



A Donegal Framework 2019

Intercultural Art in Action Research Project

Donegal Intercultural Platform

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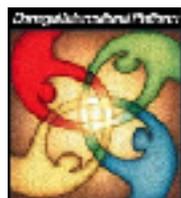
This research and consultation project among the Black and Minority Ethnic communities in Donegal, was undertaken by Donegal Intercultural Platform, in the context of a wider Cultural Diversity project, completed between 2017 and 2019 by Donegal County Council, Mayo County Council (Lead Partner) and South Dublin County Council, under the Arts Council's Invitation To Collaboration Scheme.

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**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council



Contents

4. Donegal Intercultural Platform	32. Acouscenic Listening
6. Intercultural Arts and Culture Definitions	34. Connected Spaces
7. Beginning the Consultation Process	36. Culture Crossroads Café
8. Values and Public Policy	39. Research Questionnaires
11. Where are we now?	44. These Walls Must Fall
13. Demographics Donegal	47. Going Forward in Donegal-Recommendations
14. Communities of Interest	54. Glossary
18. Consultation and Engagement	55. References
20. Creative Process /Building the Change	56. Thank you
23. Methodologies	
24. Café Arabia	
27. International Mother Language Day	
30. Journeys Dialogue	

Donegal Intercultural Platform

The Donegal Intercultural Platform is committed to helping establish a more inclusive, welcoming and anti-racist society. The platform is a voluntary Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) that welcomes people who are interested in building inclusion and equality in Donegal and in promoting Human Rights and opposing discrimination and racism.

Representing the Priorities for Minorities, DIP are widely recognised by minority communities and state agencies as the representative forum for intercultural inclusion and have representatives on the Connecting for Life initiative, The Donegal Community Health Network, Donegal Women's Centre, The PEACE IV Partnership, DLDC Working Groups, Social Inclusion Measures Group, Donegal PPN Social Inclusion Linkage Group.

Donegal Intercultural Platform 5 core values include:

Collectivity; A collective approach requires practitioners to focus on the potential benefits for communities.

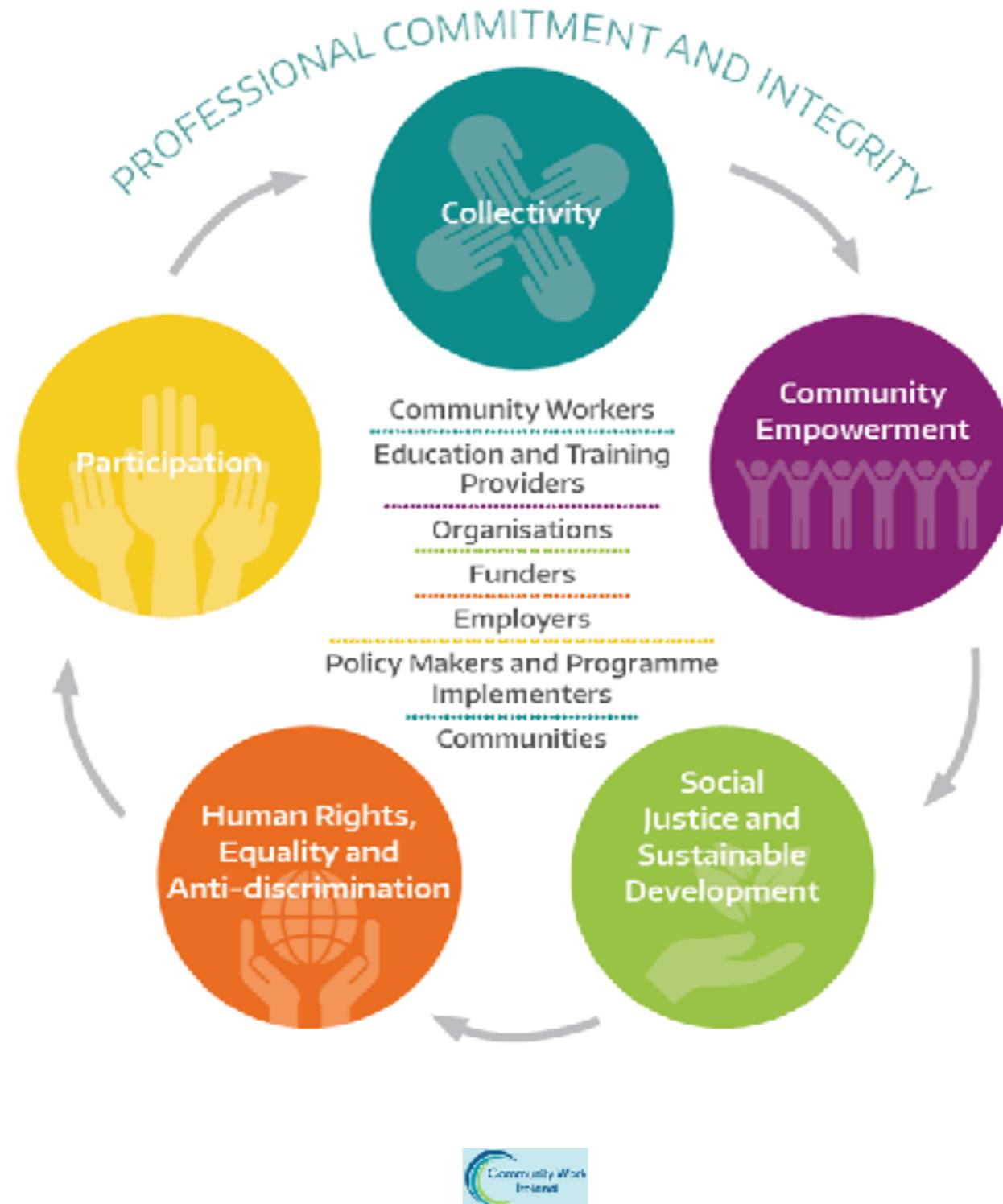
Community Empowerment; involves an approach which leads people and communities to be resilient, organised, included and influential.

Social Justice and Sustainable Development; Promoting a just society involves promoting policies and practices that challenge injustice, poverty, inequality, discrimination and social exclusion, and valuing diversity of identities and approaches. Promoting a sustainable society involves promoting environmentally, economically and socially sustainable policies and practices.

Human Rights, Equality and Anti-discrimination; In seeking a society where human rights and equality are realised and discrimination is addressed, community development is reinforced by human rights mechanisms and frameworks, processes and standards for the protection and promotion of human rights for all.

Participation; Participation is rooted in the self identification of needs and interests, the formulation of responses by the community or group concerned. (The All Ireland Standards for Community Work)

Donegal Intercultural Platform Community Work Standards





Intercultural Arts and Culture Definitions

'It is important to draw a distinction between interculturalism and multiculturalism, with which it is often equated. Both concepts involve the recognition of diversity. While this is only one aspect of interculturalism, multiculturalism focuses on celebrating and encouraging manifestations of diversity. An example of multiculturalism might be a festival in which people from different cultures present musical performances and showcase diverse ethnic practices. An intercultural event might take a different form, with members of different cultural groups interacting and co-creating.' Shelly Tracy

'Through our understanding that our primary challenge was not necessarily our different cultures but in fact our different creativities, we discovered more and more how relevant an intercultural approach was when negotiating collaborative arts practice. It was this discovery that led us to design Creative Fusions as a project that requires that people work across art forms, as well as across cultures'. Jude McVitty

Beginning the Consultation Process

A series of conversations and research was initiated by Donegal Intercultural Platform and Donegal County Council Arts Office to develop a framework for Intercultural Arts for Donegal from the perspective of the BME communities.

The aim of the project is to bring people together from the wide range of communities in Donegal, representing Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Communities to share and develop opinions and priorities for communities through culture and art practice and to encourage meaningful dialogue and artistic expression.

It proposes inclusive intercultural arts and culture practice within the broader community of Donegal. It explores concrete proposals for inclusive intercultural arts and culture practice and asks questions about what needs to be done to create more engagement and participation in cultural activity and arts. How we can harness the creative potential from within BME communities and what are the barriers to participation?



Values and Public Policy

Human beings exist and move through spaces that are both real and imagined. Moving through these spaces we collect and store sensory and cognitive information. We navigate through everyday spaces with fragments of memory that inform our emotional experiences and perceptions. We use those fragments to help us create lived territories and sense of 'place'. Through this we define our identities.

The values and principles underlying this research project are

- the five community development values of Collectivity; Empowerment; Social Justice; Participation and Equality & Anti-Discrimination

- the core principles underpinning the The Arts Council of Ireland's policies on cultural diversity and arts

- Social Practice Art collaboration and engagement principles recognising human rights and social justice within intercultural artistic collaboration. It sees art as a meaningful dialogue to create change, that is both political, cultural and artistic and views 'art as weapon' (Nato Thompson) rather than a sticking plaster for society or a tool to create capital and investment.

The Intercultural Art in Action Project has been undertaken in Donegal in the context of a number of important strategies and declarations on the issue of cultural diversity, expression and inclusion, both internationally and here in Ireland.

UNESCO Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Chief among these is Article 27 of UNESCO's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states 'Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.' In its Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, UNESCO further states, under Article 5 – 'All persons have therefore the right to express themselves and to create and disseminate their work in the language of their choice, and particularly in their mother tongue; all persons are entitled to education and training that fully respects their cultural identity; and all persons have the right to participate in the cultural life of their choice, and conduct their own cultural practices, subject to respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (of others).'

Equality of access to the means and platforms for cultural expression are seen as the prerequisites of Cultural Diversity in Article 6 'Freedom of expression, media pluralism, multilingualism, equal access to art and to scientific knowledge, including in digital form, and the possibility for all cultures to have access to the means of expression and dissemination are the guarantees of cultural diversity.'

As a longtime member state of UNESCO, Ireland implicitly accepts these Declarations and it is important they continue to inform government policy and practice in this area.

The Arts Council of Ireland

The Arts Council of Ireland has recently published its Equality, Human Rights and Diversity Policy and Strategy (2019). It commits the Council to a wide range of actions and initiatives, both in-house in terms of its own structures and practices, and beyond in terms of the broader arts sector, including its support for artists from diverse backgrounds, incorporating equality and diversity criteria into its annual investment plans for arts venues and organisations and making equality and diversity a key element of its partnership with local authorities.

It believes in developing intercultural arts work in Ireland through a process that combines collaboration, intercultural art experimentation and artistic ambition and considers and prioritises the quality of the engagement at all stages of the planning, making and evaluation of the work.

The Arts Council also advises that barriers to engaging with and participating in the arts remain because of socio-economic background, ethnicity or beliefs, sexual orientation or gender identity, family status, age, membership of the Traveller Community, or through lack of accommodation of a disability. They emphasise that women artists across a range of artistic disciplines continue to encounter serious impediments to advancing their careers and repertoire in a way that equates with their male peers. They recommend longterm sustainable approaches to projects, building

relationships and capacity for intercultural, enquiry and practice within the arts over celebratory approaches and short term projects. Harnessing diversity provides unparalleled opportunities for creative collaboration, innovation and learning. Intercultural art practice should demonstrate a commitment to artistic outcomes and recognise propensity for intercultural arts works to be complex and challenging.

Create

Create is the national development agency for collaborative arts in social and community contexts. Create works in partnership with the Arts Council and a range of arts and civil society organisations to encourage, promote and support the development of the collaborative arts sector. Create manage the Arts Council's 'Artist in the Community Scheme' which funds artists to work collaboratively with communities to create contemporary arts projects.

"Artists and arts organisations seeking sound, informed and impartial advice as to the best approaches to collaborative arts practice that challenges and inspires have an organisation specifically devoted to their needs".

Creative Ireland

Creative Ireland is a cross Government cultural initiative which aims to improve access to cultural and creative activity, among every community in the country and to place creativity at the centre of public policy. Operating under the aegis of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, it works in partnership with local authorities across the state, each of whom has devised and published its own Creative Ireland county and/or city strategy.

As such, the Donegal Culture and Creativity Strategy 2018-2022 contains a specific priority to, 'Promote opportunities to recognise and embrace the rich and diverse culture of new communities and to support new communities in promoting and maintaining their culture. The Government forward in The Creative Ireland Programme states

'the best way to nurture the creative imagination is through active engagement with arts and culture. Promoting creativity provides us with a strategy for individual wellbeing, social cohesion and economic success'



A landscape photograph showing a rocky stream bed in the foreground, tall grasses on the right, a fence line, and rolling hills in the background under a cloudy sky. The text "Where are we now?" is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**Where are
we now?**

Where are we now?

County Donegal can be seen as rural, a land's end and a periphery with a contested border. We work and live in often impoverished communities who feel left behind by government and where employment is welcomed. Discussion around arts and necessary cultural investment often is dismissed and held in conflict with the reality of poverty in everyday life. We are familiar with culture used as capital but meaningful culture and art is more importantly the backbone and fabric of a tolerant and inclusive society and requires investment and nurturing.

The worst humanitarian crisis of our time has seen more than 11 million people either displaced or killed since March 2011 and 4.8 million people registered with the UNHCR, having crossed borders in search of refuge from conflicts in Syria and Iraq. The Irish government has committed to international agreements that allow for migration of Irish people moving to other countries and people from other countries and cultures to live in Ireland. Climate change is also creating movement of people, with global conditions of political, environmental and economic uncertainty.

In Donegal, a Refugee Resettlement Project is being co-financed by the European Commission under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020 and is supported by the Department of Justice and Equality.

Under the programme, 25 families will resettle in Donegal in two phases, which started in 2017. The families undertake an initial language and orientation programme when they arrive in Ireland before being resettled to County Donegal. As Programme Refugees who have been invited to Ireland, the refugees have the same rights as Irish citizens to education, housing, health, social welfare and employment services. Some of these families have settled in Inishowen around Carndonagh and some in south Donegal and in the Stranorlar area. Some new families are coming to live in Buncrana soon. Buncrana is a town near the border with N. Ireland. and near Derry but unfortunately refugees are unable to cross the border without going through a visa process.

There have been proposals to provide accommodation for asylum seekers and also for further resettlement programmes. We await the outcome of that and the impact of an impending Brexit.

2019 Demographics Donegal

The population of County Donegal was recorded at 156,169 in the most recent Census (2016). By Ethnic or Cultural Background, this comprised of White Irish at 139,728 (89.47%), White Irish Travellers at 586 (.38%), Other White at 8,817 (5.65%), Black or Black Irish at 684 (.44%), Asian or Asian Irish at 1,521 (.97%), Other at 1,362 (.87%) and Not Stated at 3,471 (2.22%).

Of the 8,827 Donegal residents (5.54% of the total population) who identified as Speakers of Foreign Languages, 2,168 of these spoke Polish (25.56%), 939 spoke French (10.64%), 327 spoke Lithuanian (3.7%) and 5,393 spoke Other Languages (61.1%). Of these, 7160 (81%) stated that they spoke English either Very Well or Well, while a further 1667 (19%) stated Not Well, Not At All or did Not State.

Some 56,700 Donegal residents (35.6% of the total population) stated that they could speak Irish, while 47,260 (29.7% of the total population) stated that they spoke Irish with varying degrees of frequency, within and/or outside of the education system.





Communities of Interest

Communities of Interest

Meetings took place at different stages of the process with communities of interest and interviews were conducted sometimes individually and also with groups. The framework documents voices from the Black and Minority Ethnic communities and Intercultural communities in Donegal and is not a policy document but is a research document based on Intercultural Art in Action conversations and events.

Meetings took place with -

Syrian, Iraqi and Kurdish Families at Carndonagh and Buncrana, Co. Donegal and with Syrian Women at Finn Valley Family Resource Centre, Stranorlar, Co. Donegal.

BME Communities and Traveller Community at Mother Language Day in Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny.

BME Communities at Café Arabia in Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny and at Donegal Travellers Project Letterkenny. Other meetings took place with representatives from the BME communities in the Radisson Hotel Letterkenny and Mount Errigal Hotel, Letterkenny. Co. Donegal.

Interfaith Workers Ruth Garvey Williams and Andrew Garvey Williams at The Exchange, Buncrana. Co. Donegal. Inishowen.

Development Partnership Buncrana, Co. Donegal.

Artists Marie Barrett and Siobhan Shiels, Inishowen, Co. Donegal, Fadl Mustapha and Macola Vonga, Letterkenny.

Donegal Intercultural Steering Committee, Letterkenny Co. Donegal.

Earagail Arts Festival, Letterkenny. Co. Donegal.

Resettlement Programme Support Workers (DLDC), Co. Donegal.

Áine Crowley, Programme Manager, Arts and Engagement Support in Create Ireland.

Kevin Murphy, Chief Officer Voluntary Arts Ireland, Derry.

BME Communities including the Traveller and Roma communities, Donegal Intercultural Platform, Syrian, Kurdish and Iraqi Families within the Resettlement Programme, Letterkenny Islamic Association, Igbo Nigerian Association, Ghana Union, Indian Association, Polish Sunday School, Letterkenny, Bangladeshi Community in Donegal, Matreshki and Samovar Russian Community Cultural Organisations, Tamil Association, Donegal Traveller Project, The Roma Outreach Project (DTP), Building Intercultural Communities Project, Donegal (DTP PEACE IV programme).







Consultation and Engagement

Consultation and Engagement

In March 2018, the event 'Living in Donegal' opened up conversation around Intercultural Arts in County Donegal. Following this, meetings took place with the Donegal Arts Office and the Donegal Intercultural Platform regarding an Art in Action research project and framework document for Donegal. The Intercultural Arts Engagement process began in September 2018 on Culture Night building collaboration with Donegal Travellers Project, Donegal Intercultural Platform, the community and artist.

A small working group was then established, Paul Kernan (Irish), Thoiba Ahmed (Sudanese) and Kathryn Daily (USA) from within the Donegal Intercultural Platform was established to assist and oversee the project and research gathered. Social practice artist, Bernadette Hopkins (Irish) was commissioned to begin collaboration, consultation, project management, design and documentation of the project. She found and contacted communities of interest in the county to engage with and also contacted Áine Crowley Programme Manager, Arts and Engagement Support in Create Ireland for advice.

The global changing landscape of migration reflects locally and a necessary change in current modes of practice and language used is needed in Donegal. Opportunities for exchange of ideas and expertise from BME communities are required as part of the research process with the aim to give everyone access to the arts and creating new models of practice.





Building the Change

Creative Process

Building the Change

The design of the framework is firstly openness to change through process while encouraging stronger connections and relationships between BME communities and artistic practice and culture. By promoting participation and diversity in the creation of art and culture, it aims to increase creativity in diverse communities and encourage self expression and sense of well being. The project is an opportunity to reach out and discuss research undertaken in the field and explore new ideas. The global changing landscape of migration reflects locally and a necessary change in the current modes of practice and language used is needed. Opportunities for exchange of ideas and expertise from BME communities are required as part of the research process with the aim to give everyone access to the arts and creating new models of practice.

The project is based on Social Practice Art, an artistic and creative practice that aims to create change: it requires a meaningful interaction with communities of place and/or interest and with broader social or political intentions at it's core. The participatory element of socially engaged practice, is key, with the artworks created often holding equal or less importance to the collaborative act of creating them while maintaining theoretical modes and methods of artistic expression.

These include public events that are designed by the participants or co-creators in collaboration with the artist and are intended to bring attention to poignant issues and create dialogue. Social Practice Art brings together art, social justice, activism and cultural organising.

This project has been designed to create empowerment for the participants and increase their role in cultural decision making. It was also designed to provide a framework that seeks meaningful dialogue while exploring aspects of art practice and culture, within which BME communities and artists can situate themselves. It is an opportunity to raise awareness on equality, human rights and diversity during these conversations and effect change. Most of all we wanted to find ways to bring about positive outcomes in terms of art and culture for members of the BME communities, identify artists in the BME communities and encourage them as artists to lead artistic projects and take part as artists in the planning and co-ordination process for future arts engagements in their communities.

The research practice was underpinned by an agreement at the outset to have trust in the process, to open up dialogue, be experimental, push boundaries and have flexible goals. It was agreed that there would be a series of events to research and gather ideas for development of art and culture from the BME communities in Donegal. A Donegal Intercultural Art in Action facebook group page was set up to enhance engagement.

Creative Process

A series of actions, workshops, engagements and five events, were organised as part of a social practice art process and engagement to gather research for the framework document and create dialogue. The time frame of this part of the project engagement, events and framework documentation was six months: from November 2018 until April 2019.

- 1.Café Arabia, Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny. Co.Donegal
- 2.International Mother Language Day, Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny. Co. Donegal
- 3.Journeys Dialogue, Anglers Centre, Buncrana. Co.Donegal
- 4.Acouscenic Listening at Pollen Bay, Inishowen. Co.Donegal
- 5.Connected Space Dialogue, Finn Valley Family Resource Centre, Stranorlar, Co. Donegal
- 6.Culture Crossroads Café Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny. 14th April

In addition to these events, meetings and interviews were conducted during this time frame outside of the main Intercultural events to harness best practice including 'Art of Living' organised by ArtsEkta in Black Box, Belfast. N. Ireland

A meeting with Create Ireland took place on 17 January, 2019 discussing best practice, rational, ethical and participative approach and process. Create is the national development agency for collaborative arts in social and community contexts. They provide advice and support services to artists and arts organisations working collaboratively with communities in social and community contexts. Create supports artists across all art forms who work collaboratively with communities in different social and community contexts.

Martha McCulloch and Harry Kerr were commissioned at the start of the project to provide photographic and film documentation during the project events. Martha worked as Director of Street Level Photoworks in Glasgow and as a lecturer in Fine Art at the Glasgow School of Art. Harry's background is in graphic design, photography and film. He taught photography in the Fine Art Photography Department Glasgow School of Art as a technical instructor.

Harry and Martha worked on the project attending events and photographically documenting to provide a photographic archive for the project and the creation of the Café Arabia Film <https://youtu.be/4xAH3xiEsQw> and a series of interviews and film documentation of the project process that is continuing until later this year. Their film Café Arabia was screened at the Regional Cultural Centre at the final event Culture Crossroads in April 2019. They also filmed the performance by Fadl Mustapha of 'Bassam' for the project <https://youtu.be/KUyng01FJLg> performed at our Culture Crossroads Café, Regional Cultural Centre, April 2019. Their work can be found at Memory Factory Photography.

Methodologies

Research methods included visual pathways to conversation, story-telling and mapping personal landscapes. Cultural probes were given to participants to inspire self expression and communication about their lives, environments, thoughts, and interactions. This was communicated prior to doing so. Postcards, maps, journals, and cameras, various pieces of text and imagery were explored to open personal responses and to gain views of participant cultures, preferences, beliefs, and desires. They served to begin a conversation about possibilities. Acouscenic listening/mapping methods were applied to personal and lived landscapes.

Visual explorations were employed that express thoughts and experiences through multimedia and collage while seeking ways in which people create resistance and political change. Interviews were a fundamental research method for direct contact with participants, to collect first hand personal accounts of experience, opinions, attitudes, and perceptions.

Questionnaires and conversation cards were used during this research at events and sent out also to BME communities and the Donegal Intercultural Platform. Conversations and the questionnaires lead to the final roundtable event where findings were discussed and recommendations given by participants.





Café Arabia

Café Arabia

The Donegal Intercultural Platform Art in Action Project presented 'Café Arabia' at the Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny on Saturday 15th December at 2pm. Café Arabia marked UN World Arabic Language Day. The day celebrates the Arabic language and promotes cultural diversity.

Café Arabia was attended by adults and children, of which 45 adults signed in. People came to the event from many different cultural and ethnic backgrounds including Egyptian, Sudanese, Syrian, Palestinian, Chinese, Spanish, Irish, Dutch, Russian, African, American and Polish. There was a shared appreciation and recognition of the key place of the Arabic language in terms of global communications, culture and faith. The day brought a fusion of Arabic art and was the first event, as part of a series of conversations and research, to create an intercultural framework for Donegal.

The aim of the event was to bring people together from the wide range of communities in Donegal, representing Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Communities to share and develop opinions and priorities for communities in culture and art practice and to encourage artistic expression. The event was made possible by all those who assisted in organising the event, especially the women's organising group, the resettlement support workers, the musicians and dancers and everyone who participated and engaged.

A series of meetings took place prior to the event with Donegal Intercultural Platform representatives, women from the Arabic-speaking communities, the working group and the project artist. The event was then organised to include children's arts tables, Arabic music and traditional Irish music, cultural tables with artefacts from various Arabic cultures, costume, poetry, dancing, calligraphy and a visual history of calligraphy, traditional Arabic cuisine, henna painting and a public art conversation where participants took a seat at a conversation table and were presented with question cards written in Arabic and English. Twenty six people participated and wrote about their ideas for a Utopian community and what arts and culture meant to them.

Traditional Irish music from Martin McGinley, fiddle and Ted Ponsonby, guitar, opened the event, followed by experienced male Syrian dancers. They encouraged others on to the floor to dance with them and danced to a fusion of Arabic Music assisting relaxed intercultural interactions that helped people to open conversations and enjoy aspects of Arabic cultures. Arabic food was prepared and brought by the families, men and women who helped to organise the event. It was an opportunity to share recipes and enjoy a part of Arabic culture. Coffee is another important part of Middle Eastern culture and culinary tradition. It was served at the event sweetened and with cardamon and was a new experience for many attending. Café Arabia was a well attended opening to the Intercultural Art in Action Project and a participatory beginning of the project research.





**International
Mother
Language Day**

International Mother Language Day

International Mother Language Day (IMLD) is celebrated every year on 21 February with the overall objective to promote linguistic diversity and multilingual education. The Bangladeshi Community in Donegal and Donegal Intercultural Platform came together to organise an educational and celebratory event on Sunday 24th February 2019 in the Regional Cultural Centre in Letterkenny.

It was well attended by both adults and children and 50 people signed in. There were various ethnicities attended the event, Bengali, Russian, Irish, Polish, Sudanese, African, Korean, American and Spanish, which included a short documentary film and speeches from community leaders. Research took place through the celebration of art, language and culture through poetry, song and dancing from Indian Irish and Russian dancers and artists. The Letterkenny Accordion Band played and food was provided from the Bangladeshi Community.

Conversations around the artistic and culture content of the event sparked sharing and exchange of information about traditional dance, costume and music. An art conversation table also took place with question cards around art and culture providing documentation. 55 question cards were filled in and contributed to the compilation of the research.







Journeys Dialogue

'Journeys Dialogue'

The art dialogue began with a keynote presentation on how women have visually documented experiences and ideas through textiles and mixed media. This included the 'Arpillera' collage work by women from Chile used as a form of resistance under an oppressive regime where communication with the outside world was banned. Women used sackings and cloth to inform the world about what was going on, inside their country. Their Arpillera's were smuggled out and are now exhibited in galleries around the world. Journeys Intercultural Dialogue took place in the Anglers Centre, Buncrana, Co. Donegal in collaboration with Inishowen Development partnership who greatly supported and arranged the venue and introductions to those attending.

The project artist facilitated and provided material for the art collage workshop for twelve women and Thoiba Ahmed from the Research Project Working Group provided translation for the five Syrian women taking part. The participants used collage, mixed media and textiles to express personal journeys and concluded with reflection on the work, evaluation and gathering of replies to questionnaires from the project. The women talked about the isolation they felt and how difficult it was to go out and make friends. They wanted to engage with the communities and cultural events but felt language was a barrier. They felt comfortable being able to come together through visual language and express themselves. The workshop created meaningful dialogue around personal experiences and life journeys.





Acouscenic Listening

Acouscenic Listening

On International Woman's Day 2019, an intercultural bus journey of Inishowen was organised by Inishowen Development Partnership. The Intercultural Art in Action project were part of the day and the project artist Bernadette Hopkins gave an introductory workshop on acouscenic listening when we stopped at Pollen Bay. Instruction for the workshop was written in Arabic and English and information was given about sound walks. Twelve women attended from Irish and Dutch ethnicities. Unfortunately the Syrian woman that were booked were unable to attend that morning. The workshop offered an opportunity for dialogue and discussion and building relationships. Dr. Sean Taylor has developed and researched acouscenic listening as social art based practice and refers to it as an interest in relational areas of research; acoustic space and it's relationship to the everyday, deep listening and it's connection to social art practice. A creative sound walk is an



exploration of the soundscape of a given area. The traditional sound walk has become an important practice for researchers in acoustic ecology and sound art practices. Discussion afterwards was around a sense of presence and of time, space and place. There was an interest in developing this practice and getting to know the general locality collectively through workshops such as this. The participants thought they would learn a lot about the culture

of the area from the collective discussion and reflection on this practice and were keen to meet others in this way. The bus then moved on to visit a local craft shop and the Fair-trade Festival taking place in Carndonagh on the same day. Here we met with some of the Syrian community and enjoyed their wonderful cuisine.



Connected Spaces

Connected Spaces

'Connected Spaces' Workshop took place in Finn Valley Family resource centre, Stranolar, Co. Donegal. The venue was provided and organised by the project management team at the centre. A consultation took place between 12 Syrian women and artist two weeks prior to the workshop. A questionnaire was discussed relating to general needs and what arts and culture they wished to explore.

The workshop was attended by 3 Syrian women and two community workers and began with a visual presentation of mixed media collage from around the world using maps, journals, postcards, textiles and drawing. The women used collage to relate to their sense of place, present and past. At the evaluation at the end of the workshop, they discussed some aspects of their journeys and the process of creating a new home for themselves. They talked about the homes they had to leave, the different flowers that they once had planted and how they would like to plant flowers again in their new homes. They expressed a strong desire to continue with an art practice process.

The workshop had a low attendance and was subdued as mass shootings at a mosque in New Zealand had taken place just hours prior to the Connected Space' art dialogue.



Culture Crossroads Café



Culture Crossroads Café

The final event in the project was the 'Culture Crossroads Cafe' which presented the outline and findings of the Intercultural Art in Action Research Project followed by roundtable discussion on the way forward for Intercultural Arts in Donegal. The event was attended by a broad section of the BME communities and people from arts and culture backgrounds. Forty adults signed into the event and people of Roma, Sudanese, Syrian, Egyptian, African, Irish, Polish Palestinian, Irish Travellers, Nigerian and American ethnicities participated in the event.

Film and photography from the previous project events were shown including a screening of 'Café Arabia' and there was a poignant performance from Fadl Mustapha- an excerpt from the play 'Bassam' which was filmed on the day. A visual presentation of the project and findings of the research was given by the project artist Bernadette Hopkins. At the round table discussion, a number of recommendations which had arisen over the course of the consultations were introduced, and participants at each table were asked to work in groups to give feedback on their implementation. There were lively conversations and exchanges as each table presented their findings, their thoughts and their ideas, all of which have been included in the Recommendations at the end of this Report.

There was a delicious meal to end the day made by two women from the Syrian Community, with Roma music by pianist and singer Nicholas Armlich and Irish classical music by The Donegal Quartet.





Research Questionnaires



Research Questionnaires

Research took place during the conversations and engagements. Questionnaires were also sent out to members of the Donegal Intercultural Platform and their steering group. Members of the BME communities were also invited to send us ideas and their thoughts by email during the project. Racism was mentioned many times in these discussions. People from BME communities appear to be experiencing racism on a daily basis here in Donegal.

In addition to creating dialogical events, Donegal Intercultural Art in Action set up a Facebook group and invited interested people to join and take part in the conversations, events, meetings and workshops, and to be part of forming a framework for intercultural dialogues from the perspective of the BME communities. We offered transport for events, given the large geographical spread of the county and translation for events, to maximise the opportunity to communicate with each other. The communication was also achieved through creative explorations, where language skills are not a requirement.

We are grateful to all those who took the time to engage through the questionnaires and to those who sent emails. We have tried to include all those voices in this framework document.



Asking Questions and Gathering Responses

We opened the discussion at the first event asking very open questions about values, perceptions and interests. We took these questions on cards to all the dialogues, events and interviews and asked

What do you think Utopia or a perfect world looks like?

What qualities in society are important to you?

What arts and culture do you like best and why?

What are the favourite parts of your culture?

What would you like to change in your community/the world?

What makes you feel frightened?

The replies we got back were very specific

-People said they wanted to live in a world where human relationships were not dependant on background, or what country, culture or tradition they came from.

-Family and friends were most important to them.

-They wanted to be free from experiencing racism

- They wanted openness, respect and inclusion and a sense of belonging.

- They wanted diversity and to meet others, sharing food, and talking and to have Irish friends.

- One person feared her children would not learn about other cultural backgrounds living in rural Ireland.

- One person wrote that being considered a stranger really hurt.

- They said they enjoyed participating in visual arts, painting, crafts, dance, performance, music and singing, writing and philosophy, history, old cultures and food culture and learning new skills.

- They liked visual arts and music because it did not always require advanced language skills.

- One person specified photography and film editing and production.

- What frightened most people was war and lack of peace and stability in the world, poverty and loss of children.

- One person wrote 'I am frightened of what would happen if people took action on the hate they show when they find out I am a Muslim'

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A questionnaire submitted by Donegal Arts Office was brought to the Journey and Connected Spaces workshops and discussed at events. Twenty eight answers drawn from these encounters have been included in the document's recommendations.

Q.1. How and where do members of Black and Minority Ethnic Communities engage in and enjoy cultural activity in Donegal at present?

A.1 Many said they found themselves isolated especially in the rural areas. There are no cafés to go to in the evening to mix and have cultural experiences and most would not go into pubs because of cultural issues around alcohol and especially for women. The cost of travelling to somewhere like Letterkenny was prohibitive and also the cost of events in the theatre is an issue and a barrier to participation. Public transport does not run to suit events time-wise in Letterkenny. Many are refugees and have very little income. They struggle with language. In Letterkenny many attend the events organised by the Intercultural Platform and their communities. They cannot cross the border to Derry because that would require visas and is an issue for refugees.

Q.2. What can Donegal County Council do to support Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in the practice and enjoyment of cultural activities? What can arts and cultural organisations and facilities in Donegal, such as theatres, arts centres, galleries, festivals, artists organisations, do to support Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in the practice and enjoyment of cultural activities?

A.2 They would like opportunities to explore a range of arts and access workshops and training in arts practice in the areas they live. They felt this would help them be less isolated with a chance to socialise without needing a lot of language skills. Child care is an issue for many of the young mothers. They need more assistance with childcare as it is a barrier to them participating in the arts and other educational training. Many said they would like assistance with transport and costs for tickets for cultural events particularly those in rural areas. They would like to see art work in the theatres and art centres that is relevant and issue based and dealing with matters of social justice. They would like to see more events that engage their communities and diversity in the art and artists showing with more discussion and translation around the work. They would like the Earagail Arts Festival more actively engage with them around international music events etc and have affordable ways of participating.

Q.3 What is the best way to communicate information about cultural activities/ events/programmes, to and among Black and Minority Ethnic Communities?

A.3 Through DIP and the community groups who actively engage with BME groups and by creating communities of interest through setting up arts groups for BME communities to engage in. Develop knowledge, training and interest in the arts and that will create communication with the cultural event organisers.

Q.4 What can we do to make the cultural activity of Black and Minority Ethnic Communities more visible, within the overall context of culture in Donegal?

A.4 Provide opportunities and training to BME in the arts. Funding to start their own small projects. Show diversity by employing people from BME communities.

Q.5 Are there other questions relating to cultural practice among Black and Minority Ethnic Communities that should be raised?

A.5 Other questions included

How can we start mentorship exchanges?

How can we help BME communities develop small business through their crafts, food and expertise?

How can the arts organisations facilitate exhibition space for BME communities?

How can we actively and directly challenge racism through the arts and the County Council in Donegal?

A Donegal Intercultural Art and Culture in Action questionnaire was sent to 86 members of the Donegal Intercultural Platform with 12 replies.

Q1. In my opinion, the promotion of intercultural dialogue through the arts is largely understood as: Please select no more than three options

- a. a core objective to promote cooperation between people from different countries
- b. a feature of official cultural exchanges
- c. a process of exchange between artists from different cultural communities
- d. a means to promote understanding and relationships between diverse ethnic, religious or language communities
- e. a result of special cultural events to educate the public about the traditions of other cultures
- f. a tool to help minority communities better integrate into the majority cultural community
- g. inter-religious dialogue
- h. an objective of citizenship programmes and has nothing to do with the arts
- i. something inherent in the activities of community development organisations and not part of a wider government policy or programme
- j. difficult to achieve due to language barriers
- k. A tool to help me express myself and my experiences with others
- l. none of the above

Other (please specify)

A1. The promotion of intercultural dialogue through the arts is largely understood as a means to promote understanding and relationships between diverse ethnic, religious or language communities and as a tool to help people express themselves and their experiences with others

Q2. Do you think intercultural dialogue through the arts should lead to: Please select the most important three options to you.

- a. cultural exchanges between majority and minority communities
- b. activities that bring the public into contact with other cultures, their traditions or contemporary expressions which they would not otherwise have access to
- c. artistic projects that mix different cultural traditions and result in new or hybrid forms of artistic and cultural expression
- d. preservation of traditions that are important to me and my culture
- e. an understanding of others personal journeys and perspectives
- f. creation of new spaces or a common platform where a diversity of voices can be shared
- g. Shared experiences that create understanding and friendships
- h. Learning artistic skills and opening personal creativity
- i. a decrease in acts of racism and discrimination against members of diverse ethnic, religious or language communities
- j. none of the above

Other (please specify)

A2. Intercultural dialogue through the arts should lead to cultural exchanges between majority and minority communities, shared experiences that create understanding and friendships and learning new artistic skills and opening personal creativity

Q3. Cultural and arts institutions can promote intercultural dialogue by:

Please select no more than three options (or the three you believe are the highest priority).

- a. developing new artistic or cultural programmes that involve artists with different cultural backgrounds and artistic visions
- b. commissioning creative works that raise awareness of the issues and host discussions with the audience afterwards
- c. organising seminars, workshops and conferences with artists from diverse cultural, religious and language groups debating relevant themes
- d. enlarging their criteria for artistic excellence
- e. inviting individuals with different cultural backgrounds to be members of their boards and steering committees
- f. opening up recruitment procedures in order to diversify their management, administrative and artistic staff
- g. inviting the public to participate in programme development
- h. developing exhibitions or other programmes that feature specific cultures or traditions as a tool to educate the public
- i. offering special evenings or workshops that engage the public in the artistic practices of other cultures
- j. none of the above

Other (please specify)

A3. Culture and Arts Institutions can promote intercultural dialogue by developing new artistic or cultural programmes that involve artists with different cultural backgrounds and artistic visions; commission creative works that raise awareness of the issues and host discussions with the audience afterwards and invite individuals from different cultural backgrounds to be members of their boards or steering committees

Q4. What arts and aspects of culture are you most interested in?

- a. participation in creative environments that create and inspire conversation
- b. traditional arts and crafts that require training
- c. expressive arts that help you to express your ideas in a creative way and require guidance in the early stages.
- d. participatory cultural events
- e. exploring a range of arts from visual art, drawing, painting, collage, textiles, installation, film, photography, drama, performance, dance, creative writing, poetry, music, cooking, print-making, wood-carving, sculpture, design
- f. none of these

Please specify if you are particularly interested in something not mentioned

A4. The arts and aspects of culture they were most interested in were participation in creative environments that create and inspire conversation, exploring a range of arts from visual art, drawing, painting, collage, textiles, installation, film, photography, drama, performance, dance, creative writing, poetry, music, cooking, print-making, wood-carving, sculpture, design and the traditional arts and crafts that require training.



**These Walls
Must Fall**

These Walls Must Fall - Findings

The research carried out is a beginning for what comes next. General findings, from discussions that have taken place and from those interviewed, point to what the difficulties are and how participation in arts, empowers people and gives a sense of well being and belonging. Refugees coming into the county require rehabilitation, empowerment and integration into the communities in Donegal. Trauma happened to them before, during and after their journey. Many suffer PTSD, anxiety and depression. They try to deal with it inside their family.

Intercultural research shows that art and creativity

- are connected to improving a sense of well being, feelings of connectedness, empowerment and building friendships.

- art is a personal expression of feelings and experiences.

- a cultural background is one of layers.

- art is a meaningful language. It gives power to the voiceless and a face to the faceless. It is a constructive medium for dissent, dissection and anger.

- art intervention along with social action leads to cultural transformation.

Art engagement is important in rural communities to create tolerance and understanding. Questions around identity are important to BME communities and many want to express

that through art making. BME communities want to learn new artistic skills. They lack places to meet interculturally. Language is a huge barrier to integration creating a lack of confidence to socialise. There is a desire for mentorships and exchange of skills. Mentorship schemes are starting in Scotland on Sawti project-professionals and refugees learning from each other. In Inishowen there are refugees with expertise in tailoring, woodwork, beekeeping, yogurt making and also cooking. 'WISH' Women's Intercultural Support Hub is in place in Inishowen to combat isolation and build relationships. They are interested in developing an art programme with 'taster' sessions of different art forms.

Through the project we have encountered women and gender equality issues. Patriarchy keeps some women restricted and at home and also inhibits men's participation, contributing to men's isolation. Arts based groups could open up discussion and awareness. There is a need to fund small community projects trying to start from grass roots. Intersections are needed for people to connect with the arts. Art making is more than an aesthetic experience. There are often feelings of 'otherness' in relation to the arts. People often don't see arts belonging to them but can experience 'walls coming down through art's as it promotes friendship and breaks down barriers. Traveller art, craft and music culture has a special place in Irish life, especially in Donegal. Traveller and Roma community and artists need support and encouragement to gain respect and inclusion with more investment in art and cultural & intercultural educational programmes. There is a need to connect art with everyday lived experiences.

One woman wrote a reflection on her experience of Café Arabia event:

'I went to an event in Regional Culture Centre in Letterkenny on 15th December 2018 at 2 o'clock. This event was organised by Donegal Intercultural Platform, Donegal County Council. It was an event of celebrating United Nations Arabic Language Day. There were Syrian, Palestinian, Sudanese, Egyptians, Moroccan, Africans, South Africans, Jordan, English & Irish people. Different cultures coming together, that was positive, sharing food tea coffee and Arabic sweets. Dancing together getting to know each others by having conversation and asking questions. Interpreter was there. She did speak in Arabic interpreting what the presenter of the event was saying in English. So the people who do not speak English knew what the event was all about.

This Arabic culture event did highlight unity, togetherness, belonging and friendship everybody had good time, the atmosphere was warm and welcoming. Syrian kids sang songs in Arabic they seemed to enjoyed singing in their mother tongues Arabic. And that is very important to keep up with their heritage language while they are living in Ireland. Irish music was played and Arabic poems was read, also activities for kids painting and colouring. Myself and other ladies had Henna Tattoo on our hands. It did look beautiful.

The Donegal County Council and the Regional Cultural Centre showed what is called intercultural and allowed for that interaction between majority and minority cultures. I thank every one who make this event happened ,it was well organised. I am looking forward to be involved in similar events in the future.'





Going Forward in Donegal- Recommendations

Going Forward in Donegal

Recommendations and conclusions

Artists and Practitioners

1. There is a need to establish the current extent and diversity of arts and cultural practice among the Black and Minority Ethnic communities in the county. This will entail creating an audit and maintaining a register of artistic skills, professional and otherwise, that are prevalent within the communities. It should outline how many people identify as or have particular skills, experience or qualifications in, the visual arts, performing arts, crafts, creative writing etc.

2. There is a need to assist in the professional development of artists in the Black and Minority Ethnic communities.

3. Consideration should be given to the development of an arts mentorship programme. There are many people within the wider community who have advanced skills that they could share and exchange on an arts and culture mentorship programme. This would create a two way dialogue with mutual respect and assist in the creation of more diverse art.

4. There is a need to identify and engage with local cultural institutions and professional arts organisations, to encourage them to engage and support Black and Minority Ethnic artists and communities in the county, eg. Donegal County Council Culture Division, Regional Cultural Centre, An Grianán Theatre, Earagail Arts Festival, Balor Arts Centre and Balor Developmental Community Arts, An Gailearaí Doire Beag,

Artlink etc., as well as with national bodies, such as Create - the National Development Agency for the Collaborative Arts.

5. There is a need to develop intercultural arts projects that invite national and international arts practitioners to work with local Black and Minority Ethnic artists, to help them develop professionally and to raise visibility for intercultural arts in Donegal and engage with the Black and Minority Ethnic Communities directly.

6. There is a need to find and identify local artists interested in working in intercultural arts and those who would be interested in providing mentorships in Black and Minority Ethnic, Traveller and Roma communities.

7. Consideration should be given to the creation of a panel of Intercultural Arts Facilitators, who would co-ordinate, manage and implement plans for intercultural arts and culture in the county and who would liaise with wider Black and Minority Ethnic communities and institutions, both locally and nationally. Facilitators would be experienced, professional working artists with a knowledge of arts methodologies and where possible would be drawn from Black and Minority Ethnic communities. They would work with an Advisory Intercultural Forum, made up of representatives of Black and Minority Ethnic communities in the county, Donegal Intercultural Platform, Donegal Travellers Project, local Arts Venues and Organisations, Donegal County Council, Donegal ETB, Community Development groups, Resettlement workers and individual Artists.

Social Spaces.

8. There is a need to create, or to provide access to safe, shared spaces and common grounds where Black and Minority Ethnic communities can have meaningful dialogues through art and pursue a wide range of cultural and social activities including language learning and exchange Conversation Cafés, arts and crafts practice workshops, celebratory events, cookery classes, food demonstration and sharing events.

9. The idea of the Intercultural Café as a regular event, spread across a number of towns – Letterkenny, Donegal Town, Ballybofey/Stranorlar; Carndonagh, Raphoe, Buncrana – should be considered. Evening intercultural cafés could be set up by asking local cafés to stay open and provide food and beverages of international flavours and where alcohol is not served. This would allow women and children from BME communities to fully participate.

10. Donegal Intercultural Platform, or the Platform's Peace IV funded Building Intercultural Communities (BIC) project, could promote this as network of local forums, as places to share information and ideas. Incentives could be provided to local businesses to encourage them to host International Café style events.

Community Creativity, New Skills and Experiences.

11. There is a need to assist the development of new skills and to develop art practice among Black and Minority Ethnic communities. This would give people room to grow, to feel

connected and would also provide the stability necessary for members of new minority communities to adjust in a new country. The setting up of weekly workshops/community conversations of approximately 2 hours duration, throughout the county, with tasters of different artforms and crafts, should be considered.

12. A wide range of possible areas of workshop activity emerged in the course of the consultations, among them - workshops in drama, performing arts, dance and mythology, live performance art, sculpture, crafts, collage, photography, film, painting, drawing, design, mixed media, print-making, jewellery making, ceramics, sound art workshops, music, poetry, shared histories, storytelling, scriptwriting, book-making, community gardening and allotments, seed exchange, recipe exchange, intercultural nature art groups in communities to create outdoor art, walking, conversation and sharing creative ideas.

13. Further international arts and crafts workshops were also suggested in Chinese or Japanese ink painting and calligraphy, Indonesian batik, silk-screen painting, woodblock printing (African or Japanese), wood-carving bowls, mugs etc. (Indian, African, Slovakian). Weaving fibres to make mats, baskets etc. Metalwork (North African). Leather work for shoes and bags. Clothes design and making, embroidery, appliqué, crochet.

14. The use of school art departments and community spaces for visual art workshops should be explored.

15.A programme of theatre workshops, of shared stories and storytelling, should be developed to assist integration.

Participating in the Cultural Life of the Community

16.There is a strong desire among Black and Ethnic Minority communities to attend and participate in cultural events and programmes, both those organised by their own communities and those taking place in the context of the wider Donegal community. There are, however, a number of barriers which militate against their greater participation in the cultural life of the community. Chief among these are access to transport, costs of admission to events and programmes and access to childcare – the latter being particularly relevant in the context of community members, women especially, participating in daytime skills development activities like workshops or training programmes.

17.As such it is suggested that assisted transport and concessionary tickets be provided to enable those who are impoverished and living in rural areas especially, to attend cultural events in the county. Travel assistance is a vital component for arts participation.

18.Consideration must also be given to support for childcare, or for provision of parallel activities for children, to free-up parents to participate in arts and cultural activities. During the summer months, when childcare availability is limited, women especially find themselves very isolated.

19.There is a desire among Black and Ethnic Minority communities to create and to participate in arts and cultural projects that include discussion on issues such as identities,

integration, diversity, domestic violence, patriarchy and social isolation and give opportunities to express and challenge ideas around cultural norms.

20.A programme of weekend cultural bus trips for Refugee and new Black and Minority Ethnic families to Donegal, should be considered so that they may learn more about the culture and heritage of the new country and community they live in.

21.A programme of family nature walks, should be developed, as above.

Education and Actions around Diversity and Inclusion

22. Racism is a reality experienced by many members of Black and Minority Communities in Donegal and needs to be challenged at all levels of society. It is recommended that Arts are resourced and funded in the county to be used a tool to articulate the collective stories of the BME communities including Traveller and Roma to raise awareness of the experiences of racism, oppression and marginalisation.

23. It is also suggested that, in order to challenge on-going and emerging racism, a major arts, diversity and inclusivity arts programme should be initiated in schools. As such, the adoption of the Yellow Flag Programme (www.yellowflag.ie) by all Donegal schools is highly recommended. This programme has been developed by the Irish Traveller Movement to support primary and second level schools to become more inclusive of all cultures and ethnicities, to celebrate diversity and to challenge racism and discrimination.

23.(cont) Since 2008, 80 schools in 10 counties have joined the Yellow Flag programme. The programme requires the active support of the local authority.

24.Explore the possibility of establishing an intercultural arts entity in the county that could liaise with schools and youth programmes to encourage discussion around diversity and racism, within their arts programming and art projects.

25.To further promote inclusion among younger children, encourage libraries to make available books in different languages.

26.In addition, the civil society structures such as the Public Participation Networks (PPN), that elect representatives on to the policy committees of Donegal County Council to linkage groups and other committees, must reflect Donegal's ethnic diversity in terms of designated seats for Traveller and Roma representatives and for members of the BME communities on bodies such as the PPN Secretariat and the local authority Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs), such as the Community, Social, and Cultural SPC.

27.Programmes such as Men On The Move and Men's Sheds and similar initiatives can be of immense benefit to men from Black and Minority Ethnic communities. Such groups could be encouraged to welcome participants and members from Black and Minority Ethnic communities. A specific programme of engaging with the Mens groups on a one to one basis and of offering to organise special introductory sessions etc., would need to be initiated to make this happen.

Increasing the Profile of Intercultural Arts in the County

28.Create a specific, festival showcase of Intercultural Arts in the county. (Maybe on World Human Rights Day in October).

29.Liaise with Earagail Arts Festival to establish a means by which Black and Minority Ethnic artists and communities in Donegal can advise and have input into intercultural arts programming in the Festival.

30.Develop a programme of small festivals around intercultural arts exchange eg. Irish Sean Nós and Middle Eastern and Indo-European traditional singing, Traditional Instruments – both making and playing etc along side visual arts and performance festivals.

Inishowen Together's recent Carndonagh Middle Eastern Festival is one such example. The event was hosted by members of the new Syrian and Kurdish communities in the town. The Festival programme included sharing of food, dance, arts, crafts, children's songs and talks about the journey to Donegal and could be considered a model for similar smaller scale event around the county.

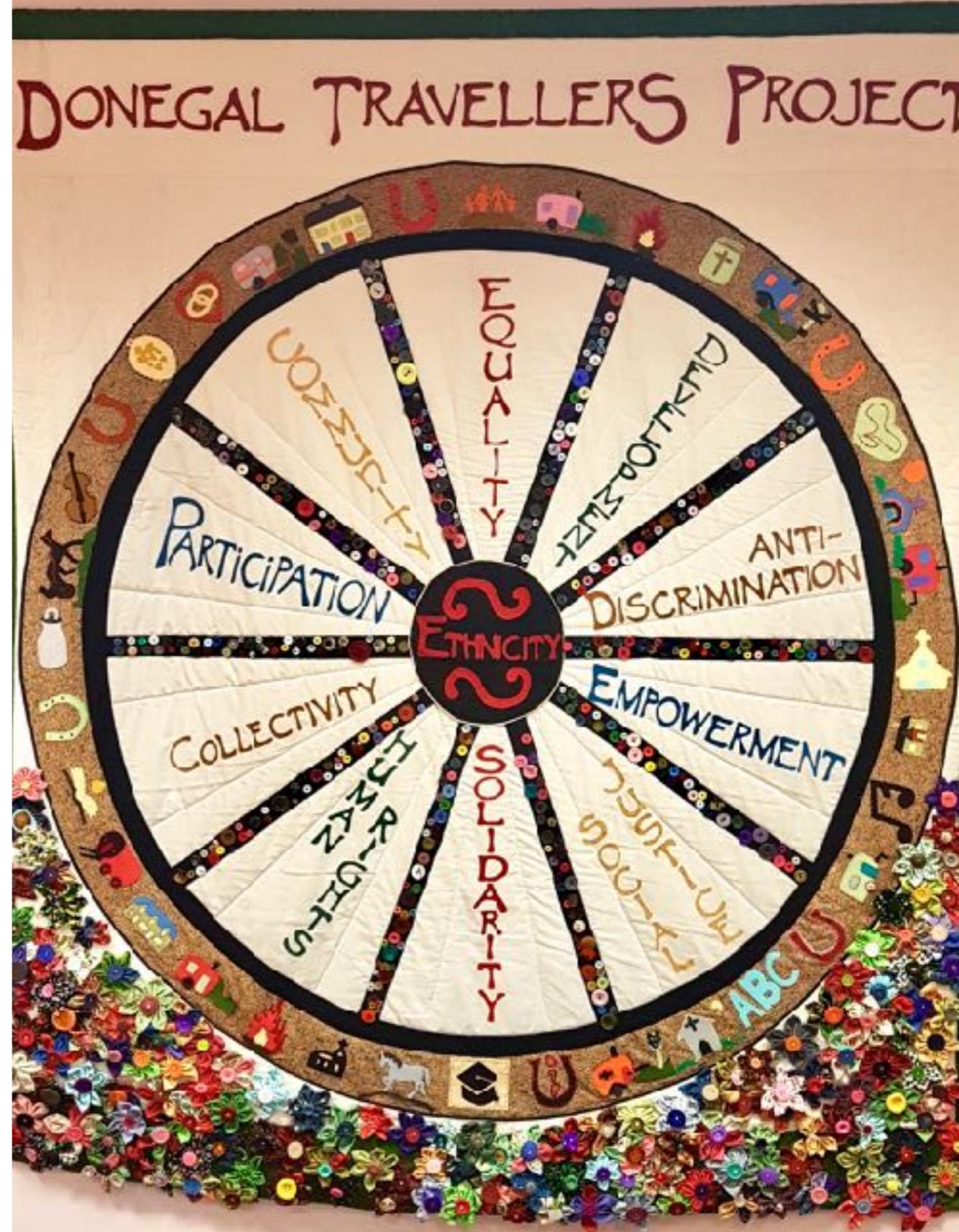
32.Create a publication of Children's Songs, Poems and Lullabies from around the world.

33. Include use of symbols, cultural and traditional images from Black and Minority Ethnic cultures in arts promotion and in shared public spaces to create a sense of inclusion and belonging for these communities while assessing cultural services. These symbols could be explored and created in community groups and as part of the Yellow Flag School Project.

34. Promote a Traveller Pride event annually to raise awareness of Traveller culture, traditions and history.

35. Develop initiatives with the Roma community which encourages a wider appreciation of the music, arts and culture of the Roma communities living in Donegal.

36. Explore the creation a project with Donegal Music Education Project focussing on World Music with participating children drawn from the Traveller, Roma, Black and Minority Ethnic communities and the majority population.



Food Culture

37. There are many within the Black and Minority Ethnic communities who have particular skills and expertise in the area of food and who would like to give demonstrations and supply food for cultural and social events. As such, they require access to Environmental Health Association of Ireland approved Food Safety Training programmes and to Environmental Health Service approved kitchens. This would enable them to share their expertise in international cuisine with each other and with the wider community.

38. In this context, the use of school cookery class kitchens should be explored and a programme of food festivals and demonstrations initiated.

39. The idea of a Mobile Kitchen - a World Kitchen on wheels - that could be rented by different users, and could cater for community events and small festivals.

Other Issues

40. Insurance is a stumbling block for voluntary and non-funded groups. They are unable to run events without Public Liability cover and they require a greater understanding of risk assessment and management. Insurance for arts and culture events, which might be provided through Donegal County Council, would help and encourage many more events to take place.

41. It is recommended that a Donegal Intercultural Creative Manifesto for Arts and Culture be created which includes the spirit and recommendations of this framework document.



Glossary

from the European Migration Network

Intercultural dialogue. 'An open and respectful exchange of views between individuals, groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage on the basis of mutual understanding and respect. It operates at all levels – within societies, between the societies of Europe and between Europe and the wider world.'

Refugee. A non-EU national who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country, or a stateless person, who, being outside of the country of former habitual residence for the same reasons as mentioned above, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it.

Asylum seeker. In the global context, a person who seeks safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than their own and awaits a decision on the application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In the EU context, a person who has made an application for protection under the Geneva Convention in respect of which a final decision has not yet been taken.

Migrant. A broader term applying to both emigrants and immigrants, referring to a person who leaves one country or region to settle in another, often in search of a better life.

Integration-In the EU context, a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of EU Member States.

Assimilation-The gradual process by which a minority group adopts the patterns of behaviour of a majority group or host society and is eventually absorbed by the majority group / host society.

Multiculturalism-A policy that endorses the principle of cultural diversity and supports the right of different cultural and ethnic groups to retain distinctive cultural identities ensuring their equitable access to society, encompassing constitutional principles and commonly shared values prevailing in the society.

https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/glossary_en

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Thank you

This research and framework document would not have been possible without the many conversations, intercultural dialogues and collaborations that took place over the past six months. Many people participated and added their ideas, experiences and assistance throughout the process. Too many to name because we are afraid we would leave someone out! The good will was there in abundance and it was very encouraging to see the kindness present in individual people and communities.

We would particularly like add our thanks to the organisers and participants from BME communities in Donegal, the Resettlement Support Workers, Inishowen Development Partnership and all those who came and took part in the arts and cultural research dialogues. We would also like to thank The Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny, The Anglers' Centre, Buncrana and The Finn Valley Family Resource Centre, Stranorlar for hosting the five main consultation events.

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