Community Development and Peace Walls in Northern Ireland

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Northern Ireland is a divided society with scars left unaddressed by their 1998 peace process. The most visible scars left are the Peace Walls- physical walls reinforced up to three-stories tall, designed to keep Protestant and Catholic communities apart. Peace Walls should be addressed because they create security, health, and community relations concerns. Current strategies to address these issues have failed because the communities have not been empowered to create their own solutions. Using the rural studies concept, Contiguous Community Development (CCD) offers a way to empower leaders and create collaborations between communities. CCD is a four step process consisting of: 1) exposure to new ideas, 2) people internalizing the desire to learn from each other, understand a problem and the need to address it while envisioning a better future, 3) organic organization growth, and 4) integration of development in the community and development of the community.[1] CCD is a model that activates community connections and fosters cooperation in a community by addressing specific community problems. The government in Northern Ireland has not been functioning for the past two years, and as a result, interface communities have little to no trust in the government, but still enjoy a connection to local leadership.[2] CCD should be used in the absence of the government to promote community-led solutions to Peace Walls because they are linked spaces with unique community concerns.

Peace Walls

Northern Ireland's tensions have become normalized, creating a lack of incentive to find a solutions to problems still stemming from the Troubles. Northern Ireland is the upper portion of the island of Ireland belonging to the United Kingdom with a population of a little less than 2 million people. Conflict on the island began as early as the 5th century with the arrival of

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[1] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).
[2] Jonny Byrne, "Peace Walls Survey" (lecture, Queen's University Belfast, June 2018).

Christianity by British explorers. In 1609 the British government gave Irish land to British settlers, known as the Plantation of Ulster.[3] Those identifying as Irish saw this as an act of British colonization and those identifying as British saw this as an act of legitimate expansion of power. In 1690 King William III of Orange fought the Battle of the Boyne delivering a massive win to the Protestant British defeating Catholic King James II.[4] The island was partitioned in 1920 by the Ireland Act giving the British government control of six of the counties on the island and creating the Republic of Ireland in the south.[5]

Native Irish, traditionally Catholic, felt they were being discriminated against by the new government when they applied for public housing, public service jobs (like the police force), and allocation of government services. Reforms in the early 20th century failed to address these concerns and the violence grew to new heights in the 1960s. Inspired by the Civil Rights movement in the United States, Catholic communities began to unite to fight these injustices.[6] In 1972 Catholic demonstrators were fired upon and fourteen people were killed by the British army, the event became known as Bloody Sunday and remains a point of contention and investigation.[7] Violence erupted after this event with 3,600 deaths and more than 30,000 injured, ending with the signing of the Belfast Agreement in 1998.[8] Often this violence is simplified down to Protestant versus Catholic, but there are many intricate political groups and paramilitaries involved with unique political goals. Main combatants include the Irish

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[3] Peter Gray, "History of Northern Ireland 1920-1998" (lecture, Queen's University Belfast, June 2018).
[4] Peter Gray, "History of Northern Ireland 1920-1998" (lecture, Queen's University Belfast, June 2018).
[5] Peter Gray, "History of Northern Ireland 1920-1998" (lecture, Queen's University Belfast, June 2018).
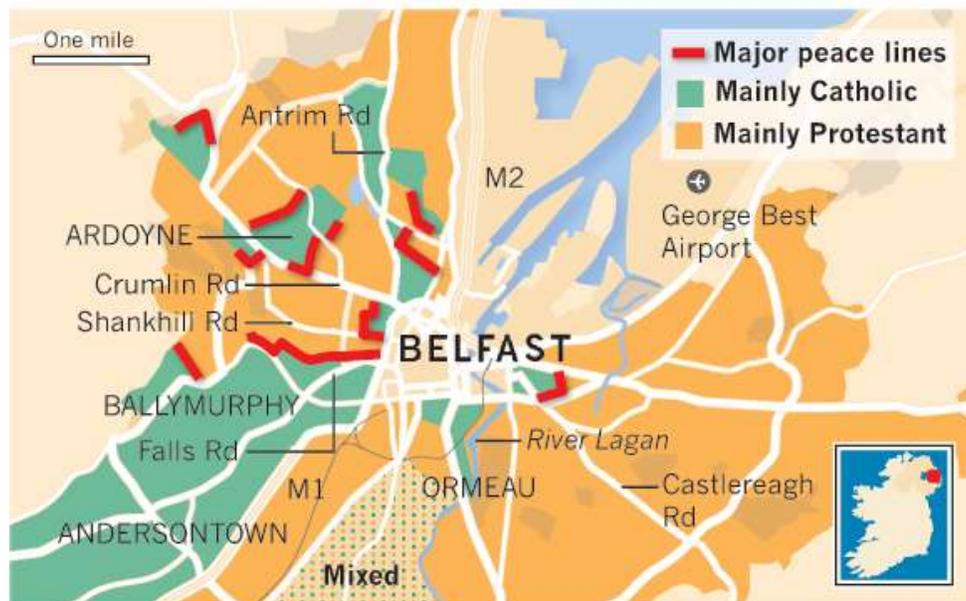[6] "Northern Ireland - Home Rule," Encyclopedia Britannica, 9 December 2019.
[7] "The Troubles - Civil Rights Activism, the Battle of Bogside, and the Arrival of the British Army," Encyclopedia Britannica, 9 December 2019.
[8] "The Troubles | Summary, Causes, & Facts," Encyclopedia Britannica, 9 December 2019.

Republican Army, Ulster Volunteer Force, Democratic Unionist Party, Sinn Fein, Social

Democratic and Labour Party, and Alliance Party.[9]

As civil unrest grew in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry the British army laid barbed wire

between the communities to keep them apart. Eventually these lines would be formalized into 45

feet tall 'Peace Walls' dividing the communities.[10] The Peace Walls were always meant to be a

temporary solution but one-third of those standing today were built after the Belfast Agreement

was signed.[11] It is estimated the Northern Ireland government has spent upwards of $1.5 billion

on segregation tactics.[12] The growing peace walls have been called 'scars' from the Troubles.

But they have become an important part of everyday life to those living along them, known as

interface communities.

[9] "Northern Ireland: Key People and Parties," Peace Insight, 13 December 2019.
[10] "The Troubles - Civil Rights Activism, the Battle of Bogside, and the Arrival of the British Army," Encyclopedia Britannica, 1 December 2019.
[11] Johnny Byrne, "Peace Walls Survey" (lecture, Queens University Belfast, June 2018).
[12] Johnny Byrne, "Peace Walls Survey" (lecture, Queens University Belfast, June 2018).

The map above, produced by The Forum for Cities in Transition, shows where current Peace Walls exist.[13] The map shows the majority of the walls in Belfast are concentrated in the north west portion, the location of much of the violence in Belfast during the Troubles. The original Walls were erected between the Shankill and Falls Communities.[14] Interface communities are divided from the vibrant city center of Belfast by the M1 and M2- major four lane motor ways. Those living in interface communities have been found to be in the top 10% of the most socially and economically deprived in Northern Ireland. [15] This deprivation paired with the government shut-down has restricted the community's access to services and hampered their ability to grow. Leaving this deprivation unaddressed will continue to limit the ability of services to be provided effectively in the communities.

Interface communities are threatened by a variety of health and social wellbeing issues. The University of Ulster found the perceived 'religious ownership' of health centers, based on which community it was in, was enough to deter those from the other community from using the service.[16] This strains services as they are forced to duplicate their services maybe only blocks apart to service both communities. This forces services to either choose a community to serve or beg for more money from donors and justify duplicating services. This problem is only projected to worsen as the population in Northern Ireland shifts. The 2011 census found that 51% of schoolchildren are Catholic and 37% Protestant, meaning Catholics are on track to outnumber Protestants by 2021.[17] This growth will only continue exponentially as these kids grow up and have kids. As the map above shows the Catholic neighborhoods are significantly smaller than the

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[13] "Belfast," The Forum for Cities in Transition, 13 December 2019.
[14] "The Troubles - Civil Rights Activism, the Battle of Bogside, and the Arrival of the British Army," Encyclopedia Britannica, 1 December 2019.
[15] Cathy Gormley-Heenan, "The Problem with Northern Ireland's Peace Walls," *Political Insight* 3, no.3 (2012).
[16] Deloitte, "Research into the Financial Cost of the Northern Ireland Divide," Deloitte, April 2017.
[17] Gareth Gordon, "Catholic Majority Possible in NI by 2021," BBC News, 2 December 2019.

Protestant neighborhoods. Catholic communities are being forced to build and live right up

against the walls, while Protestant communities enjoy more open spaces and live farther from the

walls. A Housing Studies study concludes that the effects of this growth cannot be predicted but

should be expected to effect housing needs, social care, education funding, taxation, and housing

policy.[18] This combination of problems cannot be expected to be addressed in the current

community climate until community relationships are built and fostered.

Junior Minister Fearon pledged the government would be aggressive in their addressing

of the Peace Walls, but they have been unable to engage the communities due to their shut

down.[19] In 2013 the Northern Irish Executive released a plan called Together: Building a Better

Community aimed at removing all Peace Walls by 2023. The plan recognizes that community

involvement is key to the peaceful removal of the walls and urges the government to take the

community's desires into consideration.[20] The Executive said, "Taking down interface barriers is

not something that can be achieved without engagement with, consent and support of the people

who live there. We must be sensitive to the views and perceptions of residents and balance this

against the responsibility on us to create the conditions within which division and segregation

can become resigned to the past."[21] But interface communities are highly distrusting of the

government with only 1% of Protestant respondents (and 0% of Catholic respondents) saying

they would contact the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister if they had a

concern about their local Wall.[22] 41% of respondents (42% Protestant, 41% Catholic) said they

would contact their local community leader first.[23] It is clear communities would be quicker to

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[18] Chris Paris, et al., "Demographic Trends and Changing Housing Systems in Northern Ireland," *Housing Studies* 33, no. 8 (2018) 1264, accessed December 8, 2019.
[19] "Removing Walls Opens Door to a New Shared Space – Fearon," The Executive Office, November 1, 2019.
[20] "Removing Walls Opens Door to a New Shared Space – Fearon," The Executive Office, November 1, 2019.
[21] Johnny Byrne, "Peace Walls Survey" (Lecture, Queen's University Belfast, June 2018).
[22] Johnny Byrne, et al., "Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015)," *University of Ulster* (2015).
[23] Johnny Byrne, et al., "Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015)," *University of Ulster* (2015).

respond to support given to local leaders to address the issues than direct government work on the issue.

Current efforts are further doomed to fail due to the connection communities now have to the Walls. Pathological mourning is the process of mourning through a linked object, something that has been connected to the trauma of a lost future.[24] Brotherton documented this phenomenon with immigrant and refugee children who escape their home with only a few objects. They become fixed to the object and obsessed with keeping it and protecting it. These objects are often clothing items or toys that he witnessed care takers trying to remove from the children, causing the child further trauma. Brotherton encourages care takers to recognize this phenomenon and be aware of it when helping these kids to prevent further trauma.

The Clonard Memorial Garden, pictured below, is an example of a linked section of the Peace Wall, intentionally created by the community as a site for mourning. Each piece was a specific tribute to those lost and a reminder of how their loss has impacted the community. This memorial works to commemorate those killed in the Troubles from the Greater Clonard area (including the Falls Road) from 1916-1970. The memorial square is surrounded by a low brick wall and black iron gates with a red phoenix, making it a relatively private space even though it is in the middle of a cramped Catholic neighborhood. The Garden is divided into three separate yards with the largest feature being the black cross in the center garden.

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[24] Diana Brotherton, "Immigrants and Refugees. Trauma, Perennial Mourning, Prejudice and Border Psychology," *European Journal of Psychotherapy & Counselling* 20, no.1 (2018): 127-130.

The cross, pictured above, is adorned with Celtic knots and Gaelic writing. The plaque

behind dedicates the Garden to the Clonard Martyrs C Coy 2nd Battalion Belfast Brigade and lists

all of their names. The right garden is dedicated to the prisoners lost during four different time

periods of heightened conflict. The left garden features a plaque that reads:

> *This plaque is dedicated to the people of the Greater Clonard who have resisted and still resist the occupation of our country by Britain. We acknowledge with pride the sacrifices they made throughout every decade. Their names would be too numerous to mention, and their deeds of bravery and resistance are un-equalled in the history of our struggle. We, the Republican ex-prisoners of the Greater Clonard, salute you, and your reward will only be a united Ireland.[25]*

The large mural featured below depicts some of those who 'resisted' through the decades. In the

background are pictures of the physical neighborhood throughout the Troubles and features those

of Company C and civilians who died. Reflection benches donated by community members in

their names or in memory of those lost are positioned around the garden. Personal tributes to

those lost are also featured in the form of flowers and memorial candles. The government's plan

does not mention what would happen to memorial spaces like these, which can strain the

community further if removed without being addressed.

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[25] "Clonard Martyrs Memorial Garden," Talking Stones, December 2, 2019.

  The last large concern preventing progress on removing the Walls is security concerns.

The below picture was taken from inside the Clonard Martyrs Memorial Garden on the Falls

Road.
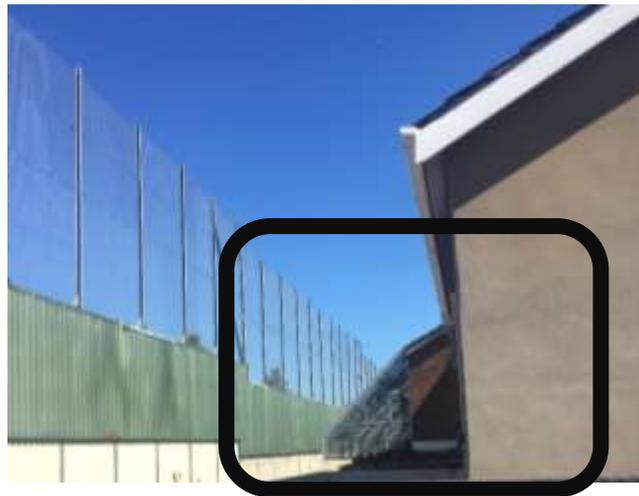
The rectangle highlights the backyard of a family living against the Peace Wall who has

reinforced their yard in addition to the three-story Peace Wall already protecting the yard. The

guide who brought us to the Falls Road explained that many families reinforce their backyards to

protect themselves from anything potentially being thrown over the walls. Dr Byrne says the

main concerns he hears from communities are: "Community safety, fear of being attacked. But

also fear of the unknown. People don't like to change. People are comfortable with what they

know."[26] These perceived security risks are compounded by a lack of trust in the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). The PSNI was created in the Belfast Agreement to address community concerns of corruption in the existing police force.[27] While the PSNI is on track to meet these recruiting requirements, 29% of respondents are very worried about the PSNI's ability to preserve peace and order if the Peace Walls were removed right now.[28] Addressing security concerns (real or perceived) are key to any plans to alter the walls.

Dr. Byrne stresses all the above issues must be addressed but also acknowledges the complexities in trying to remove the Walls. "[In] each community, the approach is so different. In some communities, the walls mark where some families who lost loved ones (during The Troubles). In others, there are concerns about anti-social behaviour and youth violence," he says. "When you get down to the micro-level, it (removing the walls) becomes very difficult. None of this was envisaged when the British military was putting them up."[29] This complexity is what drew me to investigate new methods of solving the problems of Peace Walls. With each community having a different connection to their Walls it seems vital to narrow the solutions down by community. As I finish my studies, I am more convinced simplistic community driven approaches are the best way to address protracted tension. Once tensions become normalized and the direct fighting is over it is easy for societies to stop pushing for more comprehensive peace or being exposed to new ideas. Contiguous community development forces communities back together to address the specific problems facing them. Creating community-based solutions is the

[26] Jack Sommers, "Northern Ireland's 'Peace Walls' Show No Signs Of Following Berlin's Example," HuffPost UK, December 9, 2019.
[27] "'New Era' as NI Police Change Name," BBC News, November 4, 2001.
[28] Johnny Byrne, "Peace Walls Survey"(Lecture, Queen's University Belfast, June 2018).
[29] Jack Sommers, "Northern Ireland's 'Peace Walls' Show No Signs Of Following Berlin's Example," HuffPost UK, December 9, 2019.

best approach for Northern Ireland's Peace Walls because each community has different concerns and attachments to the wall.

Contiguous Community Development

Even with the challenges in Northern Ireland CCD should be tried because it could address the six interdependent factors Byrne identifies must be addressed if Peace Walls are removed. These include topics like increasing community relations, leadership of political parties, safety and security, cultural pluralism, consequences of change, and future concerns.[30] No current plan increases community relations while addressing the other concerns. CCD relies on fostering relationships while creating real solutions. A University of Ulster survey on this topic concluded it is becoming increasingly harder to distinguish between societal problems directly stemming from the Troubles versus deprivation of government services.[31]The need for personal connections and real policy solutions makes CCD a great model for Northern Ireland. The focus on personal connections will provide solutions for the post-Peace Wall society while addressing problems stemming from the presence of the Walls right now.

Contiguous community development is a rural studies theory promoting the practice of integrating the development in the community with development of the community. Mtika defines development in a community as civil society or the government addressing the community's needs and problems.[32] Development of a community is building the community member's self-worth, relationships, and togetherness by empowering community members to lead the development.[33] The first crucial step to this process is giving the community a space to hear new ideas. Communities working together from all experiences, given the opportunity to at

[30] Johnny Byrne, "Peace Walls Survey"(Lecture, Queen's University Belfast, June 2018).
[31] Deloitte, "Research into the Financial Cost of the Northern Ireland Divide," Deloitte, April 2017.
[32] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).
[33] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).

least try suggestions find the best solutions for their communities. For example, in Kenya families organized themselves around the issue of acute water shortage. The group first dug wells in riverbeds but was unsuccessful, next they tried collecting water on their roofs, also unsuccessful.[34] Finally, they tried building sand dams to capture wet sand and save it for the dry season. The community member who found the solution said it was something he had just remembered seeing his grandfather using, and after so many failures it did not seem like a bad idea. The sand dams were successful and quickly spread to neighboring communities with similar problems.[35] The community meeting space gave farmers with different knowledge sets a space to hear what others thought and knew about water collection.

Once a community has been exposed to new ideas it is important, they next internalize the desire to learn from each other, understand the problem, and the need to address it while envisioning a better future.[36] This is initiated and materialized by new community leaders fostered while being exposed to new ideas. According to Mtika, "A central feature of contiguous community development is engaging people in meeting their needs while at the same time enhancing their creativity and building their relationships."[37] In the Kenya example, the need for water was understood by everyone in the group, and they envisioned a future where a practical solution was found for the shortage. The community leaders who encouraged people to form these self-help groups, encouraged the members creativity and relationships because they all needed water. It is unlikely individual farmers would have known all of the water collection methods on their own, the creativity of the space let them try new ideas while being supported by the group.

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[34] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).
[35] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).
[36] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).
[37] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).

Organic organization growth is characterized as the demand for increased organization support to address specific problems facing a community. An example of this is in Northern Malawi, where a US based non-profit focused on CCD, has created a successful program to address hunger at school. It was found students in the village school were often coming to school without having breakfast, making the school day a struggle.[38] The school brought the concern to the community, leaving the creation of a solution up to the parents. Once the group met to create a solution it was discovered many parents were unable to provide a breakfast to their student at home due to socioeconomic factors.[39] Eventually this knowledge led to a few parents taking the responsibility of providing a hot free meal to students at the school. The model was so successful it led to the eventual creation of a community garden to keep the breakfast program stocked and address other food insecurity concerns.[40] As the success of the program grew and students began to rely on the program the program grew to accommodate. Being supported in this expansion is a direct practice of CCD where the leaders were supported with expanded services.

The final step is integrating the development of the community with the development in the community. Meaning the structures put in place continue to foster community leader's growth and ability to continue solving problems. As seen in the Kenya case, the breakfast program could have been over when they were struggling to find food for the program. But instead they were given the power by the school to create the community garden.[41] The school welcomed their continued input on growing the program in a sustainable way through the leaders they already trusted. The garden in turn fosters more leaders by involving the students in garden upkeep and

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[38] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).
[39] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).
[40] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).
[41] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).

distribution of vegetables.[42] The development in the community fosters the continued

development of the community.

For CCD to be a success the community must be allocentric and possess gemeinschaft

relationships. Allocentric communities define themselves by the group rather than individually

and adhere to the group norms. Gemeinschaft relationships are "a group characterized chiefly by

a strong sense of common identity, close personal relationships, and an attachment to traditional

and sentimental concerns".[43] Both characteristics can be easily identified in the separate

communities, the key to CCD solving Peace Walls is being able to foster these relationships

across the community lines. Sentiments that would foster this is the future do exist in each

community already, making it at least possible to try and bridge the relationships. Even with all

the odds stacked against reconciliation, 52% of respondents in interface communities said they

felt people in both communities would benefit if the Peace Walls were removed (43% Protestant,

57% Catholic).[44] 35% of respondents would like the Walls to come down in the future.[45] And

finally a 2015 survey found 49% of respondent living in interface communities (53% Protestant,

48% Catholic) believed the Peace Walls have become a tourist attraction, and 55% believe they

send a bad image of Northern Ireland to those abroad.[46] Sentimental concerns over a better

future, a recognition the Walls will eventually be removed, and the concern of international

perception could be enough to get the communities invested in designing a solution. Of those

surveyed in the interface communities in 2015, 25% of total respondents (31% Protestant, 24%

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[42] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).
[43] Mike Mtika, "Contiguous Community Development," *Journal of Rural Studies*, no. 51 (2017).
[44] Johnny Byrne, et al., "Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015)," *University of Ulster* (2015).
[45] Johnny Byrne, et al., "Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015)," *University of Ulster* (2015).
[46] Johnny Byrne, "Peace Walls Survey"(Lecture, Queen's University Belfast, June 2018).

Catholic) believed the main strength of their community was their strong sense of solidarity.[47]

This solidarity could be mobilized to keep the communities interested in solving the problem.

Application

Given the considerably short deadline of 2023, action must be taken soon for the Walls to

be removed in a peaceful way, or create a peaceful solution. In 2015, only 1% of Protestant

respondents would contact the government with a concern about the wall nearest their house, but

41% of respondents (42% Protestant, 41% Catholic) said they would contact their local

community representative.[48] Nearly a quarter of each community felt the main strength of the

community was a strong sense of solidarity.[49] Local leaders should be empowered to mobilize

their position and existing community connections to begin exploring proposals to address the

Walls. These meetings could begin in either community, but should be encouraged to make an

effort to welcome those from the other community. This gives local politicians and local leaders

a head start to addressing Byrne's concern with political leadership post-Peace Walls.

Respondents felt this concern too as 26% (21% Protestant, 28% Catholic) would like local

politicians to work together if Walls are removed. [50] Community meetings would give leaders a

space to prove they can work together without the Walls. Sentiments exist in both communities

for a more collaborative future without the current political divides. The CCD model and

community-based approach can foster new community leaders to cultivate a new culture of

collaboration and cooperation, which will be required post-Walls.

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[47] Johnny Byrne, et al., "Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015)," *University of Ulster* (2015).
[48] Johnny Byrne, et al., "Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015)," *University of Ulster* (2015).
[49] Johnny Byrne, "Peace Walls Survey"(Lecture, Queen's University Belfast, June 2018).
[50] Johnny Byrne, et al., "Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015)," *University of Ulster* (2015).

Concurrently, Northern Ireland should create targeted self-help groups for communities specifically with linked spaces to the Walls. As in Kenya, the families with the water shortage were the most motivated to solve the issue and find a durable solution for their concerns. Communities who have built links to the Peace Walls through memorial spaces, have a deeper interest in how they will ultimately be address. Moving the walls at all in the Falls Community, for example, could force a change to the Clonard Memorial Garden. Without the input and collaboration of those using the space to mourn, the removal of the Walls could be very traumatic. Not only it this be a loss of mourning space, but also a symbolic end to the ideals fought for during the Troubles. No solution will be internalized by these communities without finding unique solutions to linked spaces.

Creating groups targeted to those with connections to these mourning spaces is not an exact science as anyone can claim a connection, but these groups could be focused in on to try and give those with arguably the most to lose in the change a seat at the table. The key for these groups to remember is to use failure as a reason to stay together and continue to work. The Kenya water group could have disbanded after the second failed attempt to collect water, but they were encouraged, and motivated by their desire for water to continue working together. The community's willingness to fail together and stay together will need to be a replicated aspect of the self-help groups, community meetings, and even the creation of SEP schools.

Even though collaboration seems impossible in Northern Ireland, given collaborative spaces Northern Ireland has proved they can achieve peaceful policies using CCD. An example of this is their attempt to integrate schools using the Sharing Education Project (SEP). Currently education is segregated in the country by religion, SEP schools work in partnership with their opposing school to design classes where students from each school can learn together. SEP

school are encouraged to create their own curriculum and program around the strengths of their school, the other school might not have access to. For example, if one school has a state-of-the-art computer lab, they are encouraged to allow students from the other school to use the lab because it is something they do not have at their school.

Once a curriculum is created through collaboration between teachers, administrators, and SEP support, students are bused from their 'home campus' to the other campus, while staying in their home uniform. Tony Gallagher, the founder of SEP explains, "In the SEP partnerships the original intention had been to create contexts where pupils with different uniforms might be seen in the corridors of schools on a routine basis to create a 'new normality' of diversity whereas previously the 'uniformity of uniforms' had highlighted the separateness of schools."[51] When asked to explain this further he summarized- no one noticed that they were being integrated if they couldn't see the differences in uniforms. They do not attend a whole day of school in the shared school but only a few classes to introduce the two groups slowly and to reduce the tension of reconciling all topics between religions.

SEP has accomplished all four steps of CCD in the schools it has worked with. Teachers became exposed to new ideas in their schools from teachers in the other schools. Teachers have internalized this desire to address concerns in their community by participating in SEP curriculum building. The Program has already experienced substantial organic organization growth and now has an independent governing body established for funding and support.[52] SEP was originally modeled after shared education spaces in Scotland and England and underwent multiple trials and errors. Much like the self-help group in Kenya, SEP was allowed to try

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[51] Tony Gallagher, "Shared Education in Northern Ireland" (Lecture, Queen's University Belfast, June 2018).
[52] Tony Gallagher, "Shared Education in Northern Ireland" (Lecture, Queen's University Belfast, June 2018).

multiple approaches before receiving support and funding from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland.[53] The strategy of SEP is four-fold:

1) Establish a school partnership;
2) Establish collaborative links between the schools;
3) Run shared classes;
4) Promote economic, educational and reconciliation outcomes.[54]

Their strategy shows the integration of development in the community and development of the community. Teachers are taught leadership skills and the community is developed. And the shared resources between schools is a development of the community. CCD prioritizes creating leaders while providing services and SEP also prioritizes this in the students, teachers, and community.

42% of those surveyed in 2015, said they never interact with the community on the other side of their nearest Peace Wall.[55] Those under 35 were the most likely age group to have interacted with the community on the other side, 29% of respondents.[56] Capitalizing on this fact SEP should be encouraged in interface communities to create a space to be exposed to new ideas, and create a point of contact for the communities. SEP curriculum creation in interface communities is a good project to promote because the process would address certain concerns Byrne identifies. For example, the partnerships created in a school setting would encourage community relations, cultural pluralism, and address future concerns of continued integration.[57] Just as the schools in Malawi created a neutral shared space to collaborate on problems, SEP schools in interface communities could serve the same purpose. This should be considered a

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[53] Tony Gallagher, "Shared Education in Northern Ireland" (Lecture, Queen's University Belfast, June 2018).
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[55] Johnny Byrne, et al., "Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015)," *University of Ulster* (2015).
[56] Johnny Byrne, et al., "Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015)," *University of Ulster* (2015).
[57] Johnny Byrne, et al., "Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015)," *University of Ulster* (2015).

long-term solution to the tensions in the community and a way to address the Walls. Creating SEP curriculum that works for each community requires trial and error to learn what works, both logistically and for the community.

Conclusion

The government's Together: Building a Better Community plan is nothing more than an piece of paper currently, with little to no action being taken to engage communities. The time for tackling this problem at all might be closing. Byrne's survey found 35% of respondents would like the Peace Walls to come down sometime in the future which is 9% less than respondents in 2012.[58] The enthusiasm for removing the walls seems to be waning as progress is not being made. Unfortunately, the communities remain divided and tensions are only increasing as Brexit looms over the island.[59] The government shut down further raises concerns with the government's ability to address to concerns of the Walls. It is time for the government to be realistic about the connections communities have to the Walls and each other and employ both to address the problem. CCD allows for communities to use the relationships they already have to each other to create solutions for their community. Because Northern Ireland has already shown promise in following CCD principles, they could be expected to follow the model again.

56% of Protestant cannot envisage a time when there will be no Peace Walls but 48% of Catholics can envisage a time when they don't exist.[60] The communities do not currently have the same 'better future' internalized. This will be a major stumbling block of any attempt to modify the current Peace Walls. The communities do not currently have the same 'better future' internalized. This will be a major stumbling block of any attempt to modify the current Peace

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[58] Johnny Byrne, et al., "Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015)," *University of Ulster* (2015).
[59] Ceylan Yeginsu, "In Northern Ireland, Brexit Deal Is Seen as 'Betrayal,'" New York Times, October 24, 2019.
[60] Johnny Byrne, et al., "Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015)," *University of Ulster* (2015).

Walls. Community meetings discussed above should recognize they could be met with more failure than success in planning ideas. The collaborative spaces are meant to be a space to hear new ideas, interact with community leaders, and eventually interact with those from other communities. CCD integrates the needs of the communities with developing new leaders. Removing Peace Walls will not be the last problem facing Northern Ireland, and they will need new leaders to guide them through the new problems facing them.

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