



PEACE PLAYERS
NORTHERN IRELAND



PEACEPLAYERS INTERNATIONAL—NORTHERN IRELAND

YOUTH-LED PROGRAMME EVALUATION

JANUARY 2018

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Executive Summary

This report presents results from a **youth-led evaluation of PeacePlayers International–Northern Ireland (PPI–NI)**, conducted by a group of 18 veteran programme participants ages 15–18 years old. The evaluation examines the outcomes achieved by the programme, and explores key issues such as recruitment, and structure and dosage of activities.

Youth evaluators collected data using two main methods, **participatory focus groups (PFG)** and **focus group discussions (FGD)**. PFGs were conducted with participants in a summer camp (Camp Beta), while FGDs were held during Belfast Interface League (BIL) activities. A total of 120 PPI–NI youth took part in the evaluation, including 59 females and 61 males. Outlined below are the **four questions examined by the evaluation**, as well as key findings and recommendations for each:

1. Does PPI–NI provide enough opportunities for participants to mix and develop relationships with those from different parts of the city, and with those from other religious groups?

Findings: PPI–NI successfully enables youth to meet and form friendships with peers from different religious backgrounds and geographic areas of Belfast. However, the evaluation found that it is difficult for some youth to maintain these relationships long-term, particularly outside of programme activities.

Recommendations: Increase the frequency of joint programmes and inter-hub events, including BIL, Champions for Peace (C4P), camps, residential, etc. to facilitate more regular and sustained contact. In addition, focus on retention of participants as they transition from primary to secondary school (i.e., continuation from twinning to BIL and C4P).

2. What themes do we need to adapt to make Community Relations more understandable?

Findings: Community relations sessions should be interactive and tackle complex issues such as diversity and prejudice. Participants want to further explore Catholic–Protestant issues in Northern Ireland, and conflicts in other PPI sites.

Recommendations: Reinforce community relations material by reviewing themes over multiple sessions, tailor session content to each age group, and introduce new themes.

3. Which programme activities have helped achieve PPI–NI’s outcomes of: developing relationships and mutual understanding; meeting new people from other sides of the city; improving knowledge about conflict; and leadership development?

Findings: C4P contributes to both leadership development and improving knowledge, while basketball tournaments enable youth to meet peers from other sides of the city. BIL was also highlighted as helping to develop relationships among those of different backgrounds within the community.

Recommendations: Secure and dedicate further resources to those activities found to correspond strongly to attainment of outcomes, particularly C4P and BIL.

4. How can we encourage more people to join PPI–NI and achieve a more equal Protestant-Catholic balance?

Findings: To achieve a more equal demographic balance, PPI–NI should expand its recruitment pool, increase awareness of current offerings and run activities out of neutral venues.

Recommendations: Broaden advertising outside of current social media channels, partner with community centres and youth clubs, and target new, particularly Protestant, areas of Belfast. At the season’s start, book neutral venues to help new participants and parents feel comfortable.

Introduction

Due to the legacy of “The Troubles,” negative stereotypes and mistrust persist among the Protestant and Catholic parts of the community in Northern Ireland. Despite a formal peace agreement signed in 1998, society remains largely segregated, preventing the development of positive relationships that are necessary to create a sustainable and peaceful future. Indeed, research in 2014–15 identified 99 security barriers separating predominantly Protestant residential areas from predominantly Catholic residential areas in Belfast, up from 80 in 1998. In addition, 90% of public housing is divided along sectarian lines, and only 7% of pupils attend integrated schools.¹

PeacePlayers International-NI (PPI-NI) is a cross-community charity that uses sport, specifically the game of basketball, to engage children and young people (aged 9-22), as well as key community members and organisations in NI. The programme’s theory of change states that:

- *IF PPI-NI provides a safe space centred around the neutral sport of basketball where children and young people from our historically divided community can **regularly come together**, engage in **community relations** conversations, and participate in **leadership skill-building** activities;*
- *THEN they will develop more **positive perceptions and relationships** with each other, becoming agents for positive change in Northern Ireland.*

See Annex 1: PPI-NI Programme Model for more detail on programme structure and outcomes.

PPI-NI’s year-round intervention programme includes the following activities:

- **Primary School Twinning:** This programme engages children ages 7-11, pairing a maintained (predominantly Catholic) primary school with a controlled (predominantly Protestant) primary school for sport and peace education activities. Twinning introduces the fundamentals of basketball in conjunction with PPI-NI’s innovative peacebuilding curriculum, which incorporates the Northern Ireland Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) academic curriculum.
- **Champions 4 Peace (C4P):** An advanced leadership training programme that provides a range of experiential learning opportunities for young people with outstanding leadership potential.
- **Belfast Interface League (BIL):** An evening or after-school and residential programme that engages young people in integrated basketball trainings, matches and community relations discussions.
- **Belfast Interface Games (BIG):** A camp bringing youth together to explore culture and identity through participating in three sports from Northern Ireland’s rich sporting heritage: football, Gaelic football and rugby. BIG is implemented in partnership with the Ulster Council of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), Ulster Rugby and the Irish Football Association.
- **Tournaments and Camps:** Seasonal conclusions to the year-round programming bridge the school academic years and provide an opportunity to further cement relationships built during the year.

This report presents the **key findings and recommendations from a youth-led evaluation of PPI-NI**. The evaluation examines the outcomes achieved by the programme, and explores key issues such as recruitment, and structure and dosage of activities. Evaluation design, data collection and analysis were performed by a group of PPI-NI youth participants.

Methodology

Evaluation Team

The evaluation was conducted by 18 youth evaluators ages 15–18 years old (evaluator photos below listed left-right), who were selected on a voluntary basis. All evaluators are veteran PPI – NI participants who take part in BIL and C4P programme activities. For logistical purposes, youth evaluators were placed into teams according to the area of Belfast that they represent within PPI – NI activities: North, South, East and West.

East

Sophie Kennedy
Liam Hinchcliffe
Hannah Byrne
Ben Rainey



South

Max McDermott
Maud Tinsley
Bruce Elkin
Kyle Mitchell



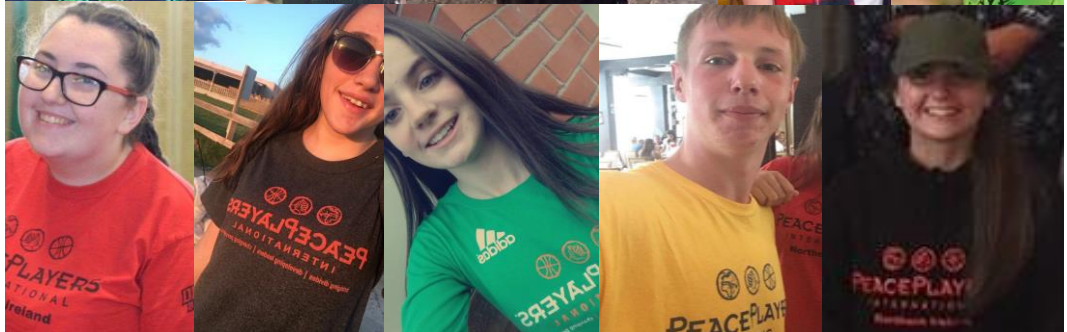
West

Anna Hinchcliffe
Ciara McCluskey
Deborah McCluskey
Shauna Lennon
Carter Hayes



North

Emma Finlay
AJ McMinn
Nora Sullivan
Conor Keenan
Megan Thompson



Training & Evaluation Planning

In selecting a participatory, youth-led approach, PPI-NI aimed to ensure that the evaluation focused on issues of most importance to participants. Thus, **in addition to gathering information to learn about and improve programming, a major goal of the evaluation was to promote the perspectives of PPI-NI youth.**

The evaluation was carried out in three distinct phases: 1) Training and evaluation planning; 2) Data collection; and 3) Analysis and report preparation. The first phase focused on selecting the youth evaluators and introducing core evaluation concepts and terms; evaluation questions and data collection tools were also developed by youth evaluators during this phase. The youth evaluators then conducted two rounds of data collection and held several meetings to assess results and draft their findings and recommendations.

During each phase, youth evaluators were supported by PPI-NI's Assistant Project Coordinator, who manages monitoring and evaluation activities for the programme. PPI-NI's Managing Director and PPI's Director of Monitoring and Evaluation also provided assistance to the evaluation as needed.

All youth evaluators took part in a four-day, in-person training conducted as part of a programme-wide residential camp, Camp Beta. Training sessions were led by the Assistant Project Coordinator and the Director of Monitoring and Evaluation. The following topics and activities were included in the training:

- Introduction to design, monitoring and evaluation concepts
- Review of the PPI-NI programme model and monitoring data
- Development of evaluation questions by youth evaluators
- Creation of data collection tools by youth evaluators

Each of the four youth evaluation teams developed one question that was the focus of their data collection throughout the evaluation:

1. **West:** Does PPI-NI provide enough opportunities for participants to mix and develop relationships with those from different parts of the city, and with those from other religious groups?
2. **South:** What themes do we need to adapt to make Community Relations more understandable?
3. **East:** Which programme activities have helped achieve PPI-NI's outcomes of: developing relationships and mutual understanding; increasing interaction between different groups; improving knowledge about conflict; and leadership development?
4. **North:** How can we encourage more people to join PPI-NI and achieve a more equal Protestant-Catholic balance?

Following selection of the evaluation questions, the facilitators provided a list of **participatory focus group** (PFG) data collection tools (please see *Annex 2: Participatory Focus Group Templates*) and reviewed the various applications of each with youth evaluators. The evaluation teams then selected one tool each to administer during the first round of data collection. The teams adapted this tool according to their evaluation question, and received additional data collection and PFG facilitation training.

Data Collection

For the **first round of data collection**, PFGs were administered by youth evaluators on the last day of Camp Beta; 32 PPI–NI camp attendees ages 11–14 (19 male and 13 female) took part in these sessions (see Table 1, page 7). Each evaluation team conducted three PFG sessions, with one youth evaluator serving as the main facilitator while the rest took notes. The evaluation teams rotated facilitators so that a different team member led each session.

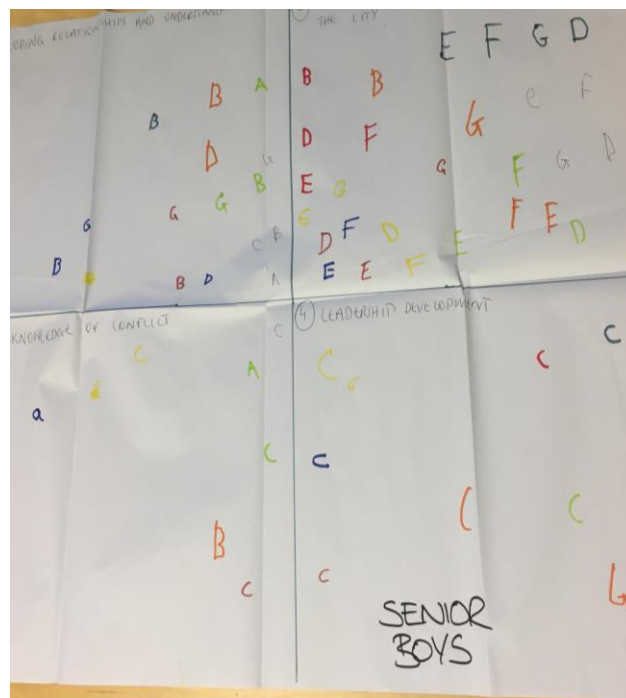
The following PFG tools were administered by the youth evaluation teams:

- 1. Line Game (West):** The key objective of this exercise was to understand whether and how PPI–NI participants develop friendships with peers from other religious backgrounds and geographic areas through the programme. At the beginning of the exercise, the youth facilitator established a line by placing two large pieces of paper on the ground, one at the left end of the floor labeled “disagree very much,” and the other at the right end labeled “agree very much.” The facilitator then read aloud a series of statements; after each one, participants moved to the point on the line that best corresponded to their opinion. The closer participants moved to the “agree very much” sign, the more strongly they agreed with the statement; the closer they moved to the “disagree very much” sign, the more strongly they disagreed. Standing in the middle indicated a more “neutral” opinion. After each statement, the facilitator asked participants to explain their opinions further. The exercise concluded with a debrief discussion.
- 2. Body Map (South):** The goal of this exercise was to gather participant feedback on topics to be included in PPI–NI community relations sessions, and to determine participant views of the current state of community relations in Belfast. To begin the exercise, the youth facilitator instructed each participant to draw an outline of him/herself on a large sheet of paper, with a vertical line in the middle; participants marked the left side of the paper as “before PeacePlayers,” and the right side as “after PeacePlayers.” The facilitator then read a series of statements corresponding to places on the “body map” (e.g., Feet: Do you feel comfortable walking through different communities in Belfast?). Participants indicated how they felt about each statement before joining PeacePlayers by writing a description on the left side of the paper, as well as after PeacePlayers by writing on the right side of the paper. The exercise concluded with a debrief discussion.

Body Map Exercise



3. **Activity Rating (East):** The key objective of this exercise was to determine whether and how PPI–NI is achieving its intended outcomes, and which activities best contribute to goal achievement. During this exercise, the youth facilitator laid one large sheet of paper, split into a four-square grid, on the ground. Each square was pre-labeled with a PPI–NI outcome area: 1. Developing relationships and understanding; 2. Meeting new people from other sides of the city; 3. Improving knowledge of conflict; and 4. Leadership development. Participants were then given a piece of paper with PPI–NI activities listed alphabetically from A–G, and were instructed to write the letter of the activity on any outcome area that they believe the activity is effective in achieving. The exercise concluded with a debrief discussion.



4. **Raise Your Hand (North):** The key objective of this exercise was to understand participant motivations for joining PPI–NI, and to gather ideas for how the programme can better recruit participants from the underrepresented Protestant tradition in Belfast to achieve a more equal Catholic-Protestant balance throughout the programme. During the exercise, the youth facilitator read aloud a series of statements regarding recruitment and retention of participants (e.g., Would you like PPI to have taster days where anyone can come along, such as youth clubs or fun days?; Would you prefer to train in a neutral area?). Participants were instructed to raise their hands if they agreed with what was stated. The exercise concluded with a debrief discussion.

Following the PFGs, youth evaluators met to review and discuss the data gathered. Based on their conclusions, each team prepared focus group discussion (FGD) questions (please see *Annex 3: Focus Group Discussion Questions*, for a list of questions developed by each evaluation team). This meeting was facilitated by the PPI–NI Assistant Project Coordinator, the Managing Director and a team coach, who provided further training for youth on conducting FGDs.

For the **second round of data collection**, each evaluation team led FGDs with BIL participants in their respective city areas, i.e. East, West, North and South Belfast. 88 youth ages 8–14 took part in the FGDs, of which 48 were female and 40 were male (see Table 1 below). This round of data collection provided evaluators an opportunity to get feedback from those who had not been reached in the first round at Camp Beta, and additional feedback from those who were there.

Across both rounds of data collection, a total of 120 PPI–NI youth took part in the evaluation, including 59 females and 61 males. The following table summarizes respondent sex for each data collection tool administered:

Table 1 - Data Collection by Sex of Respondents

Data Collection Tool	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
PFG	19	13	32
FGD	40	48	88
Total	59	61	120

Analysis & Reporting

After completing both rounds of data collection, youth evaluators took part in a data analysis workshop led by the PPI–NI Assistant Project Coordinator. The goal of the workshop was to familiarize youth evaluators with reading and interpreting data. During the workshop, each evaluation team was presented with a chart summarizing the PFG results, as well as a compilation of all FGD notes taken by youth evaluators. In addition, evaluation teams were given a worksheet with questions to help guide their analysis. The answers written by each evaluation team on the worksheet were used to draft the findings and recommendations provided in this report.

Lastly, a draft evaluation report was presented back to youth evaluators; each evaluation team reviewed the written findings and recommendations for their respective evaluation question and provided comments. The final evaluation report was then compiled based on youth evaluator feedback.

Limitations

As with all social science research and programme evaluations, there were specific methodological limitations for the youth-led evaluation:

- Due to logistical considerations, data was collected from participants in two programme activities, Camp Beta and BIL. Participants in activities such as twinnings did not take part in the evaluation, which limits the possibility of generalising results to the entire PPI–NI programme.
- Data collection was conducted by PPI–NI participants and supervised by staff, all of whom are internal to the programme. This can create positive bias among respondents, though this limitation was mitigated to the extent possible by training youth evaluators on proper data collection techniques.

Ethical Considerations

PPI–NI prioritizes child protection in all of its programming and M&E activities. All youth evaluators participated in the evaluation voluntarily, and received a detailed explanation of their roles in the evaluation process.

To minimize risk during data collection, PPI–NI staff members were present to support the youth evaluators, but were instructed to intervene only if there were behavioral issues that needed to be addressed or if a youth evaluator had a specific question or issue. All adult staff members who supported the evaluation are Access NI checked and trained in the organisation’s child protection policy, code of conduct and incident reporting procedures.

All data collected by youth evaluators was given to the Assistant Project Coordinator for storage in the PPI–NI office. The data was collected anonymously and confidentially to prevent tracing of answers back to individual respondents.

Findings & Recommendations

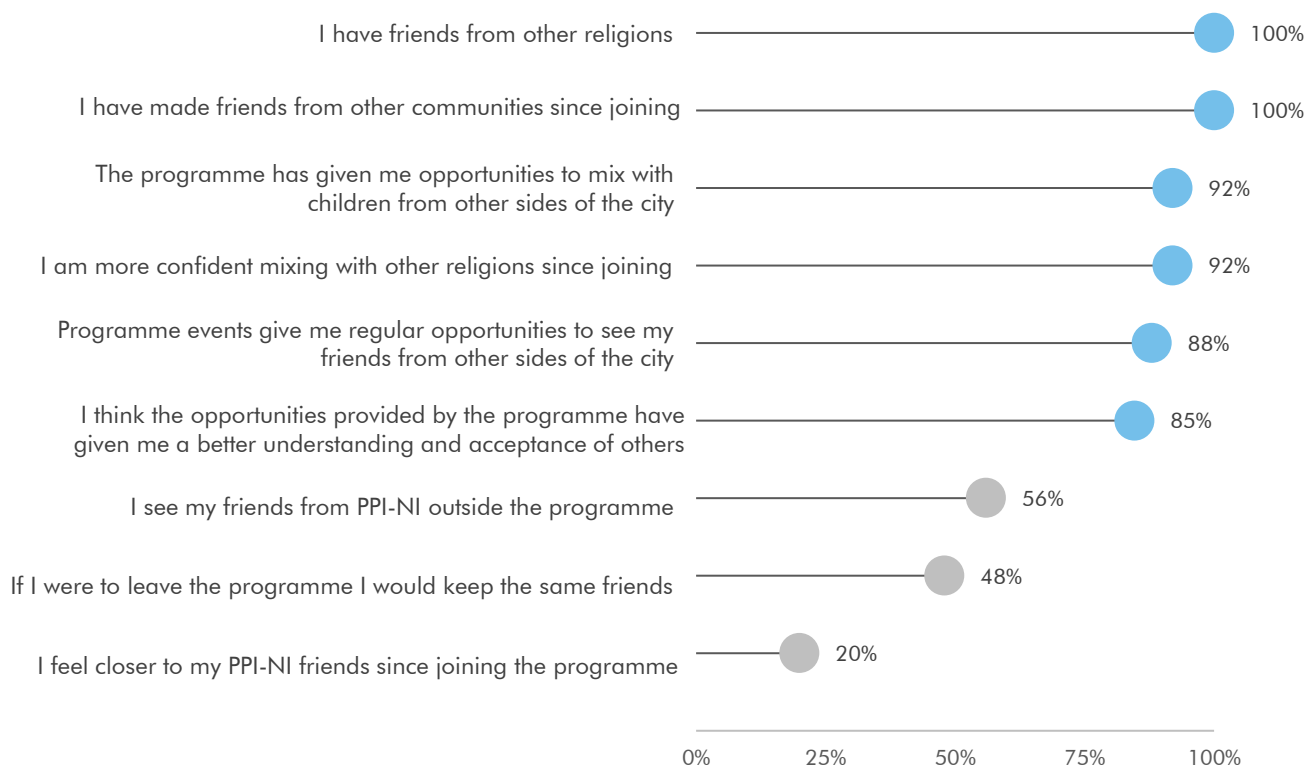
Evaluation Question 1: Does PPI-NI provide enough opportunities for participants to mix and develop relationships with those from different parts of the city, and with those from other religious groups?

Key Finding: The PPI-NI programme enables youth to meet and form friendships with peers from different religious backgrounds and geographic areas of Belfast. However, providing additional opportunities for frequent, sustained interaction would help participants better maintain these relationships.

As detailed in Figure 1 below, PPI-NI participants feel that the programme facilitates positive interactions and the development of friendships across geographic and religious divides. Specifically, 100% of youth agreed that they “have made friends from other communities since joining PPI-NI,” while 92% feel that “PPI-NI has given [them] opportunities to mix with children from other sides of the city.”

At the same time, youth report difficulties maintaining those friendships, particularly outside of programme activities. For example, 56% “see [their] friends from PPI-NI outside the programme,” while only 48% think that “if [they] were to leave PPI-NI [they would be able to] keep the same friends.”

Figure 1: Youth agree that PPI-NI provides opportunities for interaction and making friends; this drops significantly when asked about maintaining these relationships outside of the programme



During FGDs, participants noted the need to **increase the number and frequency of joint activities** to ensure that youth do not lose touch with friends made through the programme. While this should include more traditional activities such as community relations and basketball, participants also suggested facilitating informal gatherings (e.g. meet up in town, “have a bring-a-friend day,” etc.) and expanding current year-round programme activities such as C4P or BIL. Additionally, participants discussed recruitment from different outlets (social media, community centers, etc.) as a way of encouraging a new balanced mix of participants to join.

“The friends I make [at PPI–NI] don’t live near me. So **more integration** [between the sides of the city] would be better.”
– PFG Participant

Recommendations

The following are recommended for supporting sustainable, long-term relationships among youth from different geographic locations and religious groups:

Ensure that integrated activities encourage greater participation of youth from different religious backgrounds and areas of Belfast, and that youth can still come together over the long-term. Sample strategies for this include:

- Expand year-round programmes such as BIL and C4P, particularly to younger participants
- Trainings with teams from different sides of the city in preparation for larger tournaments
- Include mixed team-building days and trips, and increase the frequency of mixed events such as camps, residentials, etc.

Expand outlets for participant recruitment, including:

- Partnerships with community centres and youth clubs, including clubs for sports beyond basketball
- Focus on retention of PPI–NI participants as they transition from primary to secondary schools (continuation from twinning to BIL and C4P)
- Targeted recruitment through social media to new schools and areas
- Use coaches, who can serve as role models for younger participants, in recruiting activities



Evaluation Question 2: What themes do we need to adapt to make community relations more understandable?

Key Finding: Community relations themes are most effective when taught interactively and reinforced through multiple sessions or activities.

During PFG discussions, *stereotypes* was identified as a key area of learning, with a notable number of participants indicating that they have become more equipped to challenge peers who express negative stereotypes (see Figure 2). Since taking part in community relations sessions, participants understand the topic of *stereotypes* better, which helps them feel comfortable discussing it.

This finding was supported by FGD discussions, where programme **participants noted feeling**

confident in their knowledge of stereotypes because the theme was covered frequently and in-depth during community relations sessions. In contrast, participants have more difficulty understanding themes such as *diversity* and *prejudice*. The material covered under these particular themes is viewed as complex, and has not been explained frequently enough by PPI-NI facilitators. In addition, participants have not always understood the connection between the *diversity* and *prejudice* themes and their associated activities.

“I can [challenge peers on stereotypes] **because I am more confident** about those things; because after [community relations] I learnt more about them and understood them more.”
– PFG Participant

Figure 2: 96% of focus group participants report being able to **challenge peers on prejudice and stereotypes** after joining the programme versus 33% before joining; this is the largest before-after change among all topics discussed



Recommendations

Based on these findings, PPI–NI participants provided suggestions for strengthening community relations programming, including additional themes to explore:

- Incorporate more interactive, “movement-based” activities into community relations sessions; there should be less “sitting-down” during these sessions
- Reinforce community relations material by reviewing themes over multiple sessions or activities
- Tailor the language and content of the community relations sessions for each age group; the material for younger groups should be simplified
- Introduce new topics and themes, including:
 - History of sport and conflict, particularly in the Northern Ireland context
 - Leadership and teamwork for younger participants, specifically the junior groups
 - Examples of themes (stereotypes, culture, religions) applied to other countries or conflicts outside of Northern Ireland
 - History of PPI in Northern Ireland and other programme sites

For discussion: Are there opportunities to integrate community relations themes into programming outside of designated community relations sessions?



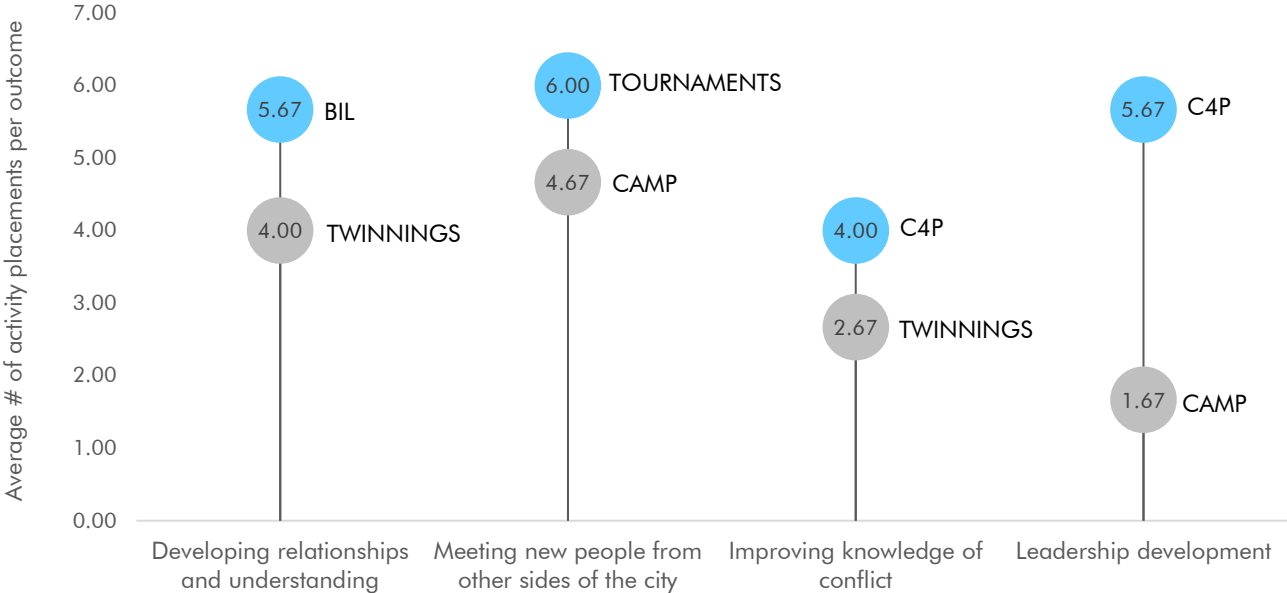
Evaluation Question 3: Which programme activities have helped achieve PPI–NI’s outcomes of:

- a. Developing relationships and understanding
- b. Meeting new people from other sides of the city
- c. Improving knowledge about conflict
- d. Leadership development

Key Finding: Participants consider the C4P activity to contribute to both leadership development and improving knowledge about the conflict, while basketball tournaments enable youth to meet peers from other areas of Belfast. Youth also identified BIL as helping to develop relationships and understanding among those of different groups.

Figure 3 below details these results, showing the top two activities that participants highlighted as corresponding most strongly to each PPI–NI outcome area:

Figure 3: C4P was rated as best contributing to two outcomes: leadership development and improving knowledge of conflict



Developing relationships

During PFG discussions, participants most frequently cited **BIL as best contributing to building relationships and understanding**. BIL was placed on this outcome an average of 5.67 times, the highest of all activities; the second-most frequently named activity, twinnings, was cited by participants an average of 4 times (for a description of this exercise, see “Activity Rating” on pages 6–7).

PFG participants agreed that the PPI–NI programme successfully develops relationships

among youth, but added that more **frequent visits to different parts of Belfast** (i.e. site visit sessions, games, etc.) would help to build and sustain these relationships further.

Meeting new people

Participants indicated that **basketball tournaments are the most effective activity for facilitating interaction** between youth from different sides of the city. This activity was cited during PFG discussions an average of 6 times, followed by BIG (4.67) and Basketball Summer Camp (4). Participants noted that increasing

these types of activities would bring youth from different religious backgrounds and areas of Belfast together more frequently, which would in turn support achievement both of the abovementioned outcomes; developing relationships and understanding, and meeting new people from other groups.

Improving knowledge about conflict

Cited an average of 4 times, **C4P was highlighted during PFG discussions as most beneficial for improving participant knowledge** of conflict. Twinnings (2.67) and BIL (2) were also seen as contributing to this outcome.

However, the total number of activities identified as “improving knowledge” was much lower than for other outcomes; participants placed activities a total of 38 times on this outcome versus 60 times for “developing relationships” and 75 for “increasing interaction.” This indicates that programme activities may not be sufficiently designed to achieve conflict knowledge gain among participants. When asked about this result, FGD participants remarked on the need to **further explore the Northern Ireland conflict** specifically (i.e. Catholic–Protestant issues), as well as wanting to know more about the history of conflicts in other PPI sites.

Leadership development

The **C4P programme activity was also seen as highly effective in developing leadership** skills among PPI–NI youth. During PFG discussions, participants commented that C4P allows them to learn these skills interactively, and that including leadership exercises in junior C4P is “good preparation for senior C4P.” They also expressed interest in incorporating more leadership development in other activities, specifically BIL and integrated basketball team sessions.

“Leadership development” also had a lower number of activity placements (27) during the PFG exercise, indicating that participants do not see PPI–NI activities as closely linked to this outcome versus “developing relationships” (60) or “increasing interaction” (75).

“[Integrated basketball teams] are very helpful for leadership development through being on a team, and because it’s casual and not structured [learning].”
– PFG Participant

Recommendations

Based on these findings, PPI–NI participants provided the following suggestions for strengthening current activities to achieve programme outcomes:

- Dedicate resources to activities found to correspond strongly to attainment of outcomes, particularly C4P and BIL
- When planning term activity schedules, incorporate more frequent opportunities for all sides of the city to interact
- Enhance activities that correspond to “improving knowledge” and “leadership development” by:
 - Allowing for more in-depth, Northern Ireland-specific conversations around conflict, and broader discussions on conflict in other PPI sites
 - Integrating more leadership development opportunities into activities such as BIL and integrated basketball team sessions

Evaluation Question 4: How can we encourage more people to join PPI–NI and achieve a more equal Protestant-Catholic balance?

Key Finding: PPI–NI needs to expand its recruitment pool, increase awareness of current offerings and run activities out of neutral venues.

Findings from the PFG and FGD can be separated into three main topics related to achieving better demographic balance among participants: awareness and recruitment; offerings; and location of activities.

Awareness and Recruitment

An overall lack of awareness of the PPI–NI programme makes it difficult to recruit enough youth to achieve the ideal 50/50 religious balance. During the PFG, 78% of participants thought the programme should broaden its advertising outside of current channels to raise awareness; only 30% had heard PPI–NI mentioned by people outside the programme.

At the same time, 96% of PFG participants indicated that they believe the programme appeals to people of all ages and backgrounds, and 100% thought that PPI–NI should recruit older participants. The FGD participants agreed, suggesting that recruitment should take place in secondary schools or youth clubs, particularly in Protestant areas.

“PeacePlayers deserve a lot *more attention!*”
– PFG Participant

Offerings

When they were first being recruited to PPI–NI, basketball appealed to 59% of PFG participants and was the initial reason they joined. FGD participants supported this result by discussing how the **sport is a good “hook” to get people interested and involved**. Therefore, sport, particularly basketball, is important to the attractiveness of PPI–NI’s offerings.

Both PFG and FGD youth suggested that PPI–NI introduce “bring a friend” sessions to encourage people to join the programme. FGD participants

built on that idea by saying that current participants should deliver games at these sessions for new participants. This would showcase their confidence and knowledge, and help new participants feel welcomed and excited to do this as well.

Location

The choice of venue for programme activities is important to achieving demographic balance. Though the majority of current PPI–NI participants indicated feeling comfortable training in a venue associated with the “other” religion, they felt that location would affect new youth joining. Specifically, FGD participants said that if the venue was a neutral area, parents would be more inclined to allow their children to participate because of the perceived extra security that comes with a neutral training venue.

Recommendations

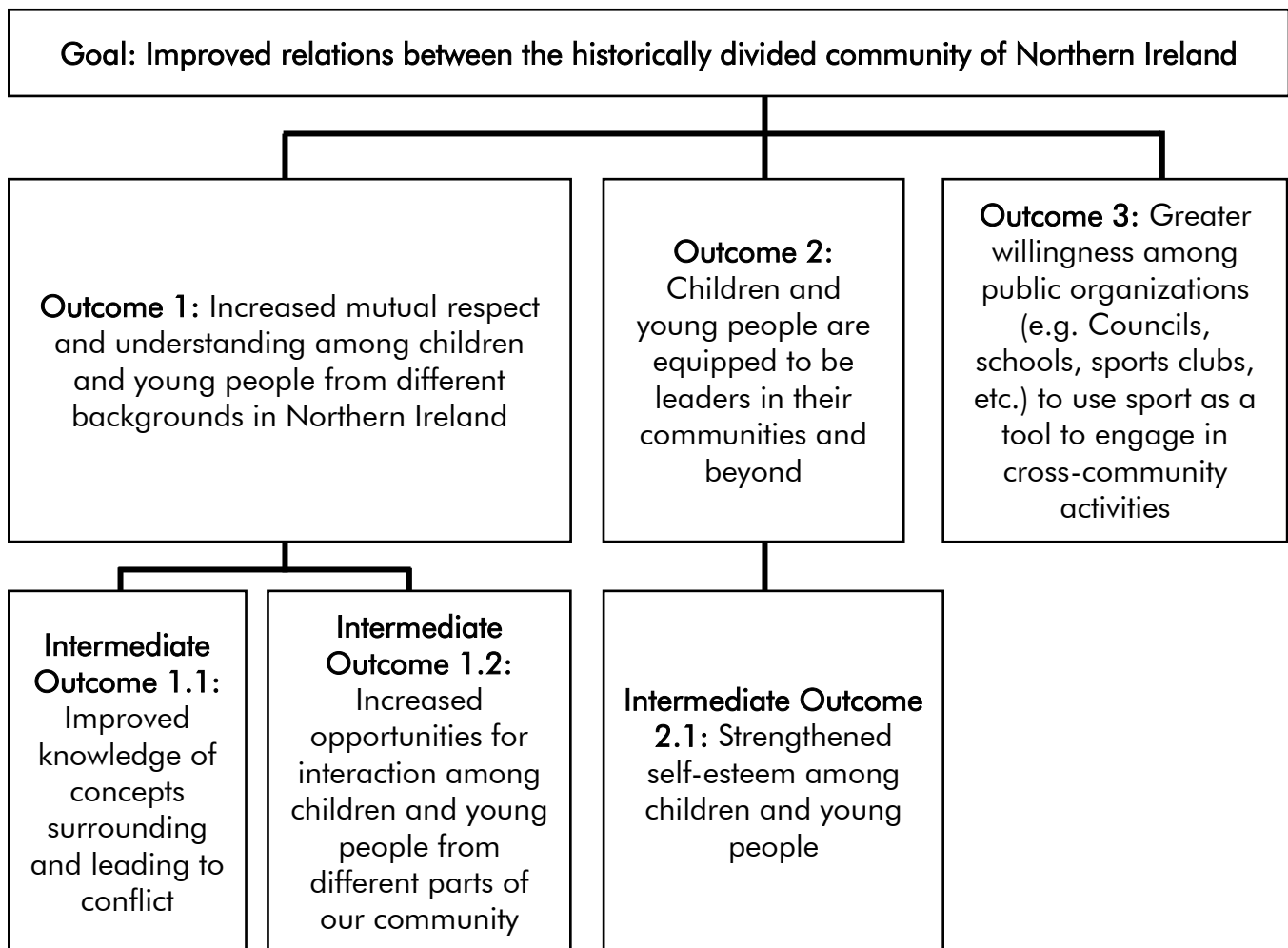
Based on these findings, PPI–NI participants provided the following suggestions for addressing the religious imbalance across the programme:

- Broaden advertising, particularly by exploring additional social media channels outside of what is currently used
- Reach out to secondary schools and other youth clubs that are more religiously diverse (especially those from Protestant areas to address the current Catholic-heavy imbalance)
- Focus on basketball as part of PPI–NI activities, as this is a major “hook” for participants to join and remain involved
- Hold “bring-a-friend” events, with current participants leading the games or discussions during these sessions
- Prioritise booking neutral venues at the beginning of activities to help new participants and parents feel comfortable

Annex 1: PPI–NI Programme Model

Problem Statement: Due to the legacy of the Troubles, negative perceptions, stereotypes and mistrust persist among the Protestant and Catholic parts of the community in Northern Ireland. As a result, society remains largely segregated, preventing the development of positive relationships that are necessary to create a sustainable peaceful future.

Theory of Change: If PeacePlayers International – NI provides a safe space centered around the neutral sport of basketball where children and young people from different parts of our historically divided community can regularly come together, engage in community relations conversations, and participate in leadership skill-building activities, then they will develop more positive perceptions and relationships with each other, becoming agents for positive change in Northern Ireland.



Annex 2: Participatory Focus Group Templates

Provided below are the participatory focus group (PFG) templates distributed to the youth evaluators during the training and planning phase of the youth-led evaluation. Each evaluation team selected one tool each and **adapted that tool according to their evaluation question:**

Data Collection Tool: “Activity Rating”

Description: This tool allows evaluators to gather feedback from participants on how various PPI – NI activities contribute to the achievement of programme outcomes. It is intended as a focus group activity, with the associated advantages as well as limitations:

- Allows facilitators to learn what the majority of people in a group think, feel, etc.
- This tool is very “visual,” as participants will physically write/draw on the flipchart paper; this can be good to use when working with children and youth.
- This tool asks for general feedback about the programme, but also allows for participants to give individual examples.
- Can lead to “group think,” where participants change their answers depending on the responses of the rest of the group. The facilitator can help minimize this by observing participant behaviour and asking appropriate follow-up questions.

Preparation and Materials Needed:

Before the Friday, August 26 data collection session:

- Prepare several PPI–NI “outcomes paper” on large flipchart paper. You will need one outcomes paper for each data collection session you will conduct.
 - Draw a grid of 4 squares on a large sheet of flipchart paper. Label each one clockwise with PPI–NI outcomes 1-4:
 1. Developing relationships and understanding
 2. Meeting new people from other sides of the city
 3. Improving knowledge of conflict
 4. Leadership development

On the day of the Friday, August 26 data collection session:

- In your evaluation team, decide who will serve as the facilitator for each rotation, and all remaining group members will then act as note-takers.
- The facilitator and note-takers should each have a copy of the “activity rating” tool. The note-takers should make sure to have a pen.
- To complete this exercise you will need:
 - Pre-prepared outcomes papers (one per data collection rotation)
 - Markers
 - List of PPI–NI activities labeled A-G

Directions:

Please follow the steps below to administer the “activity rating” tool:

- All evaluation team members should introduce themselves. The facilitator should describe the activity and obtain consent from all participants before proceeding.
- The facilitator should ask participants to sit together and give participants instructions on how to complete the activity:

1. Improved relationships between youth from different backgrounds	2. Improved knowledge of concepts leading to conflict
3. Greater self-confidence among participants	4. Greater willingness among public organizations (schools, councils, etc.) to use sport as a tool to engage in cross-community activities

- i. Bring out the prepared PPI-NI outcomes paper and explain to participants that each square on the paper represents one of the four major changes that the PPI-NI programme aims to achieve. Read through each of these with participants:
 1. Developing relationships and understanding
 2. Meeting new people from other sides of the city
 3. Improving knowledge of conflict
 4. Leadership development

1. Improved relationships between youth from different backgrounds e g b c d	2. Improved knowledge of concepts leading to conflict a d
3. Greater self-confidence among participants b c f	4. Greater willingness among public organizations (schools, councils, etc.) to use sport as a tool to engage in cross-community activities f

- c. Instruct participants to then read over the list of PPI-NI activities and think about which outcomes/changes each of these relates to; we want to know which activities lead to which outcomes/changes. Participants should write the letter of the activity on the circle of the outcome that it relates most strongly to; if participants think an activity relates to more than one outcome, they should write the letter in each square they think it fits.
- d. Allow about 10 minutes for participants to mark the paper. Once all participants are finished, spend the rest of the time debriefing the exercise. Note any patterns regarding where the activities were marked (e.g. which outcomes received the most activities, or was a certain activity mostly grouped on one outcome?). Ask participants to explain why they choose to put certain activities on an outcome. Sample de-brief questions include:
 - i. Why did you choose to put [a for “twinnings”] on the [1. Improved relationships] circle? How do you think twinnings help improve relationships between youth from different religious backgrounds?
 - o Go through each outcome and ask variations of this question, depending on which activities were placed where
 - ii. What, if anything, can PPI-NI do to better achieve these outcomes/changes? Add activities? Adjust the way that certain activities are implemented? Please share your ideas.
- e. Conclude the exercise by thanking participants for sharing their stories, and asking if they have any final questions.

Data Collection Tool: “Body Map”

Description: This tool allows evaluators to examine various types of changes that participants have experienced by taking part in the PPI-NI programme. It is intended as a focus group activity, with the associated advantages as well as limitations:

- Allows facilitators to learn what the majority of people in a group think, feel, etc.
- Is interactive, and thus can be good to use when working with children and youth
- This tool asks for general feedback about the programme, but also allows for participants to give individual examples.

Preparation and Materials Needed:

Before the Friday, August 26 data collection session:

- In your evaluation team, finalize the 5 “body map statements,” so that they will provide information to help answer your assigned evaluation question.
- Once your 5 statements are finalized, make sure that these are written down and that everyone in your evaluation team has a copy.

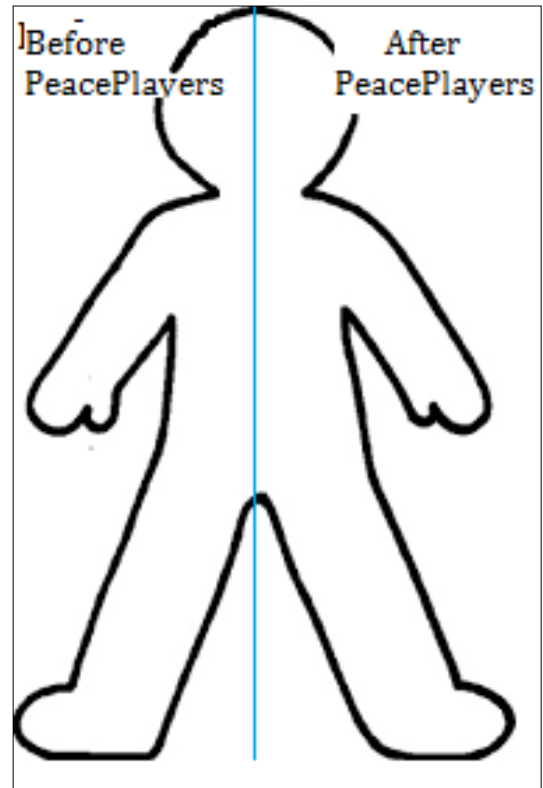
On the day of the Friday, August 26 data collection session:

- In your evaluation team, decide who will serve as the facilitator for each rotation, and all remaining team members should then act as note-takers.
- The facilitator and note-takers should each have a copy of the “body map” tool. The note-takers should make sure to have a pen.
- To complete this exercise you will need: Flipchart paper (around 35 pieces); markers

Directions:

Please follow the steps below to administer the “body map” tool:

- f. All evaluation team members should introduce themselves. The facilitator should describe the activity and obtain consent from all participants before proceeding.
- g. The facilitator should ask participants to sit in their own individual space in the hall away from other participants. Give participants instructions on how to complete the activity:
 - i. Hand each participant one piece of large flipchart paper and a marker. Instruct participants to draw an outline of themselves on the paper, with a vertical line in the middle. The left side of the paper should be marked “before PeacePlayers,” and the right side should be marked “after PeacePlayers.”
 - ii. Explain to participants that you will read a series of statements that match up with different places on the body map. They should think about how each statement relates to them first before they joined PeacePlayers, and then after they joined PeacePlayers. Participants should write this down (they don’t need to write a lot, just a summary) on the left and right sides of the paper, on the relevant body part.
- h. Read aloud the below body map statements, pausing in between each one to allow time for participants to think and mark their papers. If you see that participants have trouble understanding the exercise, provide your own personal examples.
 - i. Body Map Statements:
 - **Head:** What themes have you NOT learnt in community relations that you would like to cover? _
 - **Eyes:** Do you see the world around you with a more open mind?
 - **Heart:** Do you respect people from a different background than yourself?
 - **Shoulders:** Do you feel obliged to accept the responsibility of challenging peers on prejudice or stereotypes?
 - **Feet:** Do you feel more comfortable walking through different communities in Belfast?
 - i. After the last statement has been read aloud, the facilitator should debrief with participants:
 - i. For each of the 5 body parts, select a few participants and ask them to describe the “before/after” change experienced. For example: Tell me more about how you thought about yourself before PeacePlayers? How did this change since joining PeacePlayers (head)?”
 - ii. Which of these “before – after PeacePlayers changes” was most important to you? Why?
- j. Conclude the exercise by thanking participants for sharing their stories, and asking if they have any final questions.



Data Collection Tool: "Line Game"

Description: This tool allows evaluators to gather opinions and feedback from programme participants. It is intended as a focus group activity, with the associated advantages as well as limitations:

- Allows facilitators to learn what the majority of people in a group think, feel, etc.
- Is interactive, and thus can be good to use when working with children and youth
- Can lead to "group think," where participants change their answers depending on the responses of the rest of the group. The facilitator can help minimize this by observing participant behaviour and asking appropriate follow-up questions; for example, if you see a participant go to one point on the line and then change to the other side, you may ask why.

Preparation and Materials Needed:

Before the Friday, August 26 data collection session:

- In your evaluation team, develop 10 "line game" statements that will provide information to help answer your assigned evaluation question.
- Once your 10 statements are finalized, make sure that these are written down and that everyone in your evaluation team has a copy.

On the day of the Friday, August 26 data collection session:

- In your evaluation team, decide who will serve as the facilitator for each rotations, and then all remaining team members should act as note-takers.
- The facilitator and note-takers should each have a copy of the "line game" tool. The note-takers should make sure to have a pen.
- To complete this exercise you will need: Pre-prepared "disagree very much" and "agree very much" signs

Directions:

Please follow the steps below to administer the "activity rating" tool:

- k. The facilitator, note-taker and all evaluation team members should introduce themselves. The facilitator should describe the activity and obtain consent from all participants before proceeding.
- l. The facilitator should ask participants to stand together. Give participants instructions on how to complete the activity:
 - i. Bring out two pieces of paper labeled "agree very much" and "disagree very much." Place the "disagree" paper on the floor to the left of the "agree" paper, allowing significant space in between; the idea is to establish a line, with the two papers serving as the end points of that line.
 - ii. Explain to participants that you will read a series of statements, and they should move to the point along the line that best corresponds to their opinion on the statement read. The closer they move to the "agree very much" sign, the more strongly they agree; the closer they move to the "disagree very much" sign, the more strongly they disagree. Standing in the middle indicates a more "neutral" opinion.
- m. Begin the exercise by reading aloud the example warm-up statements, to make sure that the participants understand the exercise:
 - i. I have a lot of fun playing basketball
 - ii. The best color is purple
 - iii. Insert statement: _____
 - iv. Insert statement: _____
- n. Following the warm-up, the facilitator should read aloud the statements below, pausing after each one to allow time for participants to choose where to stand. Once participants have selected where to stand,



the facilitator should ask a few of them to describe why they chose to stand in a particular area. The facilitator should make sure to ask not only those who express majority opinions, but also those who demonstrate different views.

- i. For example, if 10 out of 12 participants stand close to the “agree very much sign” in response to an activity statement, the facilitator should question a few among those 10, as well as the two who did not stand with the others.
 - ii. Example facilitator questions: Why do you [agree very much; disagree very much] with [x statement]? Why did you stand [to the left, to the right, in the middle, etc.]?
- o. Line Game Statements:
1. I have made friends from other communities since joining PPI-NI
 2. I have friends from other religions
 3. I feel closer to my PPI-NI friends since joining PPI-NI
 4. I am more confident mixing with other religions since joining PPI-NI
 5. I see my friends from PPI-NI outside the programme
 6. PPI-NI has given me opportunities to mix with children from other sides of the city
 7. If I were to leave PPI-NI, I would keep the same friends
 8. PPI-NI events give me regular opportunities to see my friends from the other sides of the city
 9. I think the opportunities provided by PPI-NI have given me a better understanding and acceptance of others
 10. PPI-NI has given me opportunities to develop my social skills
- p. After the last statement has been read aloud, the facilitator should debrief with participants by asking their opinions of the activity:
- i. Was it difficult to decide where to stand?
 - ii. Did you ever change your mind and want to move positions? If so, why?
- q. Conclude the exercise by thanking participants for sharing their stories, and asking if they have any final questions.

Data Collection Tool: “Raise Your Hand”

Description:

This tool allows evaluators to gather opinions and feedback from programme participants. It is intended as a focus group activity, with the associated advantages as well as limitations:

- Allows facilitators to learn what the majority of people in a group think, feel, etc.
- Is interactive, and thus can be good to use when working with children and youth
- Does not provide “individualized” opinions

Preparation and Materials Needed:

Before the Friday, August 26 data collection session:

- In your evaluation team, develop 10 “raise your hand” statements that will provide information to help answer your assigned evaluation question. Use the prompts provided to help you develop statements, though this is not required; you may also come up with your own.
- Once your 10 statements are finalized, make sure that these are written down and that everyone in your evaluation team has a copy.

On the day of the Friday, August 26 data collection session:

- Decide who will serve as the facilitator for each rotation, and all remaining team members should then act as note-takers.

- The facilitator and note-takers should each have a copy of the “raise your hand” tool. The note-takers should make sure to have a pen. No other materials are needed.

Directions:

Please follow the steps below to administer the “raise your hand” tool:

- All evaluation team members should introduce themselves. The facilitator should describe the activity and obtain consent from all participants before proceeding.
- The facilitator should ask participants to sit together. Give participants instructions on how to complete the activity:
 - “I am going to read several statements. Each time I read a statement, with your eyes closed, raise your hand if your answer to the statement is ‘yes’. I may also ask you afterwards to tell me why you did or did not raise your hand.”
- Begin by asking participants a few warm-up questions. Then, read through the list of statements, pausing to allow time for participants to raise their hands and for note-takers to record the number of hands raised before allowing participants to lower them again. As needed, you may ask follow-up or exploratory questions such as:
 - “Why did you (or did you not) raise your hand for that statement?”
 - If you see a participant change his/her mind: “What made you change your answer?”

“Raise your hand if your answer to the statement is ‘yes’”

- (Warm up) You are okay with us asking you questions
 - (Warm up) You like pizza
 - (Warm up) You like the colour pink
1. Was your first PeacePlayers experience through primary school?
 2. Do you think PeacePlayers should continue programmes to reach out to secondary school pupils?
 3. **Should PeacePlayers offer the older age group a programme when BIL is not on to reach out to participants your age?**
 4. **Have you ever heard someone speak about PeacePlayers apart from at PeacePlayers events or friends you have at PeacePlayers?**
 5. **Did you join PeacePlayers for basketball?**
 6. **Do you feel comfortable going to an area of the opposite religion for BIL sessions?**
 7. **Would you prefer to train in a neutral area?**
 8. **Would you like PeacePlayers to have taster days where anyone can come along e.g. into youth clubs or fun days?**
 9. **Do you think PeacePlayers appeals to all ages and backgrounds?**
 10. **Do you think PeacePlayers should broaden their advertisement e.g. radio or newspaper etc.?**
- d) After the last statement has been read aloud, the facilitator should debrief with participants by asking their opinions of the activity:
- Was it difficult to decide where to stand?
 - Did you ever change your mind and want to move positions? If so, why?

Annex 3: Focus Group Discussion Questions

Provided below are the focus group discussion questions developed and administered by each evaluation team during BIL sessions:

West Evaluation Question: Does PPI–NI provide enough opportunities for participants to mix and develop relationships with those from different parts of the city, and with those from other religious groups?

Focus Group Discussion Questions

1. How do you think PeacePlayers could provide more opportunities for you to develop relationships with children from other sides of the city?
2. How can we make PeacePlayers more appealing to other religious groups?
3. What should PeacePlayers do in the future to continue to make a contribution to peace building in Northern Ireland?

South Evaluation Question: What themes do we need to adapt to make Community Relations more understandable?

Focus Group Discussion Questions

1. What Community Relations topics are difficult to understand?
2. How can PeacePlayers support you to use your CR knowledge to challenge others on things like stereotypes?
3. What should PeacePlayers do in the future to continue to make a contribution to peace building in Northern Ireland?

East Evaluation Question: Which programme activities have helped achieve PPI–NI’s outcomes of: developing relationships and mutual understanding; increasing interaction between different groups; improving knowledge about conflict; and leadership development?

Focus Group Discussion Questions

1. What do you get out of the BIG camps [what are the benefits]?
2. Why do you think “improving knowledge of conflict” results were low across all PPI–NI programmes? How can we improve this?
3. What should PeacePlayers do in the future to continue to make a contribution to peace building in Northern Ireland?

North Evaluation Question: How can we encourage more people to join PPI–NI and achieve a more equal Protestant-Catholic balance?

Focus Group Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think we need a neutral (no religion) venue for things like BIL?
2. Why do you think there is not currently a 50/50 balance (Catholic/Protestant) within PeacePlayers?
3. What should PeacePlayers do in the future to continue to make a contribution to peace building in Northern Ireland?