to train them all at the table.

Implementation is also a balancing act. It is a balancing act because this is often where the professionals take over. Even in a Masterplan, the financing appendix is about three pages and it will be 300 by they time they get done. As you get into that level there is often a reliance on the professionals that takes the process away and it takes away the high level of participation we had at planning, but it also pertains to community leaders.

Community leaders after 9,10,15 meetings, even you the Jury, after a couple of weeks of training and preparing for this meeting, already talk a different vocabulary than you did when you started. You probably speak differently about this project than any of the members of your extended family who haven't sat through the same processes. Community leaders that I know often talk about the problem of becoming professional community leaders. We need a balancing act and a challenge even among ourselves to keep the processes open and highly participatory and that's the only thing that will keep it live for us.

There are some options even at the level of being directly involved in implementation that I want to talk about. The community may not just be an observer and an advisor. These also follow a kind of ladder of engagement or a sequence in the process. There is nothing to say that community residents cannot be the ones who collect the data in the accountability process. There is nothing to say that community leaders and community bodies cannot do the reflection and data analysis. You might have to be taught some of these skills but everybody else learned them too.

The community play a higher role. It may be a contractor in part of the process. You heard the frustration that Seamus talked about of having the skills in the community that you knew people could be contracted for security and other kinds of activities during the development process but it is possible and it's been done, both in this country and other European countries as well as in the United States. It is an opportunity to figure out what business exists or could be created within the community that would contract for elements of the development process itself. There is even the possibility of the community becoming a developer itself. You have in the appendix to the draft plan some sketch of what a development trust might look like, where you could take over part, or the entire development project itself. It is there as a good reminder of the option and unfortunately, it is not much integrated into the body of the plan that something and that is you ought to pursue in using those appendices.

There is also an appendix on job development and one on social enterprise that I think are very meaningful and clear sketches of what are the possibilities even in this site. You need to bring that into the body of the report. Those are things that are usually put off until implementation and then, oops, it's too late to get the community ready to play that role.

The community might also be a financial partner in the site. It is not uncommon for public authorities to place the financial investment of public resources in a project

through some community controlled development trust, so that now the community is a financial partner in the development with the private sector partner and with public sector. You have to be at the table because you are writing the cheques. There are ways of using the public investment to enhance the community's engagement. Finally, at the end of the project, the community might well be the manager or may provide particular services within the context of the project.

I want to just touch briefly on some United States examples of this just to show that there is an experience that you can wave around but, as I said in the appendices, there is also some very good examples that are closer to home for direct involvement. In Oakland, California they trained community residents to be expert interviewers of people in the community. They trained the same people to bring the tapes back from those interviews and to be the expert 'de-briefers' of the data. They then worked with people at the University on the analysis of the community, which was producing a highly textured analysis of it's own community. The side effect of that was all of those interviewers became community leaders around the issues that they had interviewed on and they were able to get an implementation of the plan, resources for self organised solutions to problems that people had identified in the process that built the capacity of people.

Here are a couple of examples of the community becoming responsible for part of the plan in a whole scheme. In Baltimore a group called the Washington Hill Housing Coop became the developer of the housing part of a much larger plan creating a 250-unit housing cooperative that they collectively owned and it has succeeded for 30 years. In fact, it outlasted some social housing that was built next to it and run by a housing trust from outside the community, which has now been torn down.

In St. Louis, the Carr Square Tenant Association, which first went on strike in public housing over the conditions in their council housing, got the contract from the Housing Authority to manage their own estate. They took the learning from that on how to do development, and built on the site across the street from the estate.

Sometimes the community in the United States has become responsible for the whole plan itself. In the Manchester section of Pittsburgh, a traditional Black community, the community leaders decided that the implementation of the plan had been screwed up so many times by outsiders that they couldn't possibly make it worse if they did it themselves. They asked to take over the plan and over 30 years they carefully built a very mixed income, mixed use community. This was even mixed income within the Black community, between homeowners and renters. They worked their way through all of the tensions that come with creating a very integrated community that comes from different backgrounds.

We have an experience in the United States of what we call Community Development Corporation, sometimes CDCs. They are quite like the Development Trust that is described in your appendix. We started out using these instruments as part of regeneration schemes. There are about 40 years of experience now in our country. The first 10 years there were perhaps 30 of these organisations. In the last 30 years they really exploded. There are over 12,000 of these organisations. Interestingly enough, they flourished and expanded at the time that government withdrew or was incapable of responding. They found ways to combine the community effort with government resources and with the private sector and other non-profits to bring about a comprehensive regeneration of their community. Sometimes surprising even those of us that were advocates. They took on huge projects.

The Spanish Speaking Unity Council in Oakland, California which had previously run a work force development and literacy programme and after school programmes for children, learned how to take on some housing development. They then went to take on a major mixed use commercial development at the Fruitvale BART stop, the subway stop that goes through their neighbourhood. The community owns the whole development.

In Los Angeles, the East Los Angeles Community Union took an abandoned tire factory in a multi-million dollar redevelopment 30 years ago and created a whole new industrial zone of jobs within their community as well as opportunities for residents.

So we can see that it has happened. There are some interesting side benefits besides the human rights and social deprivation accomplishments of these projects that are worth noting. First of all, and the most obvious one, is that some of the profits stay in the community. Indeed, even more importantly, the community owns the wealth that is created as a result of the physical improvement that appreciates over time. Unsuspectingly, we found that the expertise that people learned on one project they took onto another project. In fact, many community leaders that had participated in boards actually take away the experience to their own families and their own community that enable their families to succeed in the economy much better. People take the skills from one theatre and apply it to another.

The community develops institutional relationships with those outside. By definition the separation that we started off the day looking at in the disparity analysis also means that these communities here have become separated from the mainstream of Belfast – from the mainstream of Northern Ireland.

There are those communities where that minority of people who were involved in the Troubles, while the rest of us in Belfast were fine. The language of separation creeps in all over.

Direct involvement in development enables the community to have credibility and credit-ability with financial institutions for the work that it does. You cannot work in this kind of engagement with people from the private sector without developing a relationship with them. It is those relationships, that social capital across communities, that enables successful communities to stay successful. If our communities don't develop the same kind of alliances and relationships then over time we will remain isolated.

There is a very wonderful banker in Boston who told me that the way he can tell whether another bank is really involved in the community and is actively connecting, is when the community leaders call the president of the bank by his first name and visa-versa. They know each other and the bank president is coming up to someone from the community and asking about their daughter's graduation; the kind of relationships that everybody expects everywhere get restored through this process and that makes the community part of being reconnected.

I won't touch much on indicators because you have got some people working on this but I will say one thing. There is a problem with getting involved in the details of development, and that is being co-opted. It is inevitable that as you get to know more, as you get to have these relationships, as you get more involved in the details, you often seem to lose some of the fire in your eye, the vigour in your voice and the absolute commitment to the principles of human rights and social development that you might have had at the beginning. This is not just for community development. This has happened in trade unions, it's happened in

political parties, it's happened in businesses. You can read about this in the business literature of how the business gets stale after the founder is gone or the founder gets stale after the early days. It's not ours uniquely, but community engagement and open community transparent processes is what is going to keep all of us fresh. We get to be called accountable by the people that we are representing and we have engaged in the past.

I cannot go without saying something about government. I feel like having been a Deputy to a Sub-Cabinet Minister and come from a background of community activism I can put my finger on some of things that government can do that are very simple. I would ask you, as a Jury, to look at what you ask of government in some of the questions that Ron asked before.

I think government can set the right framework, the principles, insisting on effective participation, maintaining the structure, and providing the resources for capacity building. We now, in some of our programmes in the United States, require that every new programme of development have a set aside fund for building the capacity of the community as part of the funding scheme for that programme, not just for the community participants but the other partners. The government, obviously, is going to make investments in social development but it also needs to give its capital with strings attached, perhaps with the community. Finally, I think the accountable government department has a responsibility to bring in other departments to get over the silos that exist. As was said about the project in the Gasworks on the video, the various government departments just never got to show up.

There are also roles for intermediaries that I will leave with you, but you have some wonderful intermediaries in PPR and in the Committee for the Administration of Justice already playing these kinds of roles.

I am happy to answer questions and correspond with anyone who wants to follow up about elements in my presentation.

Thank you.

Inez McCormack:

I would like to thank Joe on behalf of the Jury. Can I now call Frank McMillan, who is a volunteer and intern at our project. He is currently studying in Belfast on a George J. Mitchell Scholarship, and I think I can say on behalf of the project, the Jury and all the communities here, he has given invaluable, voluntary service and he's a credit to his country.

Evidence

Frank McMillan:

Good Afternoon. Over the next few minutes I am going to try to put Girdwood into context as far as accountability is concerned. I am going to try and do that by accomplishing three goals.

I am going give a brief introduction to how Girdwood fits into previous and future regenerations in North Belfast that are currently going on. Second, I am going to look at how these plans have been held accountable thus far for meeting equality and human rights standards and then I am going to show how these different plans have actually been designed, or not, to be working together and not against each other.

What you have in Girdwood is a huge amount of money being put into North Belfast. It is part of a much larger and longer regeneration in all of Belfast. I wanted to try and give you a feel of what I mean by this by describing how these plans have progressed from City Centre out towards the north west of Belfast. They started in the North East Quarter Masterplan, which is the Cathedral Quarter, then go up to the North West Quarter Masterplan which includes Castle Court, on up to Girdwood and then finally to the Lower Shankill and the Crumlin Road Masterplans that are currently being developed and will be published hopefully, next month. As you can see it progresses into North Belfast and you have a huge part of North West Belfast being covered by these regeneration Masterplans at this point.

With all this money being put into North Belfast it is absolutely critical that the government and the DSD be held accountable to accomplish two goals; that they use the money in regeneration plans to actually tackle the existing deprivation and inequalities in terms of health care, education, housing and the employment that we have talked about already.

It is also to make sure that these plans work together and not against each other through out this time.
I am not saying anything radical or new in this part, these are things that the government has said needs to be accomplished if this regeneration is actually going to be successful.

I am going to move into the first of those, which deals with equality, human rights and planning. The goal of this section is to lay out how exactly equality has been taken into account thus far in those five Masterplans that are happening in North Belfast as we speak.
I am going to ask how has it strategically tried to tackle problems in health, education, employment and housing that came out in Nicola's presentation at the beginning and that have been reiterated throughout today's presentations.

Relating directly to what Mr. McNeely just said, if we're going to actually tackle these problems and if we are going to actually change those statistics that we saw, then we actually have to plan them at the beginning. We need to focus on how we 'build the bucket'.
Luckily in Northern Ireland, as Tim Cunningham pointed out, there is a method to actually make sure that these are taken account of during the planning and that is equality impact assessments. I don't want to repeat too much of what has already been said but they are designed precisely for something like regeneration Masterplans. Whenever there is a large amount of money being put into the area, whenever there is a new policy being put into the area, the EQIA is designed to hold the government accountable to actually address equality around housing, around education, around health care, around employment.
It also makes sure that those policies and monies are spent in an accurate way – making sure that they are actually targeted to address those statistics that when we look 20 years down the line we see a change in those statistics that were presented.

What I am going to do now is go through a brief history of those five Masterplans that are currently being developed for North Belfast. The first is the North East Quarter Masterplan which was published in February 2005. There was no Equality Impact Assessment done because they said the plan was too conceptual, as Mr. Cunningham has indicated. This is going to turn into a pattern throughout this presentation. It went out to public consultation and people provided very specific views about how they thought the Masterplan needed to be changed. People talked about the need to make sure that it was okay for people who are physically disabled. They talked about the need to make sure that parents with young children felt comfortable in an atmosphere like the North East Quarter around the Cathedral Quarter. That public consultation came back but no Equality Impact Assessment was done at that point. It was approved by the Minister in August of 2005, but no Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out according to the government representative that I spoke to recently.

I am now going to go onto the North West Quarter Masterplan, which was published at the same time as the North East Quarter Masterplan. It is also quite parallel in terms of the same problems. The Masterplan was sent out but, again, there was no Equality Impact Assessment because it was too conceptual. It was sent out for public consultation and people, again, responded, talking about equality and about the needs to worry about employment among the different communities and about making sure that there was access for the disabled. The public consultation came back later that year and it was approved by the Minister in August of 2005. The government has said that as of now there will be an Equality Impact Assessment carried out in the Summer of 2008. I believe it has just started but I am not entirely certain of that. However there is one planned and the government said that it will take place.

The next one is the one that you, the jury, are working on; the Girdwood Barracks Masterplan. It was published in the summer of 2007 with no Equality Impact Assessment because it was too conceptual. It went out for public consultation. A number of groups argued that there was a need for an Equality Impact Assessment to be done. There are lots of equality issues and it is one of the most deprived wards in all of Belfast. We need to take account of this.

What Minister Ritchie did was something very interesting I think. She said that she is not going to approve it until an Equality Impact Assessment is done. That was a welcomed response from the government.

Finally we have the two plans that have not been published that will be affecting North Belfast – those are the Lower Shankill and Crumlin Road Masterplans. These are not yet published but will be next month, hopefully. What I think is interesting and I think needs to be pointed out is that in the government documents so far, and in the terms of reference, it said that there are no plans to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment. It also says that if one is needed, it will only happen after the Minister has approved it. I think it is important to keep in mind how these plans are different and how they focus on equality in very different ways.

The left over questions that come to my mind and I think need to be in the minds of the Jury is first, how will the planned equality impact assessments actually or significantly change these Masterplans? So that the plans themselves actually address the equality concerns that we have heard about, so that they actually address education, health, housing and employment inequalities. The second question is, why is there not an Equality Impact Assessment already planned for the Lower Shankill and Crumlin Road Masterplans? If we know those statistics already,

and those are government statistics, if we know that these are some of the most deprived wards in Northern Ireland, why has there not been an Equality Impact Assessment already planned to be carried out? Why do we have to wait for that to happen?

Now, for the last part I want to talk about how the plans fit together and how the government has been held accountable thus far for that. There has been very little published about how the plans are actually going to be put together, but the goal under development is to create a Gaolhouse Quarter in North Belfast and this has been taken from some of the minutes from the Belfast City Council. They want to use these three regeneration plans, the Lower Shankill, Girdwood and Crumlin Road Masterplans to create a new role for these communities. If this is actually going to happen, if we are going to create a Gaolhouse Quarter, if there's going to be this new role for North Belfast, then I think it is absolutely imperative that we ask how this is actually going to happen. How is this actually going to change those statistics?

So, for example, if I am trying to improve health in this area, if I am trying to actually change the way mental health is happening, I need to do an audit of the best place to put a health facility if I am going to build one. I need to figure out where I need to place it so that it actually serves the needs of the public, so that it actually helps the places that have the most needs in terms of health. If I am going to build a new school I need to look at where the communities are that actually need the help in terms of education.

Unfortunately, the detailed plans for this haven't been published yet. I think it might be useful to take a look at the way in which the timeline of those plans have currently come across. In July 2007 the Girdwood Masterplan was published and in the summer of 2008 the Lower Shankill and Crumlin Road plans and the strategic framework for North Belfast will be published. The strategic framework is the plan that puts all these plans together. In other words, what you see is that the Girdwood Masterplan was written well before the strategic framework and plan for all of North Belfast. It may be just me, but why would you do it in this order? Wouldn't it have saved money if I did the strategic framework first? If I have to rearrange the Girdwood Masterplan afterwards, wouldn't it have been nice to have done that first before I actually did the smaller plans? That's the sort of question that struck me as I was going through this and I think that it is not just a question someone working on this would have, I think it is a very rational question.

I should point out, to try and be as fair as I can, that the government has said on multiple occasions that there is a specific role for the Girdwood Masterplan in North Belfast and that role is to tackle employment and employability in North Belfast. That is all very good and I think some of the speakers, like Seamus and Ken, have both pointed out that employment and employability are extraordinarily important. I think that is great but for a plan that is going to invest millions of pounds into North Belfast, a plan that contains specific plans for health, housing, education and not just employment and for a plan that links closely with the Lower Shankill and Crumlin Road plans, it's not enough just to make that point. Something that I think the government would agree with, is that in order to actually plan out a specific area, you need to have begun and done more than just saying that the focus of a plan needs to be employment and employability.

I just want to say that the questions that I think need to be addressed by you, as you start to take this evidence away and start to work on it in order to create standards are: How is this new strategic framework, this general plan for North Belfast, actually going to change the Girdwood Masterplan in a substantive way? Is there going to be an Equality Impact Assessment on

the strategic framework to see how it best addresses these in a strategic way? Finally, what are the separate roles for each Masterplan going to be in tackling inequality and human rights in North Belfast?

I think some of these questions will be answered by the strategic framework that comes up but I think that those answers need to be included in whatever deliberations that you end up doing. I thank you very much and I hope this evidence has been useful to you and I wish you all the best as you try to put it in practice.

Inez McCormack:
I would like to thank Frank on behalf of the Jury. Now, I would like to call Tim Losty, who is the Director of the North Belfast Community Action Unit, who took up his position in March 2008. I would like to welcome Tim because he is a representative of the government here and he will be presenting evidence on behalf of the government, not in his personal capacity, and I think we should recognise that sometimes the government isn't popular in what it's doing so he has come here to do it on their behalf.
You are welcome Tim.

Evidence

Tim Losty:
Thanks for the opportunity to come along and speak to people from my perspective. There is no such a thing as too much consultation. As Inez says, I came back from America and took over the operation of the Unit a couple of months ago, so a lot of the questions that people have been asking, I have also been asking of the Unit. I feel that this is a good opportunity, perhaps, to provide a bit of clarity on what we have been doing in the Unit. This has also been a useful session for myself and colleagues from that team because we are listening to what people are saying and, in particular, some of the work of the international experts.

What we are trying to do with the overall Crumlin Road Gaol, Girdwood Barracks, and we emphasise the two aspects here because they're integrated. The Gaol is an asset, something that we want to use to attract and to benefit to the overall development. We want to create benefits for people living locally. That is people not just in the five wards surrounding the Gaol – Girdwood site, but throughout North Belfast. Some of the speakers talked earlier about the barrier; North Belfast being separated from the rest of the developments in Belfast. We believe that we can see that and we do want to see any development that we put on this site to open North Belfast up to people and money coming into the area and also from people from the area going in to join the rest of the city.

We do see this as a one off opportunity and we want to use this site and the Gaol as legacy for what happens in the future. We had an advisory panel that came together and they all agreed on this statement – this mission statement. We believe it is a living statement. It is something that we adhere to at every opportunity. The people that we talk to and the people that we engage with, we want them also to support this statement.

Our mission statement says that we want to bring maximum economic, social and environmental benefits to the local and wider community. We want to create a vibrant, inclusive and diverse environment which attracts present and future generation of people to live, work and visit. In the work that we do, we have to balance the needs of the people now – the people in the immediate community to people of the wider community and also, the needs of the generations to come. This is simply summarised by asking all of us, government, community, business, church leaders, educationalists, what sort of community do we want here in 20 years time?

That means some of the things that we all want to do now we may have to change. There may be other things that younger people want to see on the site that may be alien to older generations.

I know you were out on a tour yesterday, the international speakers, and if you do come back we would love to take you around the site and if people in the Jury want to get in and have a look at the Gaol site and Girdwood, we would be more than happy to arrange that. I think you have to get in there to see the perspective and just to see the potential, and also to see where it connects with communities and where it lies in terms of the fractures within the communities.

The Gaol site itself is 13 acres. Girdwood Park is 14 acres but they are joined giving us 27 acres of prime estate, one and three quarter miles outside Belfast City Centre. Frank has mentioned these plans earlier and no, we didn't collaborate on this before I came up here but what we do on the Gaol site we also have to take recognition of developers from other Masterplans.

We have also emphasised and some of the discussions today have talked about 'the community' and 'a community' – we don't have a homogenous community in the area that we're talking about here. We have different communities with different approaches. In terms of our approaching the needs of those communities we have to be very sensitive to the fact that there are differences there.

In terms of joining up North Belfast to the Belfast City Centre we look around and see a lot of things in North Belfast that are not joined up. We have a lot of assets but they all tend to operate individually. We would hope that whatever we do in the Gaol/ Girdwood site connects in with the other Masterplans but it also connects with some of these other assets that we have in North Belfast and that it starts to attract people into the area. More importantly, that we also find ways of keeping them in the area and taking their money off them.

I talked about the Advisory Panel and people asked earlier what recognition we place on these statistics and the issues of the five wards surrounding the Gaol site and the Girdwood site. Also, who are we accountable to? Who is going to mark our homework? The Advisory Panel that was set up to provide advice to the Minister under the team. You will see many of the names there represent the five wards that surround the area and we have to go back to those people – we want to go back to those people – with regular updates as to what is happening. Many of those people also will ask us to keep them updated on what is happening, so our homework is being marked.

The thing that is also important in situations like this is to just say that we know that people here gave up a lot of their time. It can also be a frustrating process but we just want to pay our thanks for giving up their time to help us. This isn't a situation where government – a man in the grey suit – decides what is going to into an area and then the community has to live with it. We have tried to involve people from an early stage.

We have also looked at some best practice, a lot of best practice here but in reference to some of the international visitors you maybe recognise some of the places up there. Lorton Prison in Virginia, the Boston Prison, Anacostia Stadium in Washington, D.C., were areas that either myself or some of my predecessors or the team or Ministers have gone out to look at to see what's happening in other regions and to see what we can learn from them.

In terms of the Masterplan, we refer to it as a Draft Masterplan. It isn't a definite Masterplan. It does not have concrete proposals. The Masterplan suggests proposals for discussion and for agreement. What we have tried to do in the Masterplan is make

sure that it is people and community focused in terms of the approach. I know some people maybe disagree with some of the language or disagree with some of the stages that we have taken in the development of the Masterplan but I think if you do read the Masterplan document you will see in a number of chapters, a number of paragraphs, we do emphasise that the communities have to feel ownership of the developments that go on this site.

We also want to build on local skills. We want to provide training. We want to provide advice to people to go for jobs. I was interested in the video and the discussion about the Gasworks site and one of the things that I want to do after this is perhaps talk to some of those employers like Halifax to say, what did they do to try and attract local people? Did local people apply for jobs? If they did, why did they not get them? They are questions that we want to get answers to.

We do want to create more jobs for local people. We want to see a cohesive society with shared use. I have used the word cohesive deliberately here because I am not just talking about a shared space, a shared society between the two main communities here. It has to also be a cohesive society where young people can live side by side with elderly people, where you have single parents living beside families and where we have people of different abilities being accommodated on the site and everybody feeling safe and secure in living there.

Very importantly, we want to attract, create and maintain wealth in the area. We don't want people just to come in visit, say nice things and then disappear off again. We need to find ways to get people in, stop what they're doing, take their wallets and their money out of their wallets, give them the empty wallets back and have people leave saying they have had a great time in North Belfast.

We need to try and create or change the perception of North Belfast. I spent some time in the States and when people asked me where I lived and I said North Belfast they sort of took one step back. Later when they got to know me they said, you seem like a decent enough fella, why do you still live there? You do have a reputation or perception out there and I want to change that perception.

We also want to look at this site in terms of creating significant added value. We don't want everybody getting a wee bit of what they want – nobody getting everything that they want – if we divide it up to the lowest common denominators, we lose a lot out of this.

We are going for mixed use development. Joe was talking about the diversification that you need in jobs and we want to see that diversification on this site. We want to see jobs being created for the skills of the people that live in the neighbouring communities. We also want to see jobs and businesses located on this site that will serve as role models or as incentives to people. We don't want people just to get low-paid jobs or medium-paid jobs. We want people in the local communities to aspire to getting whatever job is going to go on this site in future years.

We believe we have an asset in the Gaol. Some people say it is a horrible place and to knock it down and start all over again. We do believe that we have something there that makes us different from the other parts of Belfast and other parts of this region. It is something that we want to build on, but we have to adapt it and we have to use it. It was a Gaol in the past. It is now a resource to the community so we need to open the Gaol up to more community use.

We have stakeholders already there on the site – St. Malachy's College and Mater Hospital. We need to take care of their needs so that they can continue to add value to the community. We are looking at leisure facilities which have been suggested and we also need to open the site up. When you open the site up and you put roads in anywhere the problem is that roads are contentious. Whether it is in North Belfast with all the issues we have here or anywhere else, roads are contentious. We know that. We are talking to people about the road and we will continue to talk to people about the road, but, very importantly, we need to open the site. We don't want it excluded. We don't want it shut off from all the other developments that are happening all around it.

We also want to get quality public realm; places where people feel comfortable that they can go to, they can sit, they can relax and they can enjoy. If we are going to bring lots of people into the area we also have to look at car parking. We don't want multi-storeys but we are going to need to put the cars somewhere. That may be underground and that is expensive.

We are also looking at new development sites on the site. I think we may be leaving some sites vacant at this stage with the hope that we can develop something in future years that will, again, meet up with whatever changes are happening in the market place.

One thing I do want to say is that housing has been mentioned but housing is also an issue on which we failed to get agreement on the Advisory Panel. You have seen some of the process to date from Frank's presentation. In terms of the consultation process, there was consultation before the Draft Masterplan was prepared; it went out to public consultation on the 16th of October and the letter that went out with some of that public consultation said that our view was because the plan was in the conceptual stage we would not be carrying out an EQIA at that stage. However, as we got more definite plans an EQIA would be carried out. We want to say that it was always the intention in the Unit that an Equality Impact Assessment would be carried out on this project.

We have now started the process of the EQIA and we continue to consult with as many groups as possible. We have had business people up looking at the site, we have had community leaders and we are also getting church leaders up. In terms of numbers, pre-concept stage, six public meetings and a series of individual meetings took place. We also provided briefings with our colleagues in the community empowerment partnerships. I think Joe was talking about building capacity in the community and that's what we have tried to do with the 13 CEP's over the last number of years.

In terms of the concept stage, there was advertising and public meetings – single identity meetings and also cross-community meetings. Cross-community meetings in this area are very important. When we put the plan out in October, we also put out a number of statements that the public would be consulted. The Draft Masterplan is an illustration of what is possible and we said that we would take full recognition of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act in our consultations. In the public consultation we had five public meetings and we met with stakeholders. We had 908 responses and hopefully the Jury has had the opportunity to look at the response document that is on our website. We are also getting that printed up and that will be sent out to everybody that responded to the consultation. In terms of the EQIA, we have just written out to 527 organisations and asked them to come back to us. Some have already come back and we will be doing a ring around because we feel that there are some groups there we definitely want to talk to.

We have met with the Equality Commission and we will continue to meet with the Equality Commission. In terms of monitoring, we want to make sure that the Equality Commission's happy with the work that we are doing. We will talk to CAJ. Tim is very helpful and gave us copies of the Olympics Strategies and we intend to look at that and we will consult with them in the future. We will also be talking to PPR. We are trying to gather qualitative information at the moment and identify some of the gaps. This is the process that we go through to get the EQIA out. There will be a consultation period of 12 weeks once we have written the document up, so there will be more consultation.

In terms of the next stage, we complete the EQIA, then there may also be other consultations that we need to do for the environment or health. We also need to continue to meet with business organisations and investment organisations. We need to continue to meet with the stakeholder organisations on the site who may be party to this site. We will refine and finalise the Masterplan when we finish the consultation process. It will then go for Ministerial approval because the Gaol site is owned by OFMDFM, Girdwood is owned by DSD and we will need more than one Minister to sign them off. It then goes to the Social Development Committee and then the Executive in terms of approval. It is then that we commence implementation.

We want to get to the implementation stage as quickly as possible, but we have given guarantees to the Equality Commission and to the Minister that we will not cut corners in the consultation process. In terms of the implementation and how we build things in, we need to ensure that economic social benefits reach all communities. We want to ensure inclusivity. We will build fairness and equality of opportunity into the procurement processes and into any of the processes that we get involved in whenever we're working with other organisations. We do need to promote good relations. The site exists in a fracture between our communities. We don't want whatever goes onto this site to be tagged as a problem area. We want the communities to get together and try to reach agreement on how their needs can be met. We think the EQIA will help us there. We also need to secure, attract and support resources, and it also needs to be cost effective.

Challenges – we need to monitor expectations. That was mentioned earlier. We are looking for equality of opportunity and we want to address diversity. We want to open the Gaol up as much as possible to the local community and the wider community. We want people to see what we are doing; we don't want it to be hidden behind the gates. The Gaol will open up for public tours in June. We hope to do some renovation work that will open up other parts of it from September. We want to get agreement from the other stakeholders as quickly as possible and agreement on housing as quickly as possible and we want to get to the implementation stage as quickly as possible.

Some of the proposals that exist for this site you may have seen from the documents, so hopefully that has clarified some of the issues and maybe given people some confidence as to the fact that we do have community's interest at heart in the development of this project.

Thanks.

Inez McCormack:
I would like to thank Tim on behalf of the Panel for giving evidence. May I move over to the Jury now and ask if you have any questions of this Panel.

Questions from the Jury

1. Mary Connor:
My question is for Frank McMillan. Frank, we don't understand how an Equality Impact Assessment could have been carried out at different stages; some after the Masterplan is produced and some before; some after the Minister's decision and some before; and some not at all. How can this be possible?

Frank McMillan:
I am not entirely sure. I think there are a lot of similar issues that came out in those five Masterplans but I am not entirely sure why the process would have been different in each of them.

2. George Kidd:
I have a question for Tim Losty. We have just heard that the strategic plan for North Belfast is being published after the Draft Masterplan for Girdwood.
Can you help us understand why this was done?

Tim Losty:
The Masterplan looked, initially, at the physical development of the site. As I understand, the Strategic Framework Document is a document that is being taken forward by organisations such as the North Belfast Partnership Board and other partnership boards and they are looking at the strategic role issues that are impacting on community organisations and the development of departmental policy in those areas. We are feeding into each other in terms of what is happening. If you wanted me to say if this is a perfect situation, no, it's not. Joe had mentioned about departmental silos, community silos and other things like that and we have many stakeholders out there who engaged with us at different times and we need to be recognising that. Ideally we hope to get our Masterplans and the Strategic Framework travelling along the same path as quickly as possible.

3. George Kidd:
I have a question for Tim Losty. Work on the Girdwood regeneration so far has cost a lot of money, a lot of people's time and a lot of people's good will. Should the issues raised by Nicola Browne and Tim Cunningham on deprivation and equality have formed part of the discussions at the start?

Tim Losty:
I agree with you and I feel that they were involved at the start of the process. Certainly whenever people came together who were on that Advisory Panel, they were very adamant about the needs and the issues in their communities. That fed into a lot of the debates and the issues around what type of projects or proposals should be included in the Masterplan.

Although it maybe doesn't mention the numbers in the statistics, it mentions the issues. Numbers and statistics can change over years whereas what we needed to do was recognise that there are problems about unemployment and there are problems about access to employability training. There are problems about people taking up education. We know that they exist. We know that there are problems in this area and they are built into that Draft Masterplan and they will be issues that have to be addressed in the Final Masterplan.

4. George Kidd:
I have another question here for Tim Losty.
With the Girdwood regeneration, will the DSD be following the Equality Commission guidelines that Tim Cunningham referred to earlier which outline what steps need to be taken?

Tim Losty:
Absolutely. We will also be talking to the Equality Commission and departmental equality officers at the various stages of the process to make sure that we're following the right procedures.

5. Mary Connor:

Yes, I have got a question for Joe McNeely.
Given what you have heard so far today and after giving your own presentation, what would you say are the first steps that the community and government should take to ensure that this process is accountable?

Joe McNeely:

I think the first step is getting a little bit more closure on how the social and human rights goals are reflected in the plan. There is a perception that it is taken into account and it is buried in there somewhere but I think that could lead to a lot of misunderstanding.

I also think that it would be a very useful, immediate discussion to try to figure out with the Minister and their Department, to what degree are their appendices part of the plan or are these simply things that were discarded? If they are meaningful, if they are in fact part of the plan, then where did they integrate?

Finally, what are the goals? What are the indicators that will be used to find out if we've achieved them? We can collect some baseline information right now but if it's not going to be these statistics then what are they? While, as Tim said, the statistics change over time, there needs to be some agreement about which set of cards we're playing with at the beginning so we know where the change went.

6. Cailín McVeigh:

I have a question for Tim Losty. Of all the other regeneration plans that have been done in Northern Ireland, what lessons were learned about the importance of participation from the local community, particularly disadvantaged groups, for example, youth and disabled?

Tim Losty:

A lot of lessons have been learned. You will not get successful regeneration unless the community that lives beside the regeneration feels that it also belongs to them. It can't be something that is alien and it is just parachuted in, otherwise it becomes a target. Local communities need to feel that they have ownership of it and they also need to feel that they are proud of it and they need to feel that they will be supportive of it.

We need to see local communities and wider communities supporting what we do here.
You mentioned youth and I think youth, in particular, is very important. You will probably get more use out of this site than most of the rest of us sitting in the room here. We will be in nursing homes somewhere while you will have families to bring up. You will be working somewhere, you will be interested in education and in leisure. Your views are important. We have written out to all the schools in North Belfast and we have invited all the principals to come to the site to have a look around and to bring their students with them. We also believe it is an important part of the education process. We want people to see the Gaol and to see how it has fitted in with the historical role in Belfast. More importantly, we want to hear from young people about what they want to see there in the future.

7. George Kidd:

I have a question for Joe McNeely.
How would you make sure our communities get the skills, knowledge and resources to be an active part in the regeneration process?

Joe McNeely:
I think that there are three things that occur to me quickly. One, is that you need to identify what are the community organisations and community structures that are being engaged. Secondly, there needs to be a budget; a set of resources for capacity building and engagement of those organisations and, as Tim broadens the list to wider stakeholders, I think that is a good idea. There needs to be some forum in which all the wider stakeholders and the local stakeholders are face to face. The community needs to not just feel it owns the plan; it needs to actually own the plan. To own the plan, you have got to be all together in an ownership body and that takes some resources to create.

The third thing that this usually leads to, is one or a cluster of third-party organisations that are able to be interveners and facilitators and run the educational process. If we are going to change the way development is done so that we get different benefits, then we are all going to have to learn a different way to do it. Some people have to catch up to the way it has been in the past and some of the people who have been doing it in the past need to get in situations where they can imagine different ways of doing it in the future. That is going to take a table of both community and public and private investment community early on. Sometimes that is hard to do too and I think one of the roles of government is to help get that table.

Inez McCormack:
Can I just ask for clarification there Joe? In your presentation you talked about that kind of education capacity but quite a lot of people didn't realise it needed to be done. How did you get the developers, business people, architects and other stakeholders who didn't know, to recognise that they needed that capacity as well? Not civil servants, no disrespect Tim.

Joe McNeely:
Actually the civil servants were an interesting group because they were paying for all this capacity building and they didn't know how development was done and they kept saying we wish we could go to these sessions. Finally we said, 'why don't you go to your people and let's get this to be part of the civil service training', because they felt like this was something that you don't learn and administrate.

The way that the private sector came to it was that the people at the front line viewed some of the assignments that they were given to work in the communities, often as what we came to call 'career ending assignments'. The boss thought it was a good idea to have a community partnership but they knew when they got out there they didn't know how to do it and if it failed they knew who was going to get blamed. They were quick to acknowledge that nobody knew how to do it. Training was safer than some of the other fights over policy because you can, in a training and education situation, ask the dumb question. When you are negotiating with another party over the table you're not supposed to be dumb. The training therefore became a safe place for bringing it together.

In our experience, and in this community, there is an incredible benefit to cross-sectoral, simultaneous training in which some of the training goes on for those in their own realm. Then there is a moment in which you bring people together and there is a kind of cross-cultural experience. Community meetings are conducted in a different culture than corporate meetings, which are in turn conducted in a different culture than Parliamentary meetings. People may come from what looks like the same background but have a completely different approach to a meeting. For example, what do you do in a meeting when you're in conflict with the Chair? We know those of us from communities how participatory that moment is.

It is not necessarily what happens in government and in the private sector, there needed to be some understanding of even how you go to meetings with each other.

8. Cailín McVeigh:

I have a question for Tim Losty. We will be drawing up recommendations after considering the evidence and these will be based on promoting our human rights. Is the department willing to work with us on these recommendations in order to ensure inequality and disadvantage in our communities are addressed through the regeneration?

Tim Losty:

We will work with partner organisations. We want to work with the community. We will work with anybody who supports that mission statement and is going to work with us with integrity and with a desire to achieve something that will maximise the benefits for all the communities. I cannot give you a guarantee that we would support every recommendation that you would have simply because we do have to look at how we balance with other communities, value for money and things like that. But, a simple answer is, yes, we want to see and hear more from you. We will respond as positively as we can and we hope that we will meet you again.

Inez McCormack:

I would like to thank the Panel very much for giving your evidence. I would also like to thank Virgínia for her for her patience because she has had a long day to listen and process these comments. I now ask Virgínia to come up and give her comments on what she has heard.

07

Concluding remarks from Virgínia Bra Gomes

Virgínia Brás Gomes:

Virgínia Brás Gomes: Thank you Inez. I really cannot begin to address what I have heard during the day today and I don't think I'm going to attempt to do any kind of a summing up. What I thought I could do is to kind of divide this into two different sections. In one of them I will try to transmit some of the things I have retained from each of the presentations that, to me, are strong messages on what we have been discussing today. Then I would like to make a couple of personal comments

Beginning from this morning, from Nicola Browne, we have heard the statistical evidence of deprivation and a strong call to inclusion and to participation of residents in decision making, I think that set the tone.

From Richard Wilkinson what I retained is the far-reaching negative impacts of income inequality in many areas of our lives. He told us that the important thing is inequality and the differences of standards of living rather than the average standard of living. He also told us how important social status is and that bigger the material differences, the wider the social prejudices and inequalities.

From Tim Cunningham I heard that the peace dividend put an end to political barriers but that it has not brought increased living dividends. In fact, it might have brought increased financial barriers and relative deprivation. He referred to the role of the Equality Impact Assessment and to adequate procurement processes which I think are important in this context.

From Ron Shiffman we heard the consequence of powerlessness and the adequate response to inclusive, democratic processes, substantive participation and an empowerment of people. I particularly like the difference between non-participation, token participation and real citizen power. I think these are concepts that are flying all over but it was very good to have you just pin point the three levels of participation. You brought some examples of successful participation models and, I particularly like this final stand about 'nothing about us, without us, is for us'.

From the local stories of the regeneration project, we heard from Joe Donohoe that people need a reason to get involved. We also heard of the importance of resident's participation and of real partnerships. I particularly liked his reference to a public private partnership in which he said, it doesn't really matter who pays, provided the Masterplan is delivered. I think that is a very pragmatic approach because sometimes you are bogged down by ideological discussion but really if the Masterplan is delivered then if it is a public private partnership, or a private public partnership, it really doesn't matter. It matters that the Masterplan is delivered. I liked the reference to 'Dream, Dare and Do', which is their regeneration learning manual which I think is quite a good motto for participation.

From the Gasworks regeneration video we learned how the 'trickle down' effect really resulted in low-paid and less skilled jobs for the local community due to the lack of an effective job enhancement programme and the lack of specific training. I think that is something that we all need to take into account; this message that the pending regeneration projects should try to avoid the same mistakes.

Joe McNeely talked to us about community, accountability and regeneration, and he alerted us to the fact that models have principles that can be adapted but models cannot be replicated. He told us about the sequence of steps for accountability in an overall plan and in a tailored implementation plan. He gave us some options for direct community roles and I am sure the Jury paid special attention to that.

I was very interested by the way Frank McMillan tried to put the different Masterplans together, and, in fact, I think in his presentation we got an idea of a certain incoherence in the way Equality Impact Assessments are approached in the different Masterplans. Sometimes it is at one stage, sometimes it is at no stage at all and it would really be interesting to see how it works within the context of the Strategic Framework for North Belfast. His left over questions provide a lot of food for thought for future deliberations.

That brings me straight to the last presentation by Tim Losty. I think the Jury would not agree more with you about making North Belfast a vibrant, inclusive and diverse environment. You will also understand that the Jury will share some of the concerns Frank McMillan referred to just before you made your presentation. We are all aware of the need to work together and that the ownership of the plan really belongs to all the partners but, above all, to the rights holders. In that sense, I think that your assurance that the Masterplan is still at a draft stage and that with the definite Masterplan there is still opportunity for the residents to contribute and that you will take all contributions as an important asset to the final version of the plan.

I also just want to make a few personal comments. I have been very touched today. I am very grateful for this opportunity to have become more aware of the lived experiences of injustice and inequality. As a member of the Committee, this contact with your real lived experience is something that I miss and something that I think is very important for me to better interpret the Covenant.

As the Resident Jury you have come together as individuals and as a group to represent your community and to ask for explanations on why living conditions and those of your families and your friends have not improved over the last ten years. Would the peace agreement and civil and political rights have acquired a new dimension? That is what we heard yesterday from our context in Shankill, in Crumlin and in New Lodge. Having said that, it would seem that the fulfilment of economic, social and cultural rights has not acquired a new dimension, at least it has not acquired the necessary new dimensions, particularly for the poor target groups most in need.

In my opinion, some of the reasons for this are well known. In the first place is the fact that in spite of the political discourse on the universality and interdependence and inter-relatedness for human rights, the truth still is that for many states, economic, social and cultural rights do not have the same priority as civil and political rights. One of the arguments we often hear in the Committee is that the principle of indivisibility does not imply full implementation, thereby placing economic, social and cultural rights at a subsidiary level to civil and political rights, and are seen sometimes as second class rights only to be fulfilled progressively over time?

The second reason is that interdependence among economic, social and cultural rights themselves is far from being a reality though it is the obligation of the duty bearers to monitor the situation in respect to each of the rights on a regular basis. To be able to assess the extent of the enjoyment or non-enjoyment by all individuals does not happen very often.

The third reason is because state parties consider that economic, social and cultural rights are not clearly focused nor are they expressed with the clarity needed to establish binding obligations for state's parties.

That brings me to the core obligations that I touched upon this morning and that are so important to promote equality and address as a matter of absolute priority the needs of specific target groups subject to multiple deprivation. The biographies of the members of the Jury reflect their life history and patterns of systematic deprivation.

In terms of legislation, Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and the section on the enforcement of the duties of the Equality Commission provide the legal framework for the promotion of equality of opportunity for the nine identified target groups that cover a wide spectrum of wrongful discrimination. In terms of legislation, you have it all, but there appears to be lack of Equality Impact Assessments at the initial stages. That is what has happened with the Draft Masterplan for Crumlin Road and Girdwood, which proves that this legislation has not been fully implemented. This is a serious concern because it is in relation to these target groups that the core obligations of states are needed and cannot be subject to the notion of progressive realisation without time-bound, measurable benchmarks that establish the targets to be achieved. The economic and social measures to achieve these targets, and enable an on-going assessment that allows for corrections of ineffective impact, can only be achieved if the target groups effectively participate in this process.

When grouped together the core obligations under all the rights establish an international minimum threshold that all development policy should respect. The Committee, in its general comments, has identified core obligations arising from minimum essential levels of the right to food, of the right to education, of the right to health, of the right to work and of the right to social security. These general comments, we hope, will provide some guidance for states parties.

In relation to progressive realisation, I would like to refer to the obligations of states to take steps to the maximum of available resources. In our last statement on this issue, adopted in May 2007, we have recommended that several policy options are possible and available. The state should adopt the option that least restricts government rights and that all steps to be taken should take into account the precarious situation of deprived individuals and families with utmost priority to be given to rape situations. Overall priorities should therefore ensure that resource allocation is in conformity with the state's obligations under the government.

In the context of accountability, state parties should ensure the fulfilment of the core obligations and their obligation of progressive realisation, irrespective of other future or past accountability mechanisms. They can decide as appropriate on what mechanisms they would like to follow, provided they are accessible, transparent and effective.

One thing we know and have learnt from our dialogue with state parties is that the assessment of the impact of economic and social policies on the enjoyment of human rights, is not possible without established, mutually agreed and understood indicators and benchmarks. In many states these indicators are not available and they should be.

Those are standard procedures that the Committee asks states for; statistical data on an annual basis, disaggregated on the grounds of discrimination, age, gender, ethnic origin, rural residence, etc., but hardly any states provides a coherent set of such indicators and benchmarks. The example of indicators and benchmarks established at the grassroots level by the effected groups themselves is relevant to their impact assessment, like the one you have developed on maintenance and sewage. That type of setting of indicators opens a window of opportunity for a bottom

up process that can be greatly useful to the other levels of planning and assessment. This is what meaningful participation can bring to policy formulation.

Let me now use a couple of minutes to come back to the development induced regeneration that we also touched upon this morning. It has to do with economic liberalisation and brings in an issue of real states regulation and investment. It is true to assume that such projects have not led to a favourable environment for the realisation of economic, social and cultural rights. On the contrary, they have lengthened the divide between the rich and the poor greatly because they have not integrated human rights and principles. They promise a conclusive outcome and increased opportunities for employment and education and improved living conditions for effected groups have not materialised, so people feel increasingly left out as their hopes for a better life are not met.

The PPR Residents' Jury Model is all about building up such hopes again and providing these groups with the practical tools to monitor the various stages of the regeneration process. What it is doing is to build the capacity needed to bring in the rights based approach throughout the regeneration process to meaningful participation that largely moves on beyond mere consultation.

I would just like to end by taking advantage of the fact that we are in the Indian Community Centre and I think it is appropriate for a partial quotation from Dr. Ambedkar, who's one of the founding fathers of the Indian Constitution. The Indian Constitution is considered to be very progressive in terms of economic, social and cultural rights, and he said:

'My final words of advice to you are educate, agitate and organise. Have faith in yourself. With justice on our side I do not see how we can lose our battle for ours is not a battle for wealth or for power, it is the battle of the reclamation of human dignity. While the common theme and the line of experience of deprivation is one of powerlessness human rights can empower individuals and communities. The challenge is to connect the powerless with empowering potential of human rights.'

This is what the PPR is doing and my plea today in Belfast is for public duty bearers for the national human rights institution and other supervisory bodies, for civil society and the corporate sector involved in the regeneration process, for Girdwood and other similar projects to recognise the Residents' Jury as an excellent example of how to build a culture for human rights and meaningful participation that can really constitute a golden opportunity for change.

I will be a friend of the Residents' Jury forever, whether you want it or not.

Thank you very much.

Aideen Gilmore:

Thank you very much Virgínia and thank you for being with us today. The government is being examined by Virgínia's Committee within the coming weeks so I hope that some of the lessons and information and learning that she has picked up today will be fed into that examination and some pertinent questions will be asked.

We're on the home straight people and I'd like to hand over now, briefly, to Nadine Morgan from the Jury who is going to make a brief statement.

Thank you for your patience.

Concluding remarks from the Residents' Jury

Residents' Jury Members (left to right)
Margaret Valente, Ronald Shiftman, Inez McCormack, Joe McNeely and Bertie Atkinson

Nadine Morgan:

Good afternoon. A few months ago we came together as a Residents' Jury to learn about our human rights and about the regeneration in North Belfast.
We wanted to make sure our voices were heard and our needs were met. Now, after gathering the evidence and hearing from these speakers we have to take the next step in our long journey. We need to use this information to improve the way the regeneration in Girdwood takes place.

Over the next few weeks we will be working alongside other residents of the ward surrounding Girdwood to develop simple and specific human rights indicators that help us achieve this goal. We will work to make sure this regeneration puts equality, participation, accountability and human rights at its heart.

In your folders you have a chance to help us.
You can give us evidence and contribute to these indicators on the sheets we have beside it. We want to make sure that what we develop actually helps those who are in the most need and that real change is made to all the communities.

Cailín McVeigh:

Finally, we wanted to thank everyone who has joined us here today. To all the speakers, thank you for the evidence you gave and the time you spent on your presentations. Some of you travelled hundreds, even thousands of miles to be here with us today. Your contributions have been invaluable and we cannot thank you enough. To those in charge of the event, Inez and Aideen, thank you for keeping us on track and focused on the issues at hand, and, above all, thank you to everyone who has come out and attended the event. By being here and by wanting to hear the evidence for yourselves you have given us support. You have highlighted how important it is for all of us to get this regeneration right for ourselves and for all our children.

Thank you all.

Concluding remarks from the Chair

Inez McCormack:

We said we wouldn't identify members of the Jury, their bios are in the pack but I think it is fair to give you the personal details of one member of the Jury who has just spoken and who is 16 years of age and who came here this morning to listen to the evidence, went back and did some GCSEs, came back listened to evidence and went back again, which I think is extraordinary. To all those who think her generation don't know and don't want to know, I think she has just proved that they do and they are capable of knowing.

I just want to add my thanks to the speakers on behalf of all of us and on behalf of the Project.
To the Residents' Jury, I think all of us stand somewhat in awe of the commitment you have shown from a number of weeks ago when you came together, which you didn't think you could do and you didn't think it could be done. The seriousness, patience, courtesy and competence that you have shown today in terms of taking the evidence, is a standard of what your communities are capable of and will be capable of when we get this process right and that you are part of making the change.

It is an enormous contribution that you are making. You are asserting, not only in North Belfast but to the rest of Belfast and to the rest of this place in this new political dispensation, what people are capable of when they are given the opportunity and when they take it with both hands. On behalf of all of us, I would like to thank you for that example you are setting.
I know your work has just begun and that you are going to be deliberating on the evidence and we look forward to working with you on that and hearing for.

In terms of the speakers, all of the speakers are here. I think you may have got the message so far. You have come here and now that you have become part of this, we have no intention of letting you go, so thank you very much indeed. Behind me at the moment there is showing some messages of support, I am not going to go through them in detail now because we showed some of them earlier on but they do include from the national to local; there is Monica McWilliams, who is Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. We have both the New York State and New York City Comptroller, who came here a few weeks ago and came to the Gaol.
They are not promising millions or billions, but what they are promising is to give us support to make sure there is a process and that they will want to work with you, others and people like Joe to make sure that process actually does produce a benefit. There was also a message from Mary Robinson who was with us last week who has a very clear, practical, purposeful approach. She indicates that this work that has been done is not just useful here but I think it was Joe who made the point, that you don't just take good practice and put it somewhere else. There is an approach here of what participation can be and how it can be taken forward, and she is suggesting that she will take it to her work with the Elders international group to use as a pathfinder for other communities.

To people like Tim, just thank you again and to Frank.
I am going to do just one more thing; there is someone I have just seen in the room and who I would like to welcome here today. It is someone who helped us get off the ground five years ago – Mo Tracey-Mooney.
Mo came here to work as an intern voluntarily a number of years ago and did, as Frank has done voluntarily, the huge amount of work that helped to get us going. It is that spirit of giving with analytical rigour but with generosity and imagination that will make this project run and run and run until we get the difference.

Thank you all very much indeed.

Transcribed by Luann Johnson, January 2008

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Appendix i: Speakers' Biographies

Nicola Browne:
Research and Policy Officer at the Participation and Practice of Rights Project in Belfast.

Tim Cunningham:
Equality Officer for the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ).

Joe Donohoe:
Team Leader of Fatima Groups United, Chair of the Canals Area Youth Service and Chair of the Canals Area Partnership all located in the South Inner City of Dublin. He has worked extensively in supporting local resident representative groups in their negotiations with the State and private developers for the equitable development of their local areas. A series of ground breaking publications such as "Eleven Acres, Ten Steps" "From Ghetto to Greatest!", "Our Land, Our Ground Our Futures" "8 Great Expectations" and "Dream, Dare, Do" charts the collective community analysis of the Fatima Groups United team led by Joe and makes the argument for how communities can make their voice heard in the context of the extensive regeneration programmes in Dublin city today.

Seamus Flynn:
A retired community worker for the Markets Development Association in Belfast. He worked with community workers from the Markets and Donegal Pass during the regeneration of the Gasworks site.

Aideen Gilmore:
Co-chair for the Residents' Jury on Regenerating Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol.
She is the Deputy Director for the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ).

Maria Virgínia Brás Gomes:
Member of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the head of the Portuguese Department for Social Research and International Relations. Through her work, she coordinates and participates in the preparation of EU, Council of Europe and UN reports on the implementation of international instruments and statutory requirements. She also serves as a member of interdepartmental and multidisciplinary groups working on social security and social action and has been appointed to carry out ministerial projects and missions for the Portuguese government.

Ms. Gomes is the author of Integrated Services for Children and Young People at Risk (1997), as well as a number of papers about social action and negotiations. She commonly participates and speaks as a national and international expert at conferences, seminars and meetings.

Tim Losty:
Director of the North Belfast Community Action Unit, taking up the position in March 2008. Prior to this Tim spent 4 years in Washington DC as the Director of the Northern Ireland Bureau representing the Executive's interests throughout the US.

Before going to America Tim worked for LEDU and later Invest NI with responsibility for developing new businesses, helping them into export markets and also worked on local economic regeneration programmes. Tim was a founder member of the Belfast Peace and Reconciliation Partnership Board in 1994; a Director of the Belfast Local Strategy Board; the East Belfast Partnership; and the First Stop Business Shop.
Tim also worked on the West Belfast and Greater Shankill Task forces set up by Ministers and local politicians to address specific issues of disadvantage in the community.

Educated at St Mary's Grammar School, Belfast, Tim has an honours degree in Political Science from Queens University, Belfast, a Post Graduate Diploma in Marketing, and a Master of Science in Business Improvement from the University of Ulster. Professional Qualifications include a Diploma from the Chartered Institute of Marketing and a Diploma in Strategic Management from the Institute of Directors. He is a member and former Committee Member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing and a member of the Institute of Directors.

Inez McCormack:

Co-chair for the Residents' Jury on Regenerating Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol and the chair of the Participation and the Practice of Rights Project. She is also joint chair of the Irish North/South Health Services Partnership. This brings together unions, employers and user groups in developing a model of collaborative partnership to integrate equality and quality in delivery of effective health outcomes and to reduce health inequalities. Inez was the first woman to hold the post of President of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. She has thirty years of experience in the labour union and human rights movements as an activist and a campaigner.

She has received a number of national and international awards in recognition of her "outstanding contributions to the causes of human freedom and dignity." These include the Eleanor Roosevelt Award from New York City and an honorary doctorate from Queen's University Belfast in 2000. Of her awards, the Aisling Community Award for Person of the Year (2001) and the Inclusive Ireland Award (2002) mean the most to her.

Frank McMillan:

Volunteer and intern at the Participation and Practice of Rights Project. He is currently studying in Belfast on a George J. Mitchell Scholarship.

Joe McNeely:

Co-ordinator for the Central Baltimore Partnership, a collaboration of 3 universities, several large nonprofits and foundations, a dozen neighborhood organizations and 6 city and state agencies committed to revitalization, major development projects and social development in a large distressed and impoverished area north of downtown Baltimore. He is also Facilitator for the Weinberg Fellows program managed by the University of Baltimore (UB), adjunct professor in community development at UB, and consultant to the University Foundation and the President of the University.

For twenty years he was President of the Development Training Institute (DTI), "the country's premier trainer of CDC (Community Development Corporation) leaders," (Neal Pierce) and also led one of the most highly regarded community development corporations in the country, the South East Community Organization (SECO) of Baltimore. During the Carter Administration, Joseph McNeely was Director of the National Office of Neighborhood Development at the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.

Ron Shiffman:

A City planner with 40 years of experience providing program and organisational development assistance to community-based groups in low- and moderate-income neighbourhoods. Trained as an architect and urban planner, he is an expert in the areas of financial packaging, innovative community-based financing, real estate development, and community-based planning. He has had extensive experience bringing together private and public sector sponsors of housing and related community development projects.
In 1964, Ron Shiffman co-founded the Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development [PICCED]. Mr. Shiffman was an executive committee member of the International Research and Exchange for Development (IRED) and is the immediate past president of the Salzburg Congress on Urban Planning and Development. Since 1996 he has lectured extensively on Sustainable Development and Brownfield revitalization strategies. In addition to his former role as director of PICCED, he is a tenured professor at Pratt Institute's School of Architecture. He has been a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners [AICP] since May 1985 and in April 2002 became a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Richard Wilkinson:

Currently a Professor of Social Epidemiology at the University of Nottingham Medical School and visiting professor at the International Centre for Health and Society at University College London. After several years of manual work Richard Wilkinson trained in economic history and then social epidemiology. He worked briefly in the National Health Service before taking up a research career working on health inequalities and the social determinants of health.

Working in the field for 30 years, Richard has played a formative role in research and public awareness of health inequalities and the social determinants of health. Since persuading the Secretary of State to set up the working party which in 1980 produced the Black Report on Health Inequalities, he has worked particularly on the health and social effects of income inequality. His latest book is The Impact of Inequality, how to make sick societies healthier (Routledge 2005).

Appendix ii: Messages of support

Mary Robinson:

"It is great to see the international human rights standards being put to use at a practical level in North Belfast. Participation in line with human rights standards as 'active, free and meaningful' won't just happen. It requires innovative and exciting work such as the Residents Jury event and the methodology of human rights indicators and benchmarks to ensure true participation, as central to realisation of rights, is made a reality. The work in North Belfast should be a path finder for other communities"

New York City Comptroller, William Thompson:

''Our Office has always taken an active interest in Northern Ireland and we were delighted to come and see one of the prime regeneration areas in Northern Ireland. I strongly commend this joint initiative by the PPR Project and local communities to set up a Resident's Jury. The equality-focused approach to the development at Girdwood Barracks showcases best practice by actively involving local communities at each and every stage in creating real and sustainable change. It quite literally has the potential to turn the remnants of conflict into the promise of the 'peace dividend'.

Local communities want to ensure that they will directly benefit from the regeneration project by addressing the high levels of social and economic deprivation through the provision of quality jobs, training, health services, education and housing. That involvement is their right at each and every stage and it is essential to a process of successful regeneration. I am delighted that one of New York's leaders in urban planning, Ron Shiffman, will be presenting best practice examples of regeneration projects in our city to the Jury. Ron will outline how critical the involvement of local people is to successful investment and regeneration."

I look forward to being kept informed of the project's progress and will continue to offer our support - this is after all what peace is all about."

New York State Comptroller, Tom Dinapoli:

''I learnt from my recent visit that communities surrounding the Girdwood site are some of the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland. The Shankill and the Crumlin electoral ward areas are two of the most deprived in terms of education, while all of the surrounding wards are in the top 5% most deprived in terms of health and housing. During the conflict these same communities suffered severely with more fatalities per square mile than anywhere else in Northern Ireland. The regeneration therefore represents a major opportunity to improve the quality of life for these communities.

The peace process is about bringing tangible benefits to communities like these, and to do this the voices of the local communities, from all traditions, must be heard if these problems are to be addressed.
The regeneration process at Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road jail is just beginning. I also learnt on my recent visit that the Government has now agreed to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment for the site. This requires involving local people, from the outset and continuously, when developing and implementing proposals. Evidence from other regeneration processes proves that this is crucial if public and private investment are to be effective in supporting sustainable communities by tackling inequality and disadvantage through an inclusive process.

I strongly commend the PPR Project and residents of local communities in taking the initiative on setting up a Residents' Jury to hear evidence and contributions from a range of local, national and international speakers on how regeneration could and should be used to tackle inequality and deprivation and thereby improve the quality of life in these communities. My office will keep in touch with this work as it develops and I look forward to receiving the recommendations from the Jury."

Monica McWilliams, Chief Commissioner,
NI Human Rights Commission

I commend the work of the PPR project in North Belfast. It has been my strong belief that the work of the jury panel has been an innovative example of how human rights can be brought home to people working on the ground. Moreover both the people and the panellists show how we can become involved in listening to the concerns at community level and making proposals that can make such a difference to people's lives. When I attended events before, I stood humbled and full of admiration for the hard work on real issues that was going on all around me. I only wish I could be there today to witness this yet again. Good luck with it all.

Appendix iii: Attendance List

Bertie Atkinson
Residents' Jury

Shauneen Baker
Sinn Fein

Liam Barr
North Belfast Community Action Unit

Evan Bates

Sharon Beattie
Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Janice Beggs
Upper North Belfast Community
Empowerment Partnership

Caroline Bloomfield
Belfast Health Action Zone

Virginia Bras Gomes
UN Committee on Social, Economic &
Cultural Rights, Speaker

Sean Brennan
DLI CEP

Nicola Browne
Participation and the Practice of Rights Project

Peter Bunting
Irish Congress of Trade Unions

Anna Marie Burns

Roisin Cavanagh
British Institute of Human Rights

Mary Connors
Residents' Jury

Sinead Copeland
Residents' Jury

Jennifer Cornell
Greater Shankill Alternatives

Annalene Cummings
Residents' Jury

Tim Cunningham
Committee on the Administration of Justice, Speaker

Jonny Currie
NICVA, Policy Development Officer

Marian Deady
Amnesty International Irish Section

Jim Deery
Ashton Centre

Avril Dennison
Participation and the Practice of Rights Project

Kevin Doherty
ICTU

Desmond Donnelly
UNISON

Marcy Donnelly
UNISON

Dessie Donnelly
Jury Faciliator

Joe Donohoe
Fatima Regeneration, Speaker

Irene Drain
Residents' Jury

Una Duffy
Heritage Lottery Fund

Lauren Dumm
Upper North Belfast Community
Empowerment Partnership

Niall Enright
Falls Community Council

Mary Enright
PPR Project, North Belfast Steering Group

Terry Enright
Unison

Karin Eyben
Rural Community Network

Seamus Flynn
Speaker

Kasia Garbal
Irish Congress of Trade Unions

Aideen Gilmore
Committee on the Administration of Justice

Eddie Glackin
Museum of Citizenship

Stephanie Green
Participation and the Practice of Rights Project

Kevin Hanratty
Human Rights Consortium

Julie Harrison

Michael Hill
Greater Shankill Bereaved Families

Ken Humphries

Oonagh Kane
Participation and the Practice of Rights Project

Teresa Keenan
Residents' Jury

George Kidd
Residents' Jury

Milena Komarova
QUB, School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work

Michelle Lambe
University of Essex

Danny Lavery
Sinn Fein

Orla Leonard

Tim Losty
Dept for Social Development, Speaker

Manus Maguire
Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum

Thomas Mahaffy
UNISON

Mary McAliffe

Mimi McAlinden
Investing for Health

Liam McAnoy
Community Conventions

Cillian McBride
QUB School of International Studies & Philosophy

Barbara McCabe
School of Education, QUB

May McCann
CAUSE

Inez McCormack
Participation and the Practice of Rights Project, Chair

Maire McCotter
Belfast Healthy Cities

Stella McDermott
Heritage Lottery Fund

Eamon McElhinney
CCRF

Sean McKenna
Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Christine McKeown
Ashton Community Trust

Patricia McKeown
President of Irish Congress of Trade Unions

Bebhinn McKinley
Community Relations Council

Frank McMillan
Speaker

Joseph McNeely
Coordinator of the Central Baltimore Partnership, Speaker

Dr Louise McNeill
Conflict Transformation Project, Belfast City Council

Louise McNicholl
Human Rights Consortium

Maureen McNulty
Cliftonville Regeneration Forum

Cailin McVeigh
Residents' Jury

Anne Moore
Save the Children

Leo Morgan
New Lodge CEP

Nadine Morgan
Residents' Jury

Colin Mounstephen
Deloitte

Annie Moyes

Caral Ní Chuilín
Sinn Fein

Maeve Ni Liathain
Participation and the Practice of Rights Project

Eamon Oakes
Museum of Citizenship

Trish O'Kane
Star Neighbourhood Centre

Paul O'Neill
New Lodge CEP

Dr Helen Potts
Right to Health Unit, Human Rights Centre,
University of Essex

Leona Reid
Atlantic Philanthropies

Mike Ritchie
Committee on the Administration of Justice

Eoin Rooney

Mairead Rooney
Residents' Jury

Ronald Shiffman
Speaker

Jacqueline Spence
Upper North Belfast Community
Empowerment Partnership

Eoin Stewart
UNISON

Lara Thompson
Institute for Conflict Research

Sarah Toucas
Institute for Conflict Research

Maureen Tracy-Mooney

Margaret Valente
Residents' Jury

Prof Richard Wilkinson
University of Nottingham, Speaker