



WOMEN'S SPACES

**Creating platforms to strengthen women's voices
in peacebuilding, civic and political life.**

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A TOOLKIT ON WOMEN'S ACTIVISM IN NORTHERN IRELAND

This past four months has been a very busy time for the Women's Spaces Team, who have been in the background writing and developing content for a new toolkit on Women Peace and Security in Northern Ireland.

This will be the first of its kind and will be called Pillars for Peace, very much focusing on the pillars of UNSCR 1325 Women Peace and Security as its foundation.

25 women from across the women's and peace sectors contributed to the development through blogs, vlogs, and tools, showcasing their activism as well as organisation work, research and publications. In particular, the Women's Spaces Team have interviewed and filmed 20+ women whose short films will also be part and parcel of this toolkit on a wide range of issues. This really is an exciting time for this project.

Save the date: we are pleased to announce that the Toolkit will be launched at the end of May 2025!

Rural women represented at the Assembly



As a follow on from Seat at the Table, the project was approached to have a woman from the group speak at an Assembly Community Connect engagement event. Local woman, Dervla O'Neill, NIRWN and WRDA member, came forward and engaged in a human library type event on the topic of "poverty and homelessness". Dervla is a very active volunteer in the community and this was very much outside her comfort zone but the Women's Spaces team are proud that she stepped forward and discussed what is important to her and her local community. Well done Dervla.

A SEAT AT THE TABLE: OUR GOVERNMENT, OUR LIVES

WITH ASSEMBLY COMMUNITY CONNECT



Once again the Women's Spaces team had the privilege of working with Assembly Community Connect at Stormont for another Seat at the Table Event. There were over 50 women in attendance from urban and rural communities listening to a presentation from Louise Clarke on how the Assembly works, there was a roundtable Q and A with the 5 MLA's from a range of parties that attended where local issues affecting women was discussed as well as viewing the Justice Minister Question Time in the debating chamber. This was a very worthwhile engagement with some MLA's taking the issues presented and putting forward questions to the floor and Ministers.



Thanks to Linda Dillon MLA, Órlaithí Flynn MLA, Sinéad McLaughlin MLA, Kellie Armstrong MLA, and Diane Forsythe MLA for giving your time to speak with us!

All Party Group on UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace & Security

Both the rural and urban co-ordinator for Women's Spaces were asked to present to the All Party Working Group on Women Peace and Security just before Christmas, at Stormont. This was an excellent opportunity to engage with elected representatives, statutory bodies, government departments and women's sector organisations on the work of the programme and the very positive feedback that has been received throughout. Comments from the APG itself were so warm and very gratefully received by the team with many words of encouragement to keep doing the work we are doing as it is so necessary and vital.



Where are the women? in Ballybeen & Kilkeel

WITH BRONAGH MCATASNEY
NI SCREEN: DIGITAL FILM ARCHIVE



Once again we worked with NI Screen once again to deliver this 3-week digital film archive programme with women in Ballybeen Women's Centre and Newry Street Unit KilKeel.

Archive footage was shown from the last 100 years on topics related to gender equality/inequality followed by discussions on the themes of comfortable and uncomfortable roles for women according to society.

The rural workshops were held in Newry Street Unite Kilkeel, and the urban ones in Ballybeen Women's Centre where there was a very warm welcome and hospitality. The conversations were very in-depth and so rich.

Women from Ballybeen were eager to do more, and took part in the Our Government, Our Lives event at Stormont later on.

The rural women themselves were so happy to be offered such a programme at point of access in their own community. Many thanks to Barbara Campbell for working alongside our project to ensure rural women have access to programmes and activities.



Women of the Borderlands Panel Discussion

In February 2025, our Rural Co-ordinator was asked to speak at a panel discussion on a recently launched report "Women of the Borderlands". This report was launched at the Carrickdale Hotel, right on the border and engaged with 57 women living in and around the border North and South. Thanks to the Ulster University and University College Cork for inviting her to speak at this event about Women's Spaces and the peacebuilding work that is taking place with rural women and in border regions and the issues and challenges they still face today.



Women Challenging the Status Quo and Mary Ann McCracken Walking Tour

WITH WOMEN POLITICIANS REPRESENTING RURAL COMMUNITIES

Many thanks must go to the Mary Ann McCracken Foundation and Sorchá Eastwood (MP for Lisburn Castlereagh) for a very engaging day focusing on women, past and present who have challenged the status quo, fight for equality and social justice and have helped shape the landscape for women today.

The day began with a walking tour of Belfast highlighting the important work of Mary Ann along with her legacy that still exists today, this was followed up by an engagement with Sorchá at her offices in Lisburn where rural women had the opportunity to engage with her on issues, challenges and topics particularly relevant to rural women and Sorchá herself was very open about what she deals with on a day and daily basis as an elected representative as well as the policies she is working on or has worked on to change the future for the betterment of women.



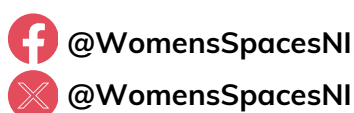
GET IN TOUCH



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RECONCILIATION FUND



Women's Spaces seeks to strengthen the voices of all women and girls in peacebuilding and decision making, delivered by a consortium involving Women's Platform, NIRWN, WRDA and WSN.