

SUSTAINABILITY OF PEACEBUILDING INTERVENTIONS:
THE EXPERIENCE OF PEACE AND RECONCILIATION COMMUNITY
PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE EU PEACE III FUND AND
THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

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This article examines the perceptions of 120 respondents regarding the sustainability of peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties. Their nongovernmental organizations are supported by economic assistance from the European Union Peace III Fund, the International Fund for Ireland, or both. We explore the perceptions of community group leaders and program development officers from Derry and the Border area regarding the sustainability of funded peacebuilding projects in which they are involved. Their narratives focus on the efforts of volunteers versus paid workers, descriptions of sustainability in community peacebuilding initiatives, and the meaning of sustainability in peacebuilding. The findings emphasize the importance of various dimensions of sustainability in peacebuilding and the implications for external agencies providing economic assistance to peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives in countries emerging from political violence.

INTRODUCTION

Peacebuilding is a multilevel and continuous process involving multiple actors and requiring numerous resources.¹ The signing of a peace accord is only one step within the process of peacebuilding; sustained post-agreement political will and support is required to implement the peace accord.² “A