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Peace Be With You: An Analysis of the Effectiveness of Interfaith versus Single-faith Peacebuilding Programming at Reducing Violence in Religious Conflict

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PEACE BE WITH YOU: AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERFAITH VERSUS SINGLE-FAITH PEACEBUILDING PROGRAMMING AT REDUCING VIOLENCE IN RELIGIOUS CONFLICT

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Abstract

This study seeks to analyze the effectiveness of interfaith versus single-faith peacebuilding programming at reducing levels of violence in instances of violent religious conflict. After reviewing the literature, I used contact theory and constructivism to form my hypothesis that interfaith programming is more effective compared to single-faith programming at reducing violence. Using a mixed-methods approach, I conducted a most similar systems case study design to analyze the effectiveness of different forms of faith-based programming within the conflict in Northern Ireland. I also analyzed geographical data to test for relationships between the types of programming and conflict violence. Although there was not enough data to draw conclusions about my original hypothesis, I formulated an alternate hypothesis, suggesting that a decrease in conflict violence over time leads to more opportunities for interfaith programming. This hypothesis was better supported by my results. The results also provided further support for the arguments put forth by contact theory and constructivism but showed a need for more systematic data collection on faith-based peacebuilding programming as a whole as well as on its effects and outcomes for communities.

Аннотация

В данном исследовании анализируется эффективность программ межконфессионального и моноконфессионального миростроительства направленного на снижение уровня насилия в вооруженных религиозных конфликтах. После обзора литературы я использовала теорию контактов и конструктивизм, чтобы сформулировать свою гипотезу о том, что межконфессиональное программирование более эффективно по сравнению с моноконфессиональным программированием в снижении насилия. Используя смешанный методический подход, я провела наиболее похожее системное тематическое исследование для анализа эффективности различных форм религиозного программирования в рамках конфликта в Северной Ирландии. Я также проанализировала географические данные, чтобы проверить отношения между типами программирования и конфликтным насилием. Несмотря на отсутствие достаточного количества данных, чтобы сделать выводы о моей первоначальной гипотезе, я сформулировала альтернативную гипотезу, утверждающую что уменьшение насилия в конфликте с течением времени приводит к большему количеству возможностей для межконфессионального программирования, что было подтверждено моими результатами. Полученные результаты также послужили дополнительной поддержкой аргументам, выдвинутым контактной теорией и конструктивизмом, но показали необходимость более систематического сбора данных о программах религиозного миростроительства в целом, а также о его последствиях и результатах для общин.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Almost all religious traditions in the world have been associated at some point in their history with violence and/or conflict. Just since 1940, around one third of all civil wars and almost 40% of all violent conflicts involving ethnic minorities have involved religion in some way (Philpott 2007). Even so, religion also has significant power to create peace, and religious organizations have the ability to work as effective peacebuilders in areas of conflict.

In the late 20th century, the field of peacebuilding began to expand rapidly as governments and organizations began to integrate peacebuilding work into many different sectors, such as economic development or education (Zelizer and Oliphant 2013). During this same period, the idea that the world was becoming more secular was generally abandoned by scholars and officials, as it was clear that religion was still impacting people's lives across the world (Hertog 2010; Little and Appleby 2004). With both of these phenomena occurring at once, an increasing number of organizations and programs that carried out peacebuilding programming began to incorporate faith-based approaches to their work with the idea that religious conflicts needed religiously-based solutions (Hertog 2010).

Within the field of religious peacebuilding, two types of faith-based programming exist: single-faith and interfaith. While both forms can be effective at creating more peaceful communities, each is associated with slightly different outcomes and uses. Currently, however, no study exists comparing the effectiveness of interfaith versus single-faith programming at reducing levels of violence within communities. Such a comparison is important, as the results can direct the form that future faith-based peacebuilding efforts should take.

In this study, I aim to compare the effectiveness of each form of faith-based peacebuilding at reducing levels of violence within communities. I argue that interfaith peacebuilding programming is more effective than single-faith peacebuilding programming at reducing levels of violence in instances of violent religious conflict.

In Chapter Two, I review relevant literature on the relationship between religion, peace, and violence as well as on single-faith and interfaith peacebuilding. After reviewing the literature, I present the gaps in current literature and present my theoretical argument, in which I use contact theory and constructivism to develop the hypothesis that interfaith peacebuilding programming is more effective at reducing levels of violence than single-faith peacebuilding programming.

In Chapter Three, I describe how I used a mixed-methods approach, with a most similar systems comparative case study design, in which I compare cases of peacebuilding programming within a larger case study of religious violence, and Geographic Information Systems data mapping, to test my hypothesis. I describe my case study choices and discuss the validity of my approach. I then operationalize the independent variable, the type of peacebuilding programming, and the dependent variable, the level of violence.

In Chapter Four, I present a summary of my main case study for historical context before presenting and analyzing the geographical data. I then present findings for three categories of cases of peacebuilding programming: programming that utilizes both single-faith and interfaith approaches, single-faith programming, and interfaith programming.

In Chapter Five, I present my conclusions. I summarize my findings that there is not enough data to provide conclusive proof of my original hypothesis but that there is more evidence in support of an alternate hypothesis, which is that lower levels of violence lead to

an increase in interfaith peacebuilding. I then discuss the implications and limitations of my study. Finally, I suggest possible areas for further research on this topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theory

How effective is interfaith programming compared to single-faith programming at reducing the level of violence in communities facing violent religious conflict? While there is existing literature on the relationship between religion, violence, and peace as well as on single-faith and interfaith peacebuilding programming, critical gaps in the literature still exist. I will review this existing literature, and the gaps within it, before presenting my theoretical arguments and hypothesis for the topic.

Religion and Violence

Almost all religious traditions have some relationship with violence and conflict, whether it be in religious texts, rhetoric, history, or practice (Harpviken and Røislien 2018; Mani 2012: Smock 2002). Religious violence can take the form of both structural or direct and can occur between different religions, religious sects, or between those with religious affiliations and those without (or those without sufficient religious zealousness) (Mani 2012). Religion also does not have to be the main cause of conflict for it to be involved (Mani 2012: Smock 2002).

Mani (2012) presents seven main characteristics of many religions that are responsible for fostering violence: the belief that a certain religion is the only truth, proselytism, anthropocentricism, male authority, the accumulation of political and economic power, ritualism, and imperviousness to change. Harpviken and Røislien (2008) identify three different characteristics of religion that, if present, can lead to violence. Religious violence will be more likely if a religion's normative system of texts and teachings is thought to promote or legitimize violence by followers, if religious identities intersect with existing identity differences in a community (creating an "us" versus "them" dynamic), or if religious

organizations partner with the state or other organizations in instances of existing conflict. Lastly, Davies (2015) provides another outline for how religion can lead to violence. Because religious beliefs tend to be exclusive, individuals may begin to believe that their religion is not just the only truth but also inherently superior to all other systems of belief. This may then lead to adherents of the religion to believe that they themselves are superior to people from different religious traditions. This can lead to intolerance and, in some cases, direct violence against people from other traditions who are seen as wrong or lesser-than.

Because religious beliefs tend to be exclusive, religious conflicts often become intractable (Davies 2015). As religious conflicts are oftentimes presented as divinely ordained, religion can help overcome the collective action problem in civil wars by providing strong motivation for enough people to join a violent rebel group that the group is sufficiently able to organize against the state (Basedau, Pfeiffer, and Vüllers 2016; Davies 2015). Religion may also motivate participation in violent conflict, as people may believe that a divine entity will protect them or reward them for their actions (Basedau, Pfeiffer, and Vüllers 2016; Davies 2015).

It is also easier for religious-based rebel groups to overcome the collective action problem when one religious group is dominant in a state, as other smaller groups might align together in rebellion, or when a state is made up of two relatively equally-sized religious groups, as these groups are more likely to become polarized, making religious identities and differences more salient and motivating collective action (Basedau, Pfeiffer, and Vüllers 2016). More than anything, the risk of armed conflict greatly increases when religious identities intersect with other differences, such as ethnicity or economic status (Augustine and Wong 2009; Basedau, Pfeiffer, and Vüllers 2016; Philpott 2007). Ethnicity in particular

can play a powerful role in religious conflict; in areas where religious and ethnic identities overlap, armed conflict is almost twice as likely when religion and ethnicity do not overlap (Basedau, Pfeiffer, and Vüllers 2016). As these identities overlap, nationalism can also become intertwined, thereby creating a situation in which communities are divided across religious, ethnic, and political lines, creating even more motives for conflict (Augustine and Wong 2009; Philpott 2007).

Religion and Peace

Although many aspects of religion can act as causal forces for violence, when viewed or utilized differently, religion has significant power to create peace. Peace is a core ideal to almost all major religions and is often key in providing the motivation for many faithful to work towards peace, with some religions even considering peace work a sign of commitment and faithfulness (Davies 2015; Huda and Marshall 2013; Hertog 2010). Beyond just overarching ideas of peace, religious traditions often also promote ideas such as nonviolence, care for all life, empathy, generosity, service, and truth, among many other ideas (Davies 2015; Hertog 2010). Furthermore, religion can provide people with specific views for how the world should be, as well as guidelines to judge right versus wrong (Hertog 2010).

Within most communities, but especially those with a deeply religious culture, religious actors can play important roles in conflict situations by continuing to provide social, education, and health services even when states or other organizations have stopped providing them (Davies 2015; Huda and Marshall 2013). Standing in between the private and public sphere, and generally with voluntary participation by community members, religious institutions can be considered part of civil society (Berger 2005; Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney 2011). This intermediate position between the state and local communities gives

religious institutions the unique ability to communicate between these two spheres to mitigate conflict (Berger 2005; Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney 2011). Many times, the physical structures of the religious institutions (temples, synagogues, churches, etc.) also act as meeting places for other civil society organizations, increasing contact between religious groups and other groups that might be working on peace and conflict issues (Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney 2011).

Because of this community-based nature, religious actors are also able to observe conflicts from the ground level and will likely have information and community connections that can aid in mediation and reconciliation processes (Davies 2015; Huda and Marshall 2013; Hertog 2010). Religious actors also tend to have a variety of communication methods available, including sermons, newspapers, public events, etc. for them to spread messages of peace and mobilize people towards peaceful causes (Hertog 2010).

Although religion can be a cause of violent communal conflict or civil war, it can also have a pacifying effect. Conflict is likely to occur when religion and other identities overlap, but many times the members of religious institutions come from across political, economic, and/or ethnic divides, reducing polarization and increasing cooperation (De Juan, Pierskalla, and Vüllers 2015; Fox 2004). Besides these horizontal links across societal divisions, religious institutions often also have vertical links through an institutional hierarchy that can help mitigate communal conflict. Higher level bodies may depend on local-level institutions to settle conflicts in their own communities, as people often feel a greater connection and sense of trust with their local institutions (De Juan, Pierskalla, and Vüllers 2015). At other times, local institutions may rely on those at the top of the hierarchy to mitigate conflict, as they have a wider network of influence, oftentimes including political influence (Fox 2004).

Institutional hierarchies ultimately allow peacebuilding to occur at multiple levels, from grassroots efforts to official diplomacy (Hertog 2010: Smock 2002).

Peacebuilding

There is no single definition of peacebuilding, but it is generally considered to encompass activities that take place after or towards the end of a conflict, involving creating functioning institutions and reconciliation efforts to create a more stable peace (Zelizer and Oliphant 2013). The peacebuilding field has expanded rapidly in the past few decades from involving mainly government agencies or the United Nations to encompassing thousands of nongovernmental organizations, including many that have integrated peacebuilding programs into existing programs focused on economic development, health, education, etc. (Zelizer and Oliphant 2013).

Peacebuilding programming can be both top-down, focused on the leaders of states or organizations, or bottom-up, involving everyday citizens. While both can be effective at fostering dialogue or conflict resolution, community-based bottom-up peacebuilding is often seen as more sustainable long-term (Hemmer, Garb, Phillips, and Graham 2006). One argument for community-based peacebuilding is that, because most communal conflict involves everyday citizens as participants and/or victims, these citizens should be directly involved in the peace process so that any agreement will reflect their needs and concerns (Conteh-Morgan 2005). Everyday citizens also tend to feel that, as individuals, they can have more of an impact on the peace process at the local level and will be more motivated to support bottom-up programming in which they feel involved over top-down programming from which they feel disconnected (Hemmer et al. 2006). Additionally, this form of peacebuilding is useful when leaders are either unable or unwilling to reach any kind of

agreement; in fact, some leaders may benefit from the status-quo and not want to become involved with any peacebuilding initiatives (Hemmer et al. 2006). However, if enough citizens participate in bottom-up programs, leaders may feel pressure from citizens to begin engaging in top-down initiatives as well (Dovidio, Saguy, and Shambel 2009; Hemmer et al. 2006).

In the late 20th century, politicians and academics around the world began to abandon the idea from the earlier part of the century that the world was becoming more secular, in favor of recognizing the important role religion played in society, politics, and conflict (Hertog 2010; Little and Appleby 2004). With this development, an increasing number of organizations began to combine peacebuilding efforts with religious programs and ideas. Because religion has many qualities that can lead to peace, such as teachings on empathy, nonviolence, service, etc., religious programming can be used for peacebuilding in nonreligious conflicts; however, it is most often used in conflicts where religion plays a significant role (Hertog 2010). Like other forms of peacebuilding programming, religious peacebuilding programming can be classified as top-down (involving mostly religious leaders) or bottom-up (involving everyday citizens who identify with a certain religious tradition). A variety of actors can carry out peacebuilding programming, including traditional religious organizations, such as churches, mosques, temples, etc., as well as many non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The programming provided by these actors can either be classified as single-faith or interfaith based on the number of religious groups or sects it targets.

Single-faith Peacebuilding

Overall, there is a dearth of literature regarding single-faith peacebuilding. However, there has been literature written about the use and effectiveness of intragroup dialogue within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which itself has religious underpinnings, as well as on using affinity groups within racial justice dialogue. While these programs might not focus specifically on religion, I argue that many of the processes and participant experiences in affinity groups will function similarly to how single-faith peacebuilding programing operates.

Intragroup, or affinity group, dialogue is where participants with shared identities gather to meet and discuss their experiences, usually directly related to that identity (Sternberg, Hirsch, and Sagy 2018; Tauriac, Kim, Sariñana, Tawa, and Kahn 2013). This type of programming is often seen as useful for peacebuilding or social justice as it allows people of different identities to gather in their own spaces, surrounded by people who have likely had similar life experiences in relation to that shared identity (Tauriac et al. 2013). In the safe space of the group, participants are able to speak freely and "test out" ideas without the concern of offending or harming people in the outgroup and without people in the affinity group becoming overly defensive about their past experiences (David et al. 2017; Tauriac et al. 2013; Walls, Roll, and Sprague 2010). Intragroup or affinity group dialogue is also useful in situations where participants are unable to realistically meet, either because the conflict situation is still too dangerous, because members of the ingroup and outgroup are too separated geographically, or because there are other constraints that make it difficult to gather in person (Zigenlaub and Sagy 2020).

These groups can also be valuable for participants who have never spent much time thinking about or discussing their own identity. While some people found this challenging,

especially when discussing previously unknown or ignored privileges related to their identity, others found the opportunity valuable for self-reflection and for starting a journey towards allyship with the outgroup (Michael and Conger 2009; Tauriac et al. 2013; Walls et al. 2010). David et al. (2017) found that self-reflection was a key part of successful programming, as this mental process is what ultimately allowed participants to perceive both the ingroup and outgroup as having diverse identities, beyond those of the conflict, and acknowledge responsibility within the ingroup for committing acts of violence or discrimination against the outgroup. Many participants find self-reflection difficult, however, as it poses a threat to their perception of themselves as moral or just (David et al. 2017). The emotional challenge of self-reflection may even cause some participants to disengage from the program (David et al. 2017).

Some participants also had deeply emotional experiences in the affinity groups, as they were able to release any pent-up frustration, anger, or pain with people they knew would likely be empathetic (Tauriac et al. 2013). Moreover, affinity groups are an effective way for people to start learning more about the outgroup without putting the burden entirely on people in the outgroup to educate them (Michael and Conger 2009).

When implemented in communities facing violent conflict, a large goal of intragroup dialogue is for participants to understand the conflict narrative of the outgroup while self-reflecting about their own conflict narrative (Sternberg et al. 2018; Zigenlaub and Sagy 2020). This is done in the hopes that participants will challenge their own beliefs about truth and justice in relation to the conflict and become more open to accepting alternate narratives, reducing the sense that each side's beliefs and narrative are intractable and that an opposing narrative is a threat to one's own identity (David et al. 2017; Sternberg et al. 2018). In fact,

participants in intragroup dialogue who were able to acknowledge the legitimacy of an opposing conflict narrative held more optimistic views about the possibilities of future reconciliation (David et al. 2017)

Intragroup or affinity group dialogue also often incorporates discussion within the ingroup about participants' other identities, such as gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, physical ability, etc. (Sternberg et al. 2018; Zigenlaub and Sagy 2020). By encouraging participants to recognize the diversity within the ingroup and practice challenging stereotypes they might hold for other aspects of people's identities, participants will be better prepared to recognize the diversity of the outgroup and critically examine any stereotypes towards the outgroup as well (David et al. 2017; Sternberg et al. 2018). These exercises also allowed participants in the dialogue to recognize that people in the outgroup might actually share some aspects of their identity (Sternberg et al. 2018). For example, Israeli youth in an intragroup dialogue program discussed how they might actually have more in common with Palestinian youth than they do with older generations of Israelis, which served to reduce fear and uncertainty about Palestinian youth in the outgroup (Sternberg et al. 2018). Reducing feelings of fear towards the outgroup is especially important, since fear is often used as a justification for violence (Sternberg et al. 2018). However, these exercises have also led some participants in intragroup dialogue programs to disengage with the peacebuilding process, as they believed it was necessary to deal with stereotypes and prejudice about diverse identities within the ingroup first, before addressing the larger conflict (Sternberg et al. 2018).

Intragroup dialogue programs also face challenges because ingroup members are not directly engaging with outgroup members and therefore cannot actually engage in

reconciliation processes. Even though participants in intragroup dialogue expressed greater willingness to engage in reconciliation efforts with the outgroup, they questioned whether members of the outgroup shared this feeling and were in favor of reconciliation (Sternberg et al. 2018). The demonstrated positive results of intragroup dialogue include acceptance of alternative narratives and reduced stereotyping, fear, and hatred of the outgroup. However, it is unclear whether these programs can actually change the core collective narratives within the conflict or only affect peripheral beliefs (David et al. 2017; Sternberg et al. 2018; Zigenlaub and Sagy 2020).

Interfaith Peacebuilding

Although it is clear that single-faith programming is doing important peacebuilding work across the globe, this is only one type of faith-based peacebuilding. Unlike single-faith programming, Interfaith programming explicitly includes people of multiple religions or religious sects with the goal of creating greater tolerance, trust, or understanding between the people involved. Interfaith programming has become an increasingly popular peacebuilding tool used across the world in instances of violence along religious lines.

Interfaith programming can take many forms, including high-level dialogues between religious leaders or grassroots community efforts (Smock 2002). Goals of these efforts can also vary; they can be forums for mediation or reconciliation or forums for greater understanding of other religions, often highlighting similarities across religious traditions (Merdjanova 2011; Smock 2002). In each case, interfaith programming ultimately works to build relationships between participants, primarily through dialogue or work on collective projects. By building relationships, participants are better able to directly understand the key motivations, issues, and interests of the other party as well as humanize one another

(Hemmer et al. 2006). Neufeldt (2011) states that interfaith programming can create change through dialogue using three different orientations: political, theological, and peacebuilding.

Political dialogue focuses on creating messages of coexistence and harmony between multiple groups to delegitimize violent actors (Neufeldt 2011). Theological dialogue is primarily concerned with creating understanding across religious groups by highlighting similarities across traditions (Neufeldt 2011). This form of dialogue, in particular, is useful for eliciting humanizing responses from participants (Soukup and Keaton 2013). By recognizing that other religious traditions have similar truths and values, participants' uncertainty and fear towards others can be reduced (Soukup and Keaton 2013). This is particularly important in instances of violent religious conflict because of the intractability of most religious traditions, which present a certain religion as the only truth and create an "us vs. them" dynamic with people from other religious traditions (Harpviken and Røislien 2008; Mani 2012; Pickett et al. 2014).

A peacebuilding perspective works to create community support for peace on the basis of both religion and mutual respect (Neufeldt 2011). It works to address and discuss the root causes of violent conflict and extend peace work beyond the confines of the interfaith program into the larger community, which is important since religious conflicts are most often communal (Neufeldt 2011). In discussing the causes of conflict, this form of dialogue often circles around the conflict narrative of each party. Like in single-faith peacebuilding, understanding the conflict narrative of the opposing side is important both for understanding the motivations of the opposing side and for finding mutual points of interest that both sides can work towards (Hemmer et al. 2006; Patel, Kunze, and Silverman 2008). Interfaith programming is different, however, in that it allows participants to hear narratives directly

from other participants with whom they have begun to form relationships, leading to greater acceptance of other conflict narratives and decreasing opportunities for miscommunication or misunderstanding (Patel, Kunze, and Silverman 2008). Interfaith approaches also provide an opportunity for participants to create a new narrative together that encompasses the history and beliefs of all sides (Hemmer et al. 2006; Patel, Kunze, and Silverman 2008).

Reconciliation is often seen as one of the most important goals of interfaith peacebuilding, as it requires participants, both as individuals and as part of their religious group, to establish or rebuild connections with people on the opposing side of the conflict (Smock 2002). The ability of interfaith programming to foster reconciliation differentiates it from single-faith programming. Because intragroup dialogue programs do not provide participants with opportunities for direct contact and dialogue with the outgroup, the program can foster a willingness to reconcile within participants but cannot actually create reconciliation (David et al. 2017; Pickett et al. 2014; Tam, Hewstone, Kenworthy, and Cairns 2009). True reconciliation requires that participants not only have an understanding of one another's beliefs but also view each other with mutual trust and respect as human beings (United States Institute of Peace 2003). Reconciliation is a psychological process that can require significant time and effort on behalf of the participants (Tam et al. 2009; United States Institute of Peace 2003). This means that interfaith peacebuilding programs should be long-lasting in order to give participants time to process their beliefs surrounding their own actions and role in the conflict, those of the outgroup, and the conflict as a whole in order to achieve reconciliation (Tam et al. 2009; United States Institute of Peace 2003).

In order to achieve reconciliation, participants in interfaith programs must first feel as though they can trust one another (Tam et al. 2009). Trust can lead to reconciliation as it

promotes conciliatory rather than coercive bargaining strategies between groups, creating opportunities for a resolution to the conflict that incorporates the interests of both parties (Pickett et al. 2014; Tam et al. 2009). Moreover, because religious conflicts are often viewed as intractable in the eyes of participants, trust is important as it can reduce the feeling of zero-sum threats (Hemmer et al. 2006; Pickett et al. 2014). When groups have mutual trust, they are able to risk some vulnerability in peacebuilding processes with assurance that they will not be exploited or harmed (Hemmer et al. 2006; Pickett et al. 2014; Tam et al. 2009). Because trust involves risk on behalf of participants, creating trust, and thereby creating the possibility of reconciliation, demands direct and extended contact between both groups in order to facilitate enough positive intergroup encounters that participants feel they can trust each other (Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, and Christ 2011; Tam et al. 2009).

Interfaith programming is most successful when it ensures that all groups in the program have equal status, come prepared to cooperate, have common goals, and are supported by the wider community to engage in an intergroup peacebuilding process (Pettigrew et al. 2011; Pickett et al. 2014; Tam et al. 2009). Even if there are severe inequalities within the community, a balance of power between religious groups within the program is important, as groups that hold the majority within dialogue groups will often consciously or unconsciously dominate the discussion, silencing the group in the minority (Dovidio, Saguy, and Shambel 2009; Smock 2002). Even if done unconsciously, this action on behalf of the majority group will perpetuate the feelings of distrust and hurt felt by the minority group because they will not feel that their views are being heard within the dialogue (Dovidio, Saguy, and Shambel 2009). A balance of power, along with clear ground rules for

the program, will make the space feel safer for participants, as they will feel as though the program is not biased towards any group (Neufeldt 2011).

In order to provide participants with the opportunity to practice cooperation and developing common goals, interfaith programing oftentimes involves participation in some kind of collaborative task (Smock 2002). A collaborative task could be something formal like the establishment of a youth organization or something informal such as cross-community meals. Since people are often unwilling or unable to express their true feelings in dialogues, collective projects will allow participants to show their trust and willingness to work together (Smock 2002). For instance, in Bosnia, an interfaith choir was formed that incorporated music from a wide variety of religious traditions (United States Institute of Peace 2003). This informal experience allowed the singers to become more familiar with the religious traditions and cultures of other ethnic groups within Bosnia and helped participants see everyone in the group as fellow humans with shared interests rather than enemies or "others" (United States Institute of Peace 2003). Through gathering a diverse array of people to create collective music, this program also provided participants with a low-stakes environment in which they could practice working together (United States Institute of Peace 2003).

Having community support for interfaith programming is also important, since interfaith dialogue often faces backlash from communities that distrust the idea of such programs or are not yet ready to engage with a conflicting group (Merdjanova 2011; Neufeldt 2011; Pettigrew et al. 2011). A lack of acceptance could lead to an increase in risks associated with participating in a program and reduce the number of people willing to join in dialogue (Pettigrew et al. 2011; United States Institute of Peace 2003). In areas where intergroup hostility remains high, leaders and/or participants in interfaith programs may face

retaliation or violence from hardliners in their communities who view anyone making concessions or contact with people on the other side of the conflict as traitors (Hemmer et al. 2006; Sternberg, Hirsch, and Sagy 2018; United States Institute of Peace 2003).

Ultimately, if participants have a positive experience in the program, they are more likely to have positive attitudes towards people from the opposing side of the conflict in the future as well. This is because positive contact can have secondary transfer effects: participants who come to like members from the opposing side within the program tend to generalize these feelings and become more accepting of the outgroup overall (Pettigrew et al. 2011; Pickett et al. 2014). In comparison, because single-faith programs do not offer direct contact with people from other groups, this secondary transfer effect among participants does not occur.

It is also important to note that single-faith and interfaith approaches to peacebuilding can be used in conjunction with one another, where participants would attend a single-faith program as a preliminary step to an interfaith program (David et al. 2017; Sternberg, Hirsch, and Sagy 2018). In this case, the interfaith programming does not negate what was accomplished by participants in the single-faith section but instead builds off of their accomplishments. The fact that single-faith programming is sometimes followed by further interfaith programming supports the idea that interfaith peacebuilding is more effective.

Gaps in the Literature

The most significant gap in the existing literature on this topic is that there is no literature directly comparing the effectiveness of interfaith programming to single-faith programming. The literature is also rather weak regarding how effective each of these forms

of programming are individually. It is unclear how much of a role single-faith or interfaith programming plays in creating greater intergroup tolerance and understanding, for example, or how much a reduction in violence within a community is actually related to these types of faith-based efforts. Additionally, while there is a wealth of literature regarding interfaith programming, the amount of available literature on single-faith programming is much more limited, possibly due to the unwillingness of different programs to brand themselves as such or possibly because much of religious peacebuilding today is in some way interfaith. My study will fill in the gaps by analyzing and comparing the effectiveness of single-faith versus interfaith programming on reducing levels of violence in instances of violent religious conflict.

Theoretical Argument

Based on the conclusions made by the existing literature, I argue that interfaith peacebuilding programming will be more successful compared to single-faith programming at reducing levels of violence in communities facing violent religious conflict. While single-faith programming might also see some success, the exclusivity of religious beliefs and intractability of religious conflicts warrants the need for interfaith programming.

Contact theory provides a useful framework for how positive contact with people on opposing sides of a conflict may provide openings and support for peace, especially in intractable conflicts, like many religious conflicts. This theory poses that trust, tolerance, and reconciliation can be created between different sides of a conflict by providing members of each side opportunities to meet and form relationships with people on the other side (Pettigrew et al. 2011; Pickett et al. 2011). While certain conditions to the contact, such as a balance of power among participants or opportunities to develop common goals, will greatly

enhance the positive benefits of contact, any contact among people in opposing parties will lead to an increased level of understanding among participants towards one another and a greater humanizing response (Pettigrew et al. 2011). Moreover, this positive response extends beyond the individuals directly involved in the contact; participants in contact programs tend to generalize their feelings towards outgroup members within the contact program to outgroup members in general.

Participants in single-faith programming can possibly still achieve greater tolerance and understanding of others through learning about different religions in an environment where participants feel comfortable, however achieving trust, reconciliation, justice, and/or forgiveness cannot happen without all parties of the conflict coming together in dialogue (Tam et al. 2009). Interfaith programming is helpful for reducing levels of violence primarily by building trust between people of different communities. Interfaith peacebuilding aims to humanize people from other religious traditions by allowing people to be vulnerable in dialogue, share their own beliefs, learn the beliefs of others, discover similarities between groups, and build relationships across conflict lines, all of which require some level of trust between participants (Hemmer et al. 2006; Pickett et al. 2014; Smock 2002; Tam et al. 2009).

Interfaith peacebuilding also is focused heavily on reconciliation. In order to achieve this, both parties to the conflict must admit their own roles within the conflict and agree to reconcile. By both admitting to guilt on some level, a level of trust between the groups can be better achieved as one group will not feel victimized within the process (Smock 2002). While single-faith programs can promote a willingness to trust or reconcile among participants, because these participants do not have contact with people in the other group, they cannot actually achieve trust or reconciliation (David et al. 2017; Pickett et al. 2014; Tam et al.

2009). These phenomena are ultimately a result of changing attitudes and norms among participants, and although attitudes and norms can change without direct contact, norm changes are stronger with direct contact (Pettigrew et al. 2011).

Constructivism is a useful theory for looking at the importance of norm changes in reducing violence. Constructivists find peacebuilding programs useful because they believe that such programs can create new peaceful norms among participants and, with intergroup programs, develop an intersubjective understanding of the conflict and possibilities for peace (Conteh-Morgan 2005; David 2001; Guzzini 2000). This differs from traditional realist theory, which questions the usefulness of peacebuilding in communal conflict. Realists see communal conflict mainly as a result of a security dilemma between competing groups, whereby competition for power and a lack of trust between groups leads to both sides attempting to maximize security (David 2001; Hill 2006). This ultimately makes both sides less secure and creates opportunities for conflict, especially when groups share a geographical space (Hill 2006). Unless peacebuilding programs can fix the underlying differences in power leading to insecurity among groups, realists do not see peacebuilding programs as effective long-term in communal conflict (Conteh-Morgan 2005; David 2001).

The goal of intergroup peacebuilding in the eyes of constructivists is to develop enough trust from participants on each side of the conflict that both sides will follow the newly established norms of peace and will be willing to disarm even if the underlying causes of a security dilemma still exist (Hill 2006). Participants in peacebuilding programming choose to participate because they see that the current environment in their community has led to conflict and want to create a new and better environment (Conteh-Morgan 2005). With intergroup peacebuilding programs, people on both sides of a conflict have the chance to

interact together in a controlled environment and begin to develop relationships with one another as well as shared ideas about peace and reconciliation. Through continuous positive interaction, participants in the program develop new norms of interaction with one another that are not centered around mistrust, discrimination, or violence. Hopefully, these new norms will then spread beyond the reach of the program into the wider community, leading to the creation of peaceful norms at the community level (Conteh-Morgan 2005; Pettigrew et al. 2011; Pickett et al. 2014). With these norms established at a community level, violence will likely be reduced as it will no longer be viewed as an acceptable means by which to resolve conflicts between different groups in the community.

Constructivism also works to explain the creation of intersubjective understanding among groups or individuals, which is also key to the success of intergroup peacebuilding (Guzzini 2000). Although intragroup peacebuilding can change the subjective understanding of participants about the realities of the conflict and possibilities for peace with the conflicting group, the lack of contact and dialogue with people from the conflicting group means that this type of peacebuilding cannot change the intersubjective understanding of participants. When people on both sides of a conflict develop an intersubjective understanding about the causes and realities of the conflict as well as the goals, motivations, and beliefs of those on the opposing side, they are able to construct a new reality from that understanding (Conteh-Morgan 2005; Guzzini 2000). Moreover, the emergence of trusting relationships among participants in interfaith programming allows participants to develop more tolerant and reconciliatory attitudes towards others, better preparing them to accept a new shared reality (Abu-Nimer 2001). Ultimately, the development of intersubjective

understanding among groups reduces reasons for conflict by providing fewer opportunities for disagreement.

For interfaith peacebuilding specifically, the goal is to recognize the validity of each sides' unique religious beliefs while developing a new shared understanding based around the similarities found in both religious traditions alongside the other shared values, concerns, and beliefs discovered amongst participants throughout the peacebuilding process (Patel, Kunze, and Silverman 2008). Because most religious traditions have shared values and beliefs surrounding peace, interfaith programming may actually give participants an advantage or head-start in forming shared understanding compared to non-religious peacebuilding programming.

However, interfaith programming can face challenges due to the exclusivity of religious beliefs. Participants may resist any kind of intersubjective understanding between conflicting groups because they may view such an understanding as violating their belief that their religion is the only truth (Abu-Nimer 2001). Interfaith programming also faces challenges if communities are not ready to accept interactions with people on opposite sides of a conflict, as this can create risks for participants in the program (Merdjanova 2011; Neufeldt 2011; Pettigrew et al. 2011). Interfaith programming will therefore be more successful when the risks faced by those participating in such programs are relatively low.

Hypothesis

I hypothesize that communities facing violent religious conflict in which members participate in interfaith peacebuilding programming will see lower levels of violence within that community than if members participate in single-faith peacebuilding programming. In testing this hypothesis, I also hope to refute my null hypothesis, which is that communities

facing violent religious conflict in which members participate in interfaith peacebuilding programming will see the same or higher level of violence compared to participation in single-faith programming.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

In the previous section, I discussed the existing literature on the topic as well as my theory and hypothesis. In this section, I present my research design and methodology that I used to investigate my hypothesis. I will explain how I used a mixed methods approach with a comparative case study and geographical data analysis for my research as well as present and operationalize my variables.

Research Design

To test my hypothesis, I used a comparative case study method, which Kaarbo and Beasley (1999) define as a "systematic comparison" of two or more data points or instances "without manipulating either the phenomenon or the context," (372). While much existing literature on religious peacebuilding has utilized a single case study method (Coward and Smith 2004; Esposito and Yilmaz 2013; Hertog 2010; Matyok et al. 2013; Merdjanova and Brodeur 2011; Smock 2002), comparative case studies have also been used (Brewer 2011, Higgins, and Teeney 2011; Power 2011b), though a comparative approach has not been used to specifically analyze interfaith versus single-faith approaches to peacebuilding. For this study, a comparative method was needed to analyze interfaith versus single-faith peacebuilding programming within a single case of violent religious conflict.

I used the most similar systems model for case studies, as I looked at how levels of violence changed within communities when members of that community participated in interfaith peacebuilding programming compared to single-faith peacebuilding programming. To decide on what cases to use, I first had to decide on an instance of violent religious conflict within which I would analyze peacebuilding programming. I first gathered information from *Religious Tolerance*, a website by the Ontario Consultants on Religious

Tolerance, to establish a sample (Religious Tolerance n.d.). I then decided to look only at cases where the conflict occurred after 1945 in order to present more modern and relevant results. I also avoided conflicts that were primarily one-sided or where the conflict was mainly between religious versus nonreligious actors, as I am interested in looking at peacebuilding programming between religious actors who have both been involved in violence. Lastly, I removed cases from my initial list that did not have sufficient existing literature on religious peacebuilding programming within that conflict. After applying these criteria, I was left with the conflicts in Northern Ireland, Israel-Palestine, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the end, I decided to look at the conflict in Northern Ireland since it would be easiest to find English-language sources.

For the comparative aspect of my case study, I looked for both single-faith and interfaith peacebuilding programming in Northern Ireland. Specifically, I searched for programs that were active during the main period of the conflict between around 1968 to 1998 and included a bottom-up, community-based approach. Although the organizations or groups that carried out faith-based peacebuilding programming did not need to have an explicit religious or peacebuilding focus, the programming itself did need to include discussions or activities explicitly dealing with religion and peacebuilding.

I used a variety of sources to find examples of faith-based peacebuilding programming. I first used lists of religious and peacebuilding organizations in Northern Ireland found through the Irish Council of Churches and Peace Insight websites (Irish Council of Churches 2015; McKinley 2011; Peace Insight n.d.), newspapers such as The Irish Times and Belfast Telegraph as well as through a variety of scholarly books and articles on the conflict in Northern Ireland (Church, Visser, and Johnson 2004; Gallagher 1982;

Ganiel 2008a; Grant 2004; Hughes and Knox 1997; Power 2011b) to create an initial list of possible organizations and groups that carried out faith-based peacebuilding programming. From this initial list, I searched for websites for the various programs to gather more information on the nature of the program, such as when the program was in operation and whether the program was community-based. If I could not find a website for a certain program, I then searched online for any news articles or scholarly sources that documented their work. I also searched for contact information for each program. While searching for further information on these programs, I often came across references to other peacebuilding programs not included in my original search that I was able to add to my list of programs. From these sources, I was able to create an initial list of 120 programs to review, of which I was able to find contact information for 38. To compare the different cases of faith-based programming, I am using a multi-method approach of interviews along with data mapping through geographic information systems (GIS) software.

Interviews

Participants in interviews are all either program leaders or program participants who have experience with one of the faith-based peacebuilding programming cases. I planned to interview people who have experience with single-faith peacebuilding programming as well as those who have experience with interfaith, aiming for an equal number of both. All participants must also all be at least 18 years old. Through interviews, I was able to gather more information from first-hand accounts on what effect program leaders or participants believe each type of faith-based peacebuilding programming had on levels of violence within communities as well as on what aspects of the programming they believe led to such outcomes.

To contact participants, I first sent out preliminary emails to all of the cases of faith-based programming for which I had obtained contact information to ask whether anyone at the organization would be willing to answer questions about the effectiveness of single-faith or interfaith peacebuilding programming on reducing levels of violence or whether they could connect me with someone who might be willing. Once I was connected with people who were willing to answer questions with regard to the study, I sent them more specific emails asking about their willingness to participate in a short interview. Within the interview itself, I also included a question asking participants if there is anyone else that they think I should contact, with the goal that this might help me connect with other possible interview participants through snowball sampling.

Within the interview, participants were asked a variety of questions about their experiences with faith-based peacebuilding programming and their perception of its effects on themselves, other participants, and the wider community. Because each case of programming was different, the interviews were semi-structured; the semi-structured questions allowed participants to answer the questions that were most relevant for their experience and give more in-depth information about each response. Upon completion of the interviews, I used the interview responses to consider whether common themes are expressed by those who have experience with single-faith programming as well as those with interfaith programming regarding the effectiveness of each. I also analyzed responses to see whether one form of faith-based peacebuilding is considered more effective. To protect the identity of participants, all information gathered in the interviews was held confidential unless they requested specifically to be named (specific interview procedures, questions, and the interview consent form can be found in Appendix A).

Data Mapping

As part of the study, I also used GIS mapping to analyze trends in the relationship between the establishment of faith-based peacebuilding programming and instances of direct violence over time. I began with the same initial list of 120 cases of programming; with data mapping, I could include cases of programming that I could not use for interviews due to a lack of contact information. For any cases for which I could not find an exact address, I used the most specific location available, such as the neighborhood or area of town in which it was located. Similarly, for any cases in which I could not find exact confirmation of the year the program began operating, I used the earliest year of operations for which I could find reference. However, I did have to fully exclude programs for which I could not find any specific references to a location, dates of operation, and/or type of programming.

Cases of programming that bring people out of their own communities to a different location to engage in peacebuilding programming also could not be included in the map; unless data was available for where the participants lived, the inclusion of this form of faith-based programming would skew the geographical aspects of the data. Additionally, programs that operate throughout Northern Ireland could only be included if the program offered specific locations of their operations, as without specific geographic locations, the cases could not be plotted on the map.

In order to analyze trends between violence and peacebuilding programming, the data on cases of programming needed to be plotted against data on conflict deaths in Northern Ireland from 1969-2005 (McKeown 2009), which also meant that only cases of peacebuilding programming that existed during that time frame could be included. This dataset was originally compiled in 2009 with data on conflict deaths from 1969 to 2001 but

was updated in 2013 to include data up until 2005. With these criteria, I was able to plot 62 cases of faith-based peacebuilding programming on the GIS map.

Through GIS mapping, I was able to see if a relationship exists between the geographical locations of instances of violence and the locations of both single-faith and interfaith programming over time in Northern Ireland. Although any trends observed through mapping cannot establish direct causation between either type of faith-based peacebuilding and levels of violence within communities, it can show any relationships that exists between these two variables.

Validity

This approach does create a problem for external validity, since I am looking at specific programs within one instance of violent religious conflict. While my findings may not be applicable to every case of violent religious conflict due to differences in the religious, historical, cultural, political, or economic background of a conflict, this research can provide a starting point for comparing interfaith and single-faith programming, as no such research exists at this point. For internal validity, while I tried to find cases of programming that were similar in structure (community-based and with religion as a central topic), each case of programming is still different. Because I could not control for all the differences between cases of programming, the dependent variable could be affected by factors that are not directly related to the differences between single-faith and interfaith programming. Furthermore, because many factors outside of these peacebuilding programs could affect the levels of violence within communities, it will be difficult to establish causation between my variables rather than just correlation.

Variables

Independent Variable: Type of Programming

For the independent variable, I am looking at whether or not a case of peacebuilding programming is interfaith or single-faith. Existing literature provides many definitions of interfaith programming. Neufeldt (2011, 344) defines it as "engagement between people of different faith traditions communicating about faith and issues of common concern," while Merdjanova and Brodeur (2011, 3) define it as programming that creates "mutual understanding and cooperation between different people who self-identify religiously." Interfaith peacebuilding can occur at different levels, including between religious leaders or everyday people; it also can be applied to specific groups by age, gender, occupation, etc. (Merdjanova and Brodeur 2011). Interfaith programming also does not have to revolve around religious conversations but can address any issues that the participants wish (Smock 2002; Merdjanova and Brodeur 2011; Neufeldt 2011). For this study, I will be looking at interfaith programming designed with a bottom-up, community-based approach. While the programming may involve any number of topics or areas of concern and may be run by either a religious or nonreligious organization, religion should be a major topic within the program. Lastly, there should be a relatively equal number of people from each faith tradition included in the programming.

Current literature does not offer a definition of single-faith programming, but Tauriac et al. defines the similar concept of affinity groups as, "meetings in which participants gather based on a particular social identity to discuss related personal experiences," (2013, 246). I therefore consider single-faith programming to be any that is conducted within the lens of a single religious tradition for participants who identify as a part of that tradition. I will again also be looking at bottom-up, community-based programs in which religion is a major topic.

In order to determine whether programming is single-faith or interfaith, I first looked at the websites of organizations or groups that ran faith-based peacebuilding programming to see if the programming was explicitly presented as interfaith or single-faith within the mission statement or other information on the website. If it was not, I then looked at any available reports or descriptions of the program, either through organizational reports, news stories, or scholarly sources, to see whether the setup of the programming would be considered single-faith or interfaith based on the above listed definitions. For any programs for which I was still unsure, I then emailed the organization that ran the programming, if I had been able to obtain their contact information, for further clarification on the type of faith-based peacebuilding they had carried out. I also included the question, "Would you describe the program as primarily single-faith, interfaith, or some combination of both approaches?" as the first question in the interview to further confirm the type of programming (Appendix A). For any programs that used a combination of both approaches, I then asked for further clarification on which aspects of the programming were primarily single-faith and which were primarily interfaith. After determining which cases of programming were single-faith versus interfaith, I used this data along with geographical and temporal information about programs as the data for the independent variable within the GIS map.

Dependent Variable: Level of Violence

For my dependent variable, I am looking at the levels of violence within a community facing violent religious conflict. Specifically, I am looking at levels of direct violence, since direct violence has a more set definition as to what qualifies as violence and is therefore easier to measure. Direct violence usually refers to physical violence committed by one group or person against another group or person, though the definition is sometimes

expanded to include threats of violence, violent language directed at a group or person, and even destruction of property (Govier 2008; Ferguson, McDaid, and McAuley 2018).

In order to determine how programming affected levels of violence, I utilized the abovementioned interviews to ask questions about changes in levels of violence, asking participants "Do you think the programming had an effect on levels of violence within the community? If so, can you describe the effect?" (Appendix A). I also asked more general questions such as "How effective do you think the programming was at fostering trust or reconciliation among participants and within the wider community?" and "Do you think the programming had lasting effects on the participants and/or the wider community?" (Appendix A). Even though these last two questions do not directly ask about levels of violence, they allow participants who might be unsure about levels of violence to talk about any changes within the community that would likely coincide with changes in levels of violence.

When available, interviews are also supplemented with reports from the organizations running the peacebuilding programming to provide more information on the effects and outcomes of the programming. Such materials may also be used in place of interviews if it is not possible to interview someone about a certain program. Neither interviews nor program reports provide a perfect measurement of levels of violence within communities as those interviewed or the organizations or groups themselves may not have data on or experience with changing levels of violence. Moreover, both programs and interviewees, especially those who work for the organization or group running the peacebuilding programming, may also be motivated to report positive results through reports or interviews. In combination, however, the use of both interviews and reports on programming work should provide a more

substantiated and accurate view of the effects of programming on levels of violence within communities. The inclusion of interviews with program participants, who should have no organizational motives to report overly positive results, as well as the fact that all information in the interviews will be confidential unless otherwise requested should further increase the accuracy of interview responses.

For data mapping, I measured data on direct violence by mapping the geographical and temporal data of the establishment and operation of faith-based peacebuilding programs against existing data on conflict deaths in Northern Ireland, which also includes geographical and temporal data for each conflict death (McKeown 2009). Although this data only includes data on direct violence in the form of conflict deaths and does not include data on other forms of direct violence, this still provides a picture of the level of direct violence in communities, as lower levels of direct violence overall should lead to lower numbers of conflict deaths.

Chapter 4: Results and Analysis

In this chapter, I present an overview of the conflict in Northern Ireland before presenting the results from my geographical data analysis. I then utilize the most similar systems case study design to present and analyze the data collected from different cases of faith-based peacebuilding programming.

Case Study: Northern Ireland

The conflict in Northern Ireland, also referred to as the Troubles, was a violent sectarian conflict lasting from around 1968 to 1998. The conflict was between the Protestant Unionists, or Loyalists, who wanted Northern Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom and Catholic Nationalists, or Republicans, who wanted Northern Ireland to be a part of the Republic of Ireland (McKittrick and McVea 2002; Wallenfeldt 2020). The violence of the conflict mostly consisted of bombings, sniper attacks, and street fighting and was carried out primarily by Catholic Nationalist paramilitary groups, such as the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), Protestant Unionist paramilitary groups, such as the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Ulster Defense Association (UDA), and the British Army and Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) police force (McKittrick and McVea 2002). Almost 3,400 people were killed within the borders of Northern Ireland, with around 200 more killed in incidents that occurred in other areas of Ireland, the United Kingdom, or Europe; over 30,000 people were also injured in the violence (Wallenfeldt 2020).

Although the conflict was not strictly religious in nature, rather involving issues such as nationality, power, and territorial rivalry alongside religion, the strict religious divide between those on each side of the conflict, and political spectrum in general, meant that it tended to be experienced as a religious conflict by those living through it (Brewer, Higgins,

and Teeney 2011; McKittrick and McVea 2002; Morrow, Birrell, Greer, and O'Keeffe 1991). Whether or not people choose to recognize the conflict as religious in nature or not, however, religion has played an extremely significant role in the peacebuilding process, in large part because of the significant role that religion has always played in the social life of Northern Ireland (Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney 2011; Morrow et al. 1991). Churches in Northern Ireland tend to not only be centers of religious life but also community life in general, with religious organizations representing the oldest and largest sector within Northern Ireland's civil society (Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney 2011; Morrow et al. 1991).

The conflict has origins that stretch back to England's first invasion of Ireland in the 12th century, after which England retained control of Irish affairs and sought to colonize the island. The most successful colonizing efforts occurred in the 17th century in Ulster, a province in the north of Ireland (Gallagher and Worrall 1982; McKittrick and McVea 2002; Wallenfeldt 2020). Although the Irish population was mostly Catholic, the new settlers from England and Scotland were mostly Protestant, and over time, the new settlers began to outnumber the native Irish population while rarely assimilating (Gallagher and Worrall 1982; McKittrick and McVea 2002). Thus, while Ireland as a whole was majority Catholic with a Protestant minority, Ulster was majority Protestant with a Catholic minority.

After the Irish War of Independence in 1919-1921, in which the Home Rule movement in the south of Ireland sought self-government from the United Kingdom, the British Parliament divided Ireland into two self-governing areas through the Government of Ireland Act (McKittrick and McVea 2002; Wallenfeldt 2020). This created Northern Ireland, which would have its own parliament while also retaining representation in British Parliament, and the Irish Free State, which was given its own Home Rule Parliament and

would later become an independent republic in 1937 (McKittrick and McVea 2002). Although this created a national and political divide between the two halves of the island, all churches, both Protestant and Catholic, have remained organized on an all-Ireland basis (Gallagher and Worrall 1982). Clergy members who are appointed are done so to positions on both sides of the border irrespective of their own origins, and church conferences are held often in both Belfast and Dublin (Gallagher and Worrall 1982).

Within Northern Ireland at the time of its formation, around two-thirds of the population was Protestant and the rest Catholic, and these proportions have remained largely unchanged since (McKittrick and McVea 2002). Because Protestants had a clear majority in terms of votes, the new Northern Irish Parliament, referred to as Stormont, was overwhelmingly Unionist (McKittrick and McVea 2002). Through gerrymandering policies and a first-past-the-post system, Unionists would remain in uninterrupted and almost complete power for the next half-century, turning Northern Ireland into essentially a one-party Protestant Unionist state (McKittrick and McVea 2002; Wallenfeldt 2020).

Although almost all Protestants are politically Unionist, the fact that the Protestant population is divided between Presbyterianism, Methodism, and the Church of Ireland, as well as a few smaller denominations, meant that beyond a general shared sense of loyalty to the United Kingdom, Protestant political and religious beliefs are harder to define (Morrow et al. 1991). This lack of political unity has been important for Protestantism and Unionism, especially in terms of finding acceptable solutions in the peace process.

While Methodists and Members of the Church of Ireland have tended to be more politically moderate, Presbyterians have often been much more conservative (Morrow et al. 1991). This is especially true for members of the Free Presbyterian Church, a sect of

Presbyterianism started by Rev. Ian Paisley in the 1950s; Ian Paisley and his church members were known for holding large evangelistic campaigns across Northern Ireland that often morphed into anti-Ireland, anti-Catholic political protests (Gallagher and Worrall 1982). Paisley would later become a powerful Unionist politician himself and, for many, represented the extent to which politics in Northern Ireland were deeply entrenched in religion (Gallagher and Worrall 1982). In contrast, the structure and hierarchy within the Roman Catholic church have meant that Catholics across Northern Ireland have tended to receive relatively unified messaging from the Catholic church and overall share very similar beliefs both religiously and politically (Morrow et al. 1991).

Under the Stormont government, the Catholic population faced severe economic discrimination, with job opportunities limited in favor of providing greater opportunity for the Protestant population; this notably included the civil service and state police force, the RUC, both of which were over 90% Protestant (McKittrick and McVea 2002). Housing discrimination against Catholics was also prevalent and resulted in severely segregated neighborhoods (McKittrick and McVea 2002). Additionally, while almost all Protestant families sent their children to state schools, almost all Catholic families sent their children to their local parochial schools, resulting in generations of Catholics and Protestants who did not interact with one another in their schools, jobs, neighborhoods, or social circles (Gallagher and Worrall 1982; McKittrick and McVea 2002).

Organized meetings between Catholic and Protestant clergy began in the 1960s, before the conflict officially began but well into the period of tension that led up to it (Gallagher and Worrall 1982). The Glenstal and Greenhills Conferences, as they were known, were mostly an opportunity for religious leaders to meet and discuss theological

issues rather than political ones. However, the conference proceedings and attendees were purposefully kept secret from the public to allow for more meaningful discussions about rising tensions between communities; many attendees later credited these meetings as important for establishing working relationships between church leaders across communal lines (Gallagher and Worrall 1982). During this same period, community-based religious peacebuilding efforts also began to emerge. Even though the conflict had not officially started, community leaders began sensing tension across the religious divide, and as the data presented later in this chapter shows, by 1969, five cases of faith-based peacebuilding programming already existed.

Inspired in large part by the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S., in the late 1960s, groups of Catholics started to organize in protest of the lack of Catholic representation in government as well as the Unionist stronghold on power (Gallagher and Worrall 1982; McKittrick and McVea 2002; Wallenfeldt 2020). Additionally, they demanded anti-discrimination legislation, a more equitable system of housing allocation, and the repeal of the Special Powers Act, which had provided the state police force power for arrests without warrants, internment without trial, unlimited search and seizure, and the right to ban meetings and publications (McKittrick and McVea 2002). Those in the movement also demanded the enactment of a one man – one vote policy, as traditionally voting had only been permitted to one person per household; the enactment of such a policy would have provided Catholics significantly more votes than they had with the current policy at the time (Gallagher and Worrall 1982; McKittrick and McVea 2002).

Although the Civil Rights marches began as part of a peaceful movement, they quickly turned violent when, in 1968, the RUC cracked down on a march in

Derry/Londonderry (McKittrick and McVea 2002; Wallenfeldt 2020). The violence at the event was caught on television and sparked widespread anger among the Catholic population (Gallagher and Worrall 1982). With Protestant fears that any concession to Catholic demands would eventually lead to the reunification of Northern Ireland with the Republic in the south, where they would then be the minority group, Unionist politicians in Stormont initially refused to meet most of the demands of the Civil Rights marchers. However, by 1969, unrest on the streets had become so severe that Stormont eventually conceded to most of the demands, including the one man – one vote policy, which led to the election of a few Nationalist politicians, but in the process also splintered the Unionist party between those willing to concede some of their power and those who were not (McKittrick and McVea 2002).

The concessions were too little too late for many Catholics, however, and violence only escalated throughout the beginning of the next decade. This resulted in the British Parliament sending troops into Northern Ireland to restore order (Gallagher and Worrall 1982; McKittrick and McVea 2002). In the first few years of the conflict, Catholics bore the brunt of violence – a majority of those killed early on were Catholic and around 5% of Belfast's Catholic population was permanently displaced – which in large part was due to the fact that Protestants had both the RUC and British Troops on their side (McKittrick and McVea 2002). This led to the rebirth of the IRA as a Nationalist paramilitary force.

First formed in the early 20th century to fight for Irish independence, the IRA had fallen apart after the end of the War of Independence but was brought back by Catholics who felt the need for a group of their own to fight back against the RUC and British Army (McKittrick and McVea 2002; Wallenfeldt 2020). In response to the violence by the IRA,

and later the INLA, Unionist paramilitary groups such as the UVF and UDA also formed (Wallenfeldt 2020). Internments without trial, especially for Nationalist paramilitaries, was increased drastically in these same years, eventually escalating to the point that the few Nationalist members of Stormont withdrew from the assembly until internment was ended (McKittrick and McVea 2002). This further increased IRA recruitment, as many Catholics saw the Stormont system as a dead end for political and societal change (McKittrick and McVea 2002).

1972 marked the most violent year of the conflict, with over 10,000 shootings and around 2,000 bombings, ultimately leaving 484 people dead (McKittrick and McVea 2002; Wallenfeldt 2020). Rioting, shootings, and bombings became almost daily events in the urban areas of Belfast and Derry/Londonderry, leading British soldiers to separate communities through physical barriers called "peace walls" or "peace lines", most of which still remain (Wallenfeldt 2020). With violence spiking and membership to paramilitary organizations continuing to increase, London again decided to intervene and on March 28th of that year shut down Stormont and reinstituted direct rule over Northern Ireland, which would remain in place for the next 25 years (Gallagher and Worrall 1982; McKittrick and McVea 2002; Wallenfeldt 2020).

Levels of violence began to fall in 1976. One reason for this is that British security forces began to crack down much more severly on the IRA at the street level, which led many members of Unionist paramilitary organizations to drop out, as they felt that their security services were no longer needed (McKittrick and McVea 2002). The IRA also switched tactics from direct engagement with British troops and Unionist paramilitaries at the street level to a strategy of sustained terrorism through assassinations and bombings,

including in places outside the borders of Northern Ireland (Wallenfeldt 2020). Simultaneously the practice of internment without trial was officially ended, which had been a large concern of the IRA as well as the general Catholic population (McKittrick and McVea 2002). However, with the end of internment, those who were imprisoned for having affiliations with paramilitary organizations were no longer granted a "special category" status that gave them more freedoms within prisons (Gallagher and Worrall 1982; McKittrick and McVea 2002).

In protest of this loss, Nationalist prisoners organized a series of hunger strikes in 1980 and 1981 (McKittrick and McVea 2002). These strikes received widespread publicity and reinvigorated support for the IRA for many everyday Catholics following the strike. In particular, the strike galvanized widespread support for the IRA's political wing, the party Sinn Fein (McKittrick and McVea 2002). In 1982, Sinn Fein received 12% of the total Northern Irish vote and became the fourth-largest party (McKittrick and McVea 2002). Importantly, the rise of Sinn Fein provided those who supported strong Republican ideals but not the violent tactics of the IRA to have a voice in politics (Wallenfeldt 2020).

The 1970s were also an extremely important time for the development of faith-based peacebuilding efforts in Northern Ireland. Throughout the decade, leaders of all four of the main churches in Northern Ireland made many statements condemning the violence and calling on their church members for peace while also becoming more involved in political talks in Northern Ireland (Gallagher and Worrall 1982). In 1973, the Ballymascanlon conference was held to provide Catholic and Protestant leaders the opportunity to further build their cross-community relationships and to brainstorm ways to help end the current violence, however discussions of the future political situation of Northern Ireland were

notably absent from the conference discussions (Gallagher and Worrall 1982). During this same period, many community-level peacebuilding programs were being formed as well, including youth programs, programs that operated as respite sites away from the conflict, and neighborhood or inter-church cross-community programs (Gallagher and Worrall 1982).

In 1979, Pope John Paul II planned to visit Northern Ireland while on a visit to the Republic of Ireland, but recent, large-scale attacks by the IRA combined with protests by Protestants led to the visit being called off due to security concerns (Gallagher and Worrall 1982). In lieu of a visit, the Pope spoke to a crowd of over 300,000 people in a town just south of the Northern Irish border where he called directly for those on both sides of the conflict to lay down their arms and for politicians to work towards reconciliation and a peaceful end to the conflict (Gallagher and Worrall 1982).

Efforts towards peace continued in the late 1980s, and as the data presented later in this chapter shows, by 1980 there were 19 cases of faith-based peacebuilding programming. In 1985, the British and Irish governments formed the Anglo-Irish Agreement, which stated that the status of Northern Ireland could not be changed towards further alignment with either government without the consent of the majority of its population (McKittrick and McVea 2002). Talks between members of all governments and paramilitary organizations also were carried out in a variety of forms and would continue until the end of the conflict (McKittrick and McVea 2002). In 1993, the Anglo-Irish Agreement was expanded upon in the form of the Downing Street Declaration. This kept the earlier statement on consent, but added an explicit acknowledgement that, if the people of Northern Ireland chose to reunite with the Republic of Ireland, and the people of the Republic of Ireland agreed, the British government would not stand in their way (McKittrick and McVea 2002). This was seen as a significant

step for many Nationalists, yet many Unionists remained split on how much they were willing to agree to.

1994 brought another significant step towards peace when the IRA announced a ceasefire in August (McKittrick and McVea 2002). When the ceasefire held, the INLA followed suit and soon so did the Unionist paramilitary groups. As the ceasefire continued into 1995, The British and Irish governments released a document outlining a shared vision for the future of Northern Ireland. In it, they envisioned Northern Ireland remaining park of the U.K. while increasing the strength and number of cross-border institutions between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland (McKittrick and McVea 2002). This document received the same reception as the Downing Street Declaration but would come to form the basis of future peace talks (McKittrick and McVea 2002). However, in 1996, the ceasefire ended suddenly when the IRA carried out a bombing attack in London (McKittrick and McVea 2002). Subsequently, Sinn Fein was banned from attending any of the official peace talks until the IRA agreed to another ceasefire (McKittrick and McVea 2002).

On April 10, 1998, a peace agreement was formed between the British and Irish governments alongside the three main political parties in Northern Ireland, excluding Sinn Fein (McKittrick and McVea 2002; Wallenfeldt 2020). The Good Friday Agreement, as it came to be known, was considered to bring an official end to the conflict after 30 years of sectarian violence. The Good Friday Agreement established a new Belfast Assembly, whose members would be elected based on proportional representation and would share governing responsibility with the British Parliament in London, along with a joint executive between a First Member, who was assumed to always be a Unionist, and a Deputy First Minister, who was assumed to be Nationalist, thereby ensuring that all agreements had to be made on a

cross-community basis (McKittrick and McVea 2002). The agreement also formed a new British-Irish Agreement and British-Irish Council, along with a new Irish North-South Council, to establish cooperation between Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland, and Northern Ireland (McKittrick and McVea 2002). Notably, the agreement also stipulated that all rights provided to Catholics under the agreement would also be afforded to Protestants in a future united Ireland (McKittrick and McVea 2002).

On May 22nd, referendums were held in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to approve the agreement. The Republic of Ireland supported the agreement by 94% of the vote and Northern Ireland with 71% (Wallenfeldt 2020). Notably, Catholics in Northern Ireland were 96% in favor while Protestants were only 52% (Wallenfeldt 2020). The agreement did not bring an immediate end to violence, as a few large attacks were still carried out later that year, but violence decreased significantly in the years following, and in 2001, the IRA was the last paramilitary group to officially decommission its weapons (McKittrick and McVea 2002).

According to the data presented later in this chapter, in 1990, there were 34 cases of faith-based programming, yet by 1998, that number had risen to 48. Although the agreement and decommissioning marked the end of the political peace process, the social peace process has still continued, with new peacebuilding programs being formed and many old ones remaining in action, as tension and division are still pervasive aspects of Northern Ireland's society today.

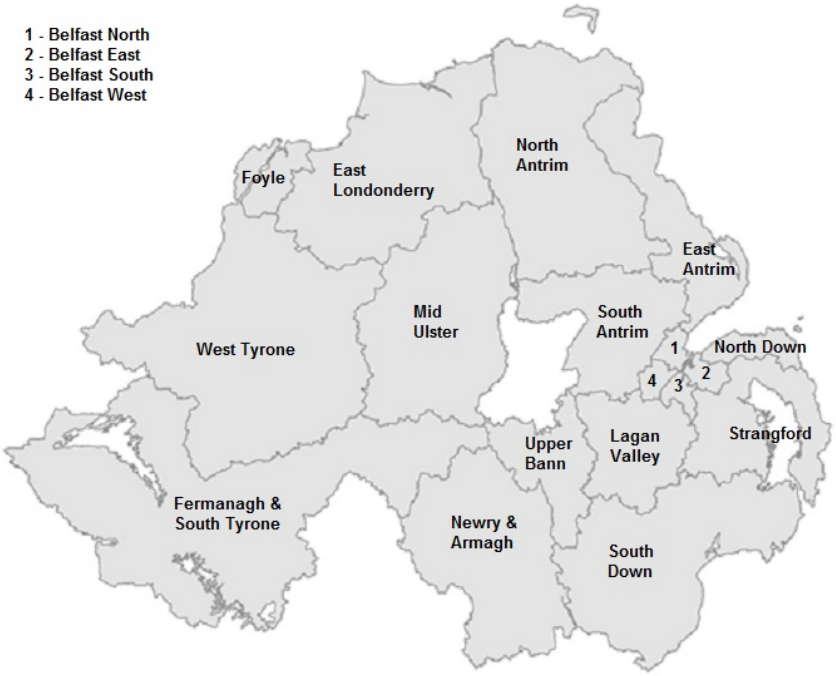
It is clear that religion played an integral part in the conflict in Northern Ireland. Faith-based peacebuilding efforts were being carried out since the start of the conflict and only grew in number as time passed. The next section analyzes geographical data on faith-

based peacebuilding programming and conflict deaths, in order to see what effects these peacebuilding efforts might have had on the violence and what relationships exist between the variables.

Analysis of Geographic Data

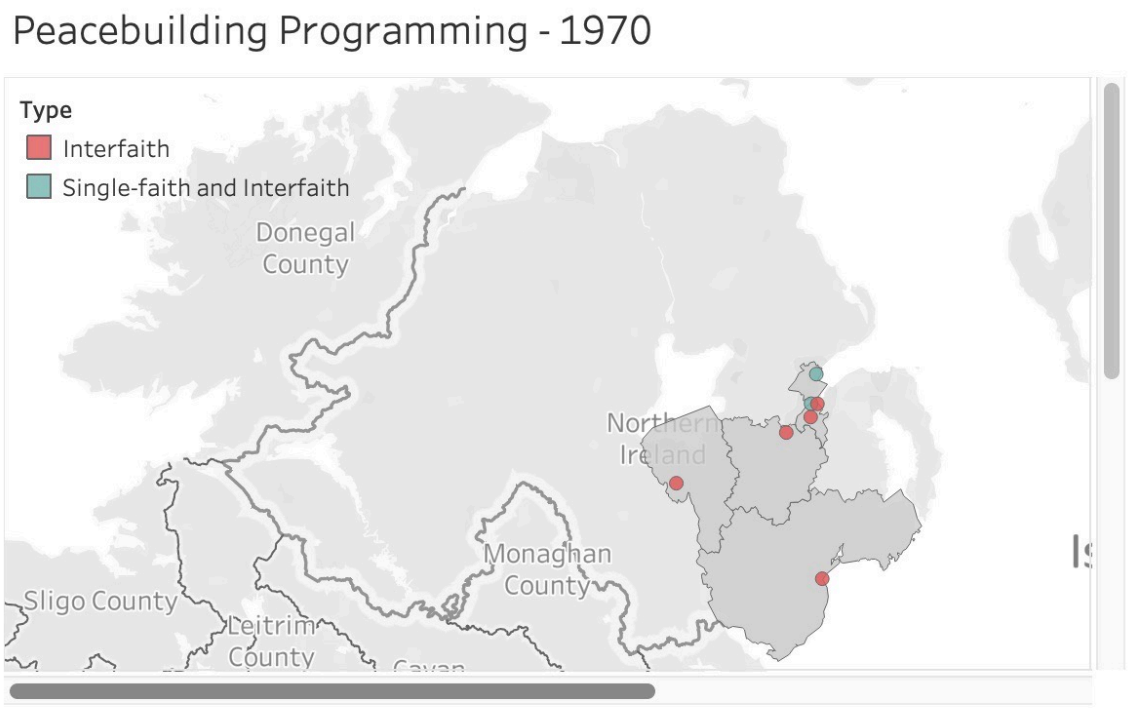
As discussed in the previous chapter, I used GIS software to map geographic and temporal data for peacebuilding programming and conflict deaths in Northern Ireland. The map shows the change in faith-based peacebuilding programming compared to conflict deaths over time from 1969-2005. For each year, the map on top shows the change in peacebuilding organizations across Northern Ireland's 18 parliamentary constituencies, with red dots showing the location of cases that only use interfaith programming, purple dots showing cases that use a combination of both interfaith and single-faith programming, and teal dots showing cases that use only single-faith programming. The bottom map is a choropleth map showing conflict deaths across the 18 parliamentary constituencies; the darker shades of blue represent more conflict deaths, and the number in each constituency shows the exact number of conflict deaths in that constituency for that year. Parliamentary constituencies were used as the common unit for geographical comparison as that was the geographical unit used by McKeown (2009) in the database of conflict deaths. Figure 1 shows a reference map for the location of and names of Northern Ireland's parliamentary constituencies, and Figure 2 provides examples of the GIS data map from the years 1970-1972. See Appendix B for the entire map from 1969-2005.

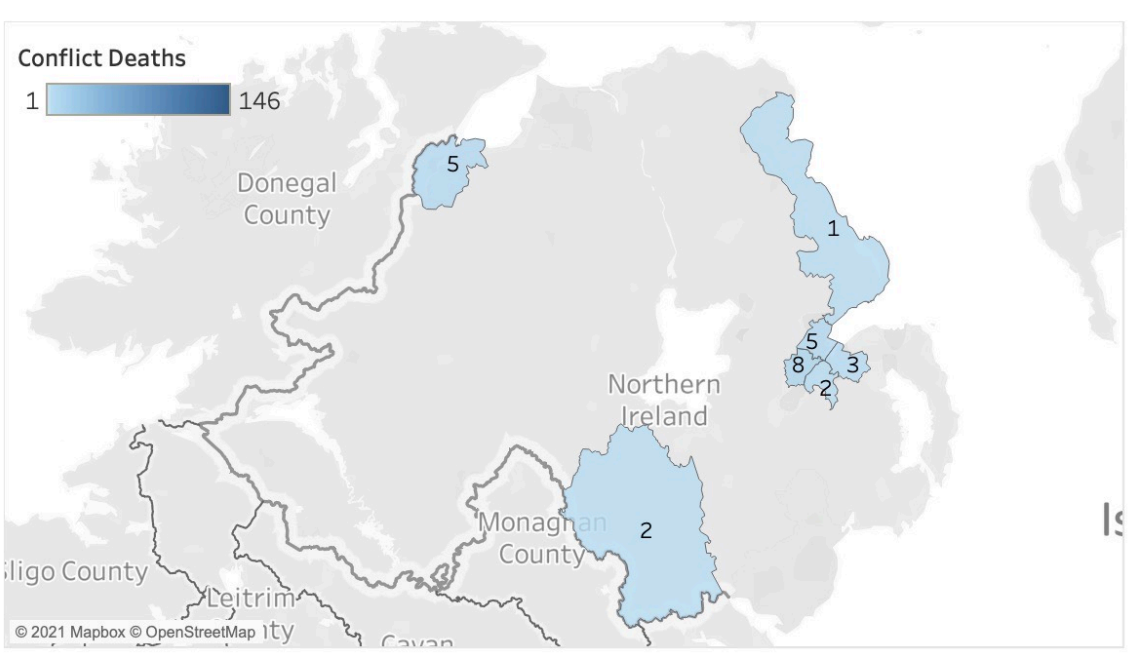
Figure 1: Northern Ireland Parliamentary Constituencies



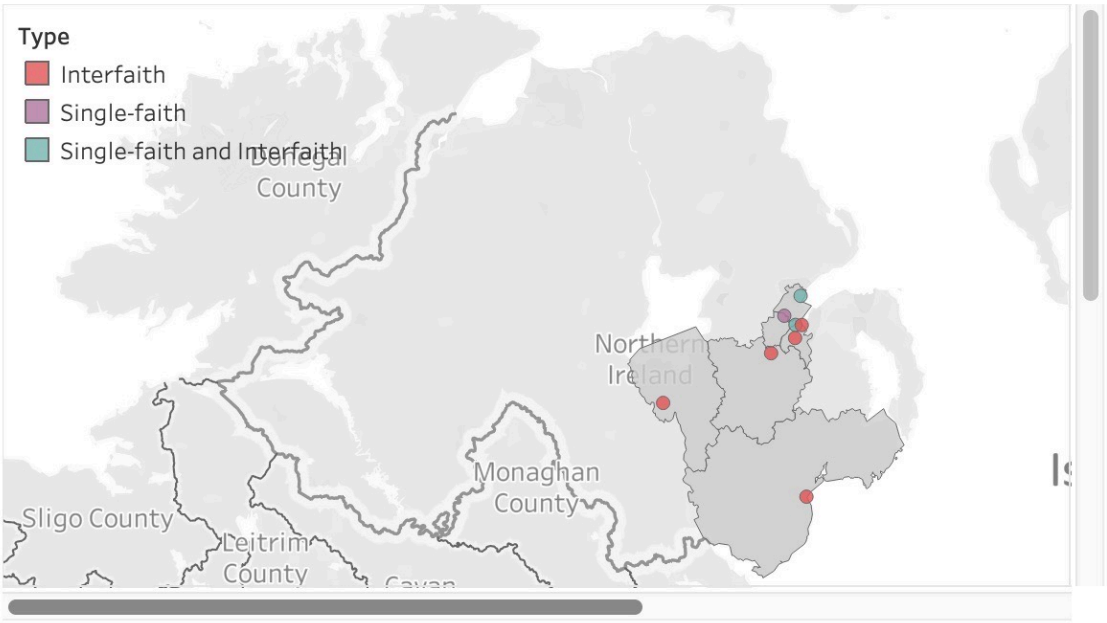
(Queen's University Belfast n.d.)

Figure 2: GIS Data Map Examples

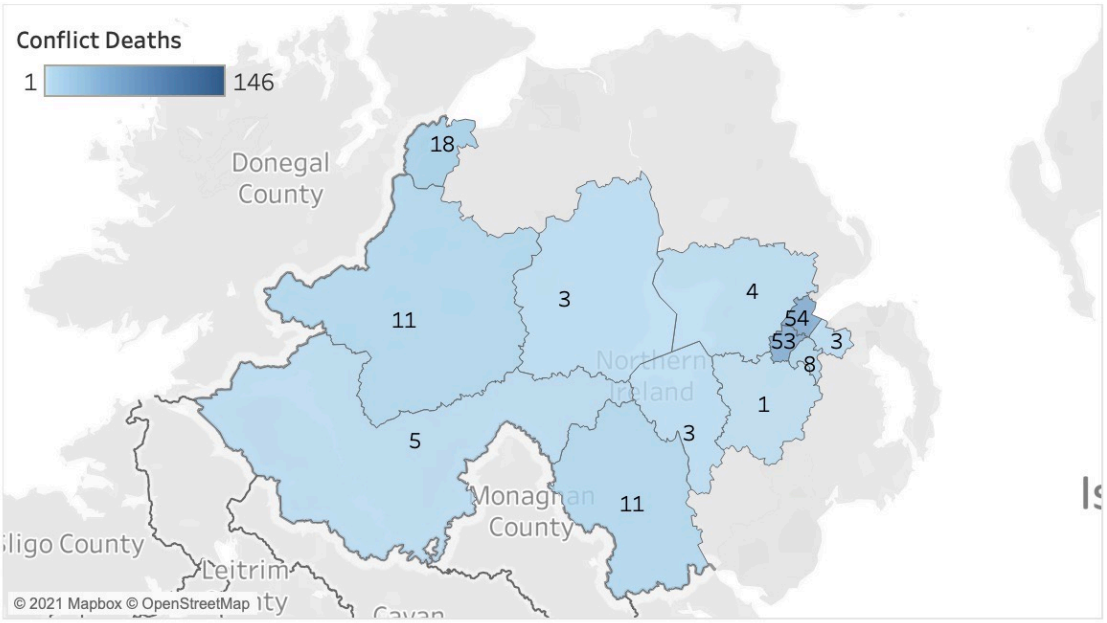




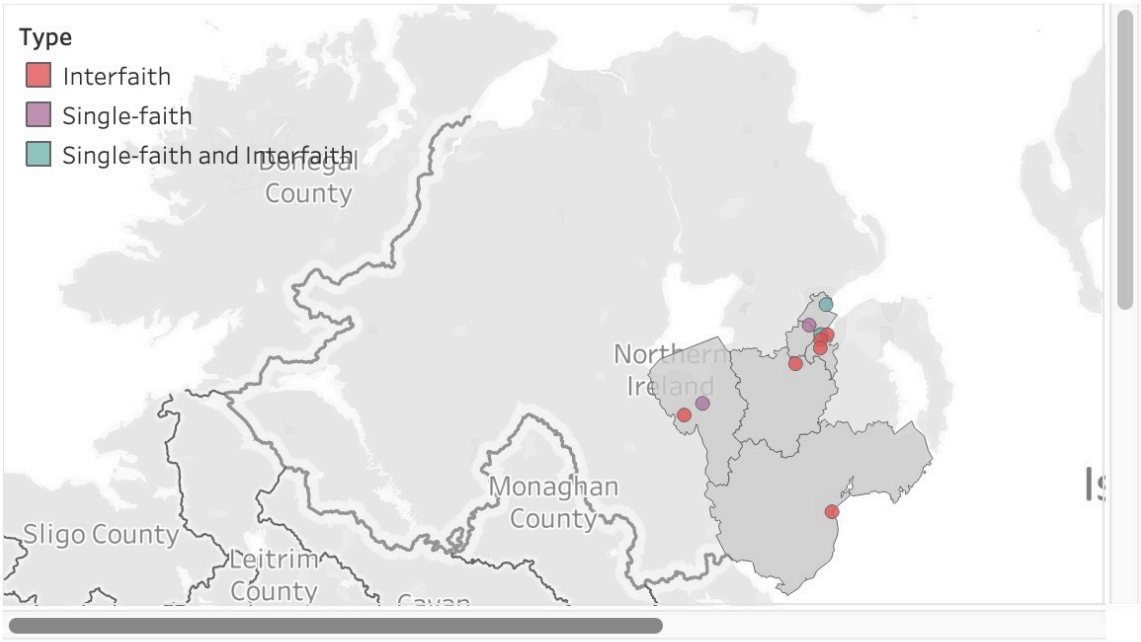
Peacebuilding Programming - 1971



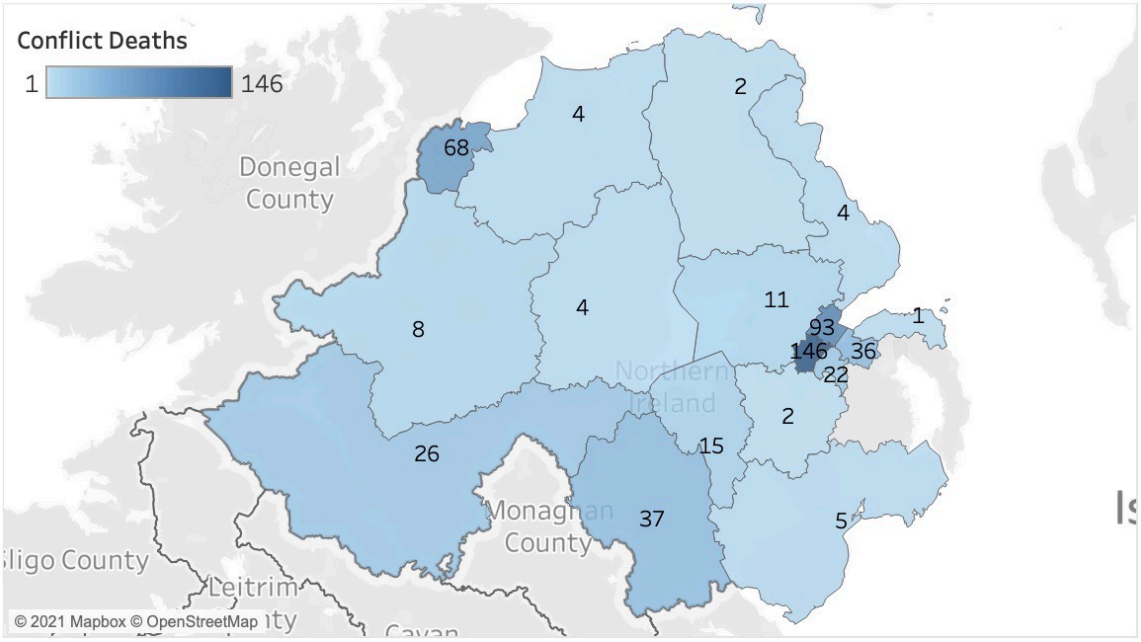
Conflict Deaths - 1971



Peacebuilding Programming - 1972



Conflict Deaths - 1972



After a dramatic rise in the first four years, from 16 deaths in 1969 to 484 in 1972 (the highest count per year recorded throughout the conflict) the number of conflict deaths per year slowly trend downward over time, reaching a low in 2004 with zero recorded

conflict deaths. After the peak in 1972, conflict deaths per year from 1973 to 1976 remained between 232 and 279. Deaths decreased from 1977 and 1981 to range between 75 and 111 annually and decreased again from 1982 to 1994 to fall between 56 and 99 per year. From 1995 to 2005, yearly conflict deaths decreased even more to remain between 0 and 19 annually, with 1998, the year of the Good Friday Agreement, as an outlier for that decade with 54 deaths. In total, 3,383 conflict deaths were recorded within the borders of Northern Ireland.

Table 1: Conflict Deaths per Year

Year	Total Number of Conflict Deaths	Year	Total Number of Conflict Deaths
1969	16	**1988**	95
1970	26	**1989**	64
1971	174	**1990**	77
1972	484	**1991**	90
1973	252	**1992**	85
1974	232	**1993**	83
1975	279	**1994**	63
1976	265	**1995**	8
1977	111	**1996**	15
1978	86	**1997**	19
1979	108	**1998**	54
1980	75	**1999**	8
1981	111	**2000**	19
1982	99	**2001**	14
1983	74	**2002**	10
1984	64	**2003**	13
1985	56	**2004**	0
1986	59	**2005**	3
1987	92	**Average**	91

Conflict deaths are also highest in the most populous parliamentary constituencies, including the constituencies that contain Belfast as well as the constituency of Foyle, which contains Derry/Londonderry, the second largest city in Northern Ireland. Conflict deaths are

also higher in the constituencies that border the Republic of Ireland, including Newry & Armagh and Fermanagh & South Tyrone.

Table 2: Conflict Deaths per Parliamentary Constituency

Parliamentary Constituency	Total Number of Conflict Deaths
West Belfast	663
North Belfast	629
Newry & Armagh	432
Foyle	253
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	229
South Belfast	192
Upper Bann	152
East Belfast	143
West Tyrone	139
Mid Ulster	105
South Down	94
East Londonderry	83
Lagan Valley	82
South Antrim	70
North Antrim	41
East Antrim	40
Strangford	25
North Down	11

As the number of conflict deaths decrease over time, the map shows that the number of cases of faith-based peacebuilding programming increase over time. While there were only 5 cases of peacebuilding programming in 1969, throughout the time period 62 distinct programs were operating, with 58 still in operation by 2005 (Table 3 shows all the cases of faith-based peacebuilding programming included in the map). The majority of the programs are concentrated in the Belfast area, with a slow spread to other parliamentary constituencies over time, though Mid Ulster, South Antrim, and Strangford never saw the development of any peacebuilding programming.

Table 3: Faith-based Peacebuilding Organizations

Programming Name	Location	Year	Type
174 Trust	Duncairn Complex, Duncairn Avenue, Belfast, BT14 6BP	1983	Interfaith
Armagh Cathedral Partnership	The Library, 43 Abbey Street, Armagh, BT61 7DY	1999	Single-faith
Ballycastle Church Action	60 Ann Street, Ballycastle, BT54 64D	2005	Interfaith
Ballymena Inter-Church Group	St. Patrick's Rectory, 102 Galgorm Road, Ballymena, Co Antrim, BT42 1AE	1991	interfaith
Belfast Cathedral's Partnership	Belfast Cathedral, Donegall St, Belfast, BT1 2HB	1998	Interfaith
Belfast Central Mission	5 Glengall St, Belfast BT12 5AD	pre-1969	Single-faith and Interfaith
Belfast Christian Family	North Belfast	1979-1987	Interfaith
Belfast Maranatha Community	116 Hazelwood Avenue, Cunmurry, BT17 0SZ	1984	Single-faith and Interfaith
Castlewellan Together	5 Cedar Heights, Bryansford, Newcastle, Co Down, BT33 0PJ	1993	interfaith
Christians Together in Newry	33 Dominic St, Newry BT35 8BN	1996	Interfaith
Churches Together in Lisburn	111 Queensway, Lamberg, Lisburn, Co Antrim, BT27 4QS	1970	Interfaith
City of Belfast YMCA	56—58 Knightsbridge Park, Stranmillis, Belfast, BT9 5EH	pre-1969	Interfaith
Clonard Monastery-Fitzoy Presbyterian Fellowship Group	77 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1LN	1981	Interfaith
Clonard Reconciliation Project	Clonard Monastery, Clonard Gardens, Belfast, Co Antrim, BT13 2RL	1976	Interfaith
Coleraine Borough Churches' Forum	C/O The Good Relations Officer, Coleraine Borough Council, Portstewart Road, Coleraine	1999	Interfaith
Columba Community	11 Queen Street, Derry, Co. Derry, BT48 7EG	1981	Single-faith and Interfaith
Columbanus Community of Reconciliation	683 Antrim Road, Belfast BT15 4EG	1983	Interfaith
Cornerstone Community	445 Springfield Road, Belfast, Co Antrim, BT12 7DL	1982	Interfaith
Currach Community	373 Springfield Road, Belfast, BT12 7DG	1992	Interfaith
Diocese of Down and Dromore Diocesan Bridge Building Programme	61–67 Donegall Street, Belfast BT1 2HQ	1997	Interfaith
Drumcree Faith and Justice Group	Drumcree	1986-1994	Single-faith and Interfaith
East Belfast Mission	239 Newtownards Road, Belfast BT4 1AF	1985	Single-faith and Interfaith
Forthspring Inter-Community Group	373-375 Springfield Road, Belfast, Co Antrim, BT12 7DG	1997	Interfaith
Holy Cross Benedictine Monastery in Rostrevor	119 Kilbroney Rd, Rostrevor, County Down BT34 3BN	1983-1987	Single-faith and Interfaith
Irish School of Ecumenics "Bridging the Difference" in Enniskillen	48 Elmwood Avenue, Belfast BT9 6AZ	1996	Interfaith
Lamb of God Community Northern Belfast	12 Cliftonville Rd, Belfast, Co. Antrim, BT14 6JX	1977	Interfaith
Lurgan Community Bridges Project Youth Programme	Lurgan	2002	Interfaith
New Life City Church Belfast	143 Northumberland St, Belfast BT13 2JF	1993	Interfaith
Newcastle Inter-Church Community Projects Association	19 Dundrum Road, Newcastle, Co Down, BT33 0BG	1987	Interfaith
Newtownabbey Methodist Mission	35a Rathcoole Drive, Newtownabbey BT37 9AQ	pre-1969	Single-faith and Interfaith
North Belfast Interface Network	123 Cliftonville Road BELFAST BT146JR	2002	Single-faith and Interfaith
Omagh Churches Forum	Community House, 2 Drumragh Avenue, Omagh, BT78 1DP	1998	Interfaith
PresenCE Cross Community Group Portaferry	Ferry Street. Portaferry. Co. Down. BT22 1PB	2005	Interfaith
Rathcoole Churches' Community Group	The Dunanney Centre, Rathmullan Drive, Newtownabbey, Co Antrim, BT37 9DQ	1983	Interfaith
Sanctus Boscus Reconciliation Group	39 Silverstream Crescent, Bangor, Co Down, BT20 3NE	2002	Interfaith
St Andrew Glencairn	137 Forthriver Road, Belfast, BT13 3SG	1971	Single-faith
St Brigid's/Fisherwick/St Thomas' and Lisburn Road Methodist Covenant	42 Derryvolgie Avenue, Belfast, BT9 6FP	1980	Interfaith
St Saviour's Church of Ireland, Craigavon	Parish of St. Saviour, Drumgor West Road, Craigavon, BT65 4AH	1972	Single-faith
St. Colmcille's/Gilnahirk Group	The Parish of St. Colmcille's, 191a Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, Co Down, BT4 3JB	1995	Interfaith
St. Matthew's/St. Oliver Plunkett Group	27-B Glenveagh Dr, Belfast BT11 9HX	1998	Interfaith
The Churches Trust	121 Spencer Road, Derry/Londonderry, BT47 6AE	1993	Interfaith
The Churches Trust in Derry/Londonderry	65 Kinsale Park, Londonderry, Co Londonderry, BT47 6NW	1985	Interfaith
The Junction NI	10-14 Bishop St, Londonderry BT48 6PW	2000	Interfaith
The Ulster Project Banbridge	Banbridge	1976	Interfaith
The Ulster Project Belfast	North Belfast	1987	Interfaith
The Ulster Project Castlederg	Castlederg	1991	Interfaith
The Ulster Project Coleraine	Coleraine	1976	Interfaith
The Ulster Project Derry/Londonderry	Derry/Londonderry	1985	Interfaith
The Ulster Project Enniskillen	Enniskillen	1989	Interfaith
The Ulster Project Omagh	Omagh	1979	Interfaith
The Ulster Project Portadown	Portadown	1976	Interfaith
West Belfast and Queens University Charismatic Prayer Meetings	University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	1972-1987	Interfaith
Women Together for Peace	2 Rivers Edge, 13-15 Ravenhill Road, Belfast, BT6 8DN	1970	Interfaith
YMCA Greenhill	Donard Park, Newcastle, BT33 0GR	pre-1969	Interfaith
YMCA Larne	34a Pound Street, Larne, BT40 1SD	1982	Interfaith
YMCA Lisburn	28 Market Square, Lisburn, BT28 1AG	1989	Interfaith
YMCA Lurgan	4 Carnegie Street, Lurgan, Co. Armagh, BT66 6AS	1986	Interfaith
YMCA North Down	YMCA North Down, 10-12 High Street, BT20 5AY	1979	Interfaith
YMCA Portadown	80 Jervis St, Portadown, Craigavon BT62 3HD	pre-1969	Interfaith
Youth Initiatives East Belfast	Parkgate Drive, BT4 1EW Belfast	2000	Single-faith and Interfaith
Youth Initiatives Lisburn	Youth Initiatives Lisburn, Seymore Street, Lisburn, BT27 4XG	2003	Single-faith and Interfaith
Youth Initiatives West Belfast	50 Colin Road, Belfast, BT17 0LG	1991	Single-faith and Interfaith

There are also significantly more cases of interfaith peacebuilding programming than cases that utilize only single-faith programming or both types of programming, yet still more programming utilizing both forms than single-faith alone. In total, there were 48 cases of interfaith peacebuilding programming, 11 cases of programming using both forms, and 3 cases of single-faith programming, with interfaith programming as the most popular form in every single year. Although I originally planned to look mainly at only interfaith and single-

faith programming, when it became clear that many cases involved the use of both types, I made a separate "interfaith and single-faith" category in the datasets and map so that I could also look at the effects of this type of dual-form programming.

From analyzing the maps, several initial conclusions can be drawn. First, there is an inverse correlation between the number of conflict deaths and the number of cases of peacebuilding programming. Secondly, interfaith programming is far and above the most common form of faith-based peacebuilding programming in Northern Ireland. Whether or not interfaith programming is resulting in decreasing numbers of conflict deaths, people and organizations must at least believe that it is effective, and specifically more effective than either of the other two forms of programming, because the number of cases of programming rises through the conflict. Cases of interfaith programming rise from 3 cases in 1969 to 47 in 2005, compared to an increase from 2 to 8 for programming using both interfaith and single-faith forms and an increase of 0 to 3 for single-faith programming.

In order to see whether the correlation between the number of conflict deaths and the number of cases of different forms of faith-based peacebuilding programming was statistically significant, I ran a fixed effects regression. This regression essentially created a panel study, which allowed me to look at variables across and within panel units that themselves do not vary over time. In this case, I employed the 18 parliamentary constituencies as the panel unites. This means that the model is controlling for differences across the constituencies when looking at the effects of the independent variable (form of programming) on the dependent variable (number of conflict deaths). This is useful because the parliamentary constituencies do have differences that might affect outcomes; for instance, the four constituencies that encompass Belfast are more densely populated, more urban, and

as the seat of government, likely more political than any of the other constituencies, which might result in differences in the independent and dependent variables compared to other constituencies.

Table 4:
Effects of the Number of Various Forms of Faith-based Peacebuilding Programming on the Number of Conflict Deaths in Northern Ireland's Parliamentary Constituencies

Variables	Fixed Effects (Standard Errors)
# of Interfaith	-2.978 (0.414)**
# of Both	-0.188 (1.074)
# of Single-faith	7.575 (2.150)**
Year	-0.137 (0.041)**
Constant	281.254 (80.790)**
Total # of Observations	666
# of Groups (Observations per Group)	18 (37)
R^2	0.246
Wald χ^2	170.210

*Significant at $p < .05$, **Significant at $p < .01$

This model shows that as the number of cases of interfaith peacebuilding programming increases, the number of conflict deaths decrease at a statistically significant level. In contrast, the presence of only single-faith programming is associated with a greater number of conflict deaths at a statistically significant level. Meanwhile, although the number of cases of programming that use both interfaith and single-faith approaches appear to be associated with fewer conflict deaths, the correlation is not statistically significant. Notably, it would not be significant even at the $p < .05$ level. I included the year as a control variable because, as the data and maps showed, deaths decreased over time, so unsurprisingly, the value is negative and statistically significant. Importantly, the R^2 value shows that this model can account for almost 25% of the change in the dependent variable, or number of deaths.

These results can be associated with two different possible explanations. The first is that my hypothesis was correct and that an increasing number of cases of interfaith programming led to a decrease in levels of violence, seen through conflict deaths.

Alternatively, these results could show the inverse of my hypothesis: as rates of violence and conflict deaths fall, programs see a window of opportunity to implement interfaith programming, as the risks and barriers to implementing such program would likely be lower during periods of less violence. This led me to form an alternate, second hypothesis that as levels of violence fall, the number of cases of interfaith peacebuilding rise due to lowered risks. The rest of this chapter will explore both of these hypotheses in more detail by analyzing different cases of peacebuilding programming through the use of interviews alongside other primary and secondary sources.

Programming with Both Single-faith and Interfaith Approaches

The Maranatha Community

The Maranatha Community is a Christian prayer organization that focuses on issues of peace and reconciliation and, over the course of its work, has utilized both single-faith and interfaith approaches to peacebuilding. According to materials provided by the Maranatha Community, the Maranatha Community is a "praying Community throughout the United Kingdom and beyond… bound together by the love of God," (The Maranatha Community n.d.). Based originally in Great Britain, the community felt a calling in the 1980s to work towards peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland, and today the Community has around 10,000 active members, including both Catholics and Protestants (Select Committee on Northern Ireland Affairs 2001). The Community is strictly non-political and instead focuses on listening and mutual prayer in order to develop trust and healing between communities (Select Committee on Northern Ireland Affairs 2001; The Maranatha Community n.d.).

I interviewed the Community Leader of the Maranatha Community who described the work of the Community in Northern Ireland as follows:

> We were invited to go to Northern Ireland in the early 80s and. At that time, there was a lot of violence, a lot of trouble, and we were invited because we were, and still are, a community composed of members of a wide variety of different churches, so we don't belong to any particular tradition. Our founders were Catholic and Methodist, so we have a truly cross denominational foundation, and our community is… committed to praying and working for unity, renewal and healing. We were founded in 1981 and we started going to Northern Ireland in around 1984 (Anonymous A 2020).

She also explained that the basis of the Community's work has always been at the community level.

> We're very much operating at grassroots, so we would go and visit people who had been the subject of attacks or whose family members had been killed or we also used to. We would go and visit church leaders who were often feeling very afraid because of the strength of feeling in their local community. So, the places that we went were usually the trouble spots (Anonymous A 2020).

Unlike other forms of peacebuilding programming, which might use structured dialogue or shared community activities to build connections and understanding between people, a majority of the Maranatha Community's work is based around prayer, and in particular, shared prayer.

> When we first started going, we didn't go because we had any solutions or anything like that, as I said, we went on the basis of being alongside people from all traditions of the church who were experiencing the real effect of the

> Troubles, as they were called, but we also learned a lot. We would describe ourselves as a listening community, so our posture was one of listening to people and also because we are a Christian community, we would also be listening to what God wanted to tell us. We're very much a prayer-based community, so a lot of what we would do would be to connect with prayer groups from different traditions to support them, encourage them (Anonymous A 2020).

Although the Community Leader described the mission and basis of the Maranatha Community as inter-faith, she also described how, in the earlier years of the conflict before the IRA ceasefire, the Community actually focused on single-faith work due to the danger that accompanied interfaith work at the time.

> Pre ceasefire, it was actually too dangerous for people from different sides of the divide. It would be dangerous for them to meet together. If they did, then they got threats. But what they could do… we set up link so that they knew that they were praying for each other. And in all of that, we were encouraging people to believe that actually if Christians united, then there could be a way to peace (Anonymous A 2020).

Interfaith work was always the goal of the Maranatha Community, however, and the Community believed that interfaith programming was the most effective form of peacebuilding. The Community sees interfaith methods as effective by allowing people to build connections with others and recognize them as fellow human beings, and in the case of the Maranatha Community's work, as fellow Christians as well.

> One of the key parts of our work was to help people to recognize that actually they shared the same faith because the core beliefs were exactly the same. So the creed, for example, in the Catholic Church is exactly the same as the creed in the Anglican Church, but they didn't know that because in Northern Ireland they are born in a certain area, which is either Catholic or Protestant. They then they go to a Catholic school or a Protestant school. They then go to Catholic Protestant universities that they are kept separate. And most of the people said "I had no idea." So they had no idea about how the other people were. And when we started introducing people, they were really shocked to discover that was the problem. There's no difference or, you know, the differences are not important. So for us, in terms of the single-faith, multifaith, our very essence is that we are inter-denominational. We are a community committed to oneness. And we saw that as the key to the resolution of the conflicts in Northern Ireland (Anonymous A 2020).

When asked about the effects of the Maranatha Community's work, the Community Leader said the following:

> I think the main effect was that the assurance that [people] were not isolated, they were not alone, that they had people who cared about them and were praying for them (Anonymous A 2020).

The power of prayer and the importance of building relationships among people on different sides of the conflict were also ideas that came up multiple times during the interview. From the view of the Maranatha Community, prayer can provide the necessary conditions for

peace. Instead of finding comfort and security within their own in-group, people can find comfort and security in a higher power through prayer.

> If someone was being intimidated or was worried about a family member or these kinds of things, we would follow up and then provide active support in terms of phone calls or that kind of thing, also advice. And again, that would always be prayer based. So, from our perspective, in terms of the lasting effects we saw, I would say one was building of relationships. And for the people who are being intimidated, I mean, the idea of intimidation is entirely control and control always has to induce fear to be effective, so our prayer would be very much in the context of assuring people that God was with them so that fear can be minimized and also that they had a means of contact so that if they needed to talk to someone or if they need a device, then they would have that link with somebody over here who would have been on that team (Anonymous A 2020).

The fact that all Christian faiths are rooted in prayer also provides a means of connection for those from different Christian denominations to connect and relate to one another.

> Other lasting effects would be building of relationships over there. So, what we often used to do would be to link people from different sides – this is from a Christian perspective – we would link people from different prayer groups or even different clergy, church leaders, we would make connections, because it was surprising to us at first that you could have people living within a very short distance, but they didn't know each other because they were separated by

> this divide. So, building relationships and really building up prayer links (Anonymous A 2020).

Overall, the Maranatha Community was not able to provide much evidence in support of my original hypothesis that interfaith programming leads to lower levels of violence within communities. The Community Leader discussed how Maranatha's work facilitated relationship building between people, which is likely associated with reconciliation and thereby lower levels of direct violence, but the Community was not able to provide any direct evidence or examples of lowered direct violence.

However, the Maranatha Community does support my alternate hypothesis that as levels of direct violence decreased over the course of the conflict, windows of opportunities emerged for interfaith programming. The Community Leader directly stated that, at the start of their work, the Maranatha Community felt that the risks to participants would be too severe to conduct interfaith programming at that time. Only after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement did the Community feel that the environment was safe enough to begin conducting interfaith programming. Up until that point, the Maranatha Community focused only on single-faith programming even though the ultimate mission and goal of the Community was always to involve people in interfaith, face-to-face contact with one another.

Youth Initiatives

Youth Initiatives (YI) is a Christian youth organization focused around fostering leadership skills and good relations between young people from divided communities. Founded in 1991 in West Belfast, YI now has opened branches in six different communities in Northern Ireland and utilizes both single-faith and interfaith forms of peacebuilding

programming (Youth Initiatives n.d.). I Interviewed the Good Relations Manager for YI, who provided more information on the activities of the organization.

She began by explaining more about the origins of the organization, which began with a cross-community project called Crosslinks in the highly segregated neighborhoods of West Belfast. This project, which still runs today, is a community youth arts project that brings together Protestant and Catholic youth to tackle difficult topics through the arts (Anonymous B 2020). The youth in the project develop their own theatre, music, and dance performances centered around the experiences of young people in the Troubles which they then present at public showcases (Anonymous B 2020). Issues of sectarianism have always been central to these performances, but as new generations of young people have become involved in the project after the peace process, other issues such as migration and racism have also begun to be included (Anonymous B 2020).

The Good Relations Manager said that the value of the Crosslinks program is that it gives young people a safe place to challenge their views outside of their home environment (Anonymous B 2020). Moreover, she said that using the arts allows young people to have conversations in a unique and safe way, as young people are often more comfortable having difficult conversations when it is tied to something they still view as creative and fun, rather than having to sit down in direct dialogue with people who might have opposing views or different upbringings (Anonymous B 2020). Crosslinks also allows youth to challenge their fears of the unknown, as they are able to discover through the program that young people from different communities still have the same interests and hobbies (Anonymous B 2020).

As the Crosslinks program grew in popularity, YI began offering different programs for each night of the week so that young people would always have a safe place to go after

school (Anonymous B 2020). This was in a direct attempt to prevent young people from becoming involved with different violent street gangs or paramilitary groups (Anonymous B 2020). The Good Relations Manager explained that it was within these afterschool programs that YI also began offering more traditional faith-based peacebuilding programs such as dialogue groups and Bible study groups (Anonymous B 2020).

It is in these groups that YI uses both single-faith and interfaith programming. Single-faith programming is used for the younger groups, with members ages 11 to 14, while interfaith programming is used with the 15 to 18-year-olds (Anonymous B 2020). The Good Relations Manager explained that, although YI believes that interfaith approaches are important for building cross-community bonds between young people, the younger members of these groups are not yet mature enough to engage in serious dialogue with members of a different community (Anonymous B 2020). A large focus within the single-identity groups is having these 11 to 14-year-olds explore their own views and identities in order to give them a chance to challenge their own beliefs before possibly trying to challenge others' (Anonymous B 2020). These younger members also spend time learning how to express themselves and their views in productive rather than defensive ways so that they are better prepared to engage in interfaith discussions in the future (Anonymous B 2020).

Within the older groups, the Good Relations Manager explained that they always spend time allowing the young people to form friendships with one another through playing games or working together on art or community projects before actually engaging in any serious discussion (Anonymous B 2020). Once friendships are formed between the group members, it becomes significantly harder for the young people to disregard their peers as "others" and then ignore or criticize their beliefs completely (Anonymous B 2020). Within

the interfaith groups, staff members also focus on helping the group members develop the confidence and skills needed to engage in productive dialogue with others so that they can continue to challenge attitudes and beliefs even when they go back to their own communities at home (Anonymous B 2020). After a few years of involvement with the interfaith groups, older members are also given the chance to meet with the younger, single-faith groups and present their experiences and what they have learned (Anonymous B 2020).

The Good Relations Manager also mentioned that, although most families are supportive of their children attending the single-identity groups, many parents do bring up safety concerns in relation to their children attending the interfaith groups, especially if it involves their children travelling to a YI center in a different neighborhood (Anonymous B 2020). She went on to explain that YI staff members often engage in home visits to concerned families and that, after discussing the safety and benefits of the program, most all of the families become willing to allow their children to join (Anonymous B 2020).

When I asked about the effects of the program, the Good Relations Manager explained that one of the most significant effects is that involvement with YI allows young people to visit different parts of their own city and meet new people that they otherwise would never have, especially since YI centers are deliberately located in highly segregated areas (Anonymous B 2020). Because many young people stay involved with YI for a significant part of their later school years, staff members are also able to see that many of the young people form long-lasting friendships across community lines (Anonymous B 2020). Staff members also see that many of the people who meet within YI programming also tend to start socializing outside of the project, getting to know one another's friends and wider social circles, which then creates wider networks of friendships between Catholic and

Protestant young people (Anonymous B 2020). She noted that quite a few past participants are also in mixed marriages with people from the opposite religion, which creates generations of change through mixed families (Anonymous B 2020).

For further information on YI's programming and effectiveness, the Good Relations Manager directed me to several video interviews that YI's branch in Scotland recorded with YI Northern Ireland staff members who had also participated in YI programs when they were younger. An Interview with staff member Lynda Whinnery provided further insights into YI's work.

When the interviewer asked Lynda about her experience with YI and why she chose to keep working with the program, she said the following:

> The highlight of all of my time at Youth Initiatives has been the Crosslinks and the other performances written and performed. It came down to the people and it came down to having a space where I discovered friendships that were new and to interesting people who thought differently from me and whose stories were different, yet they were really willing to embrace me and to let me really embrace them and for us to become really part of each other's lives. And it felt something different. It felt like we were doing something that other people aren't doing really and they're really missing out. And so, I think it really kind of captured my heart for the good relations cross community side of things even at that young age of like 15-16 (Youth Initiatives Scotland 2020).

Lynda also spoke about what it was like to meet young people from other communities in Belfast.

> Because the city was so segregated, it wasn't easy to meet people from the other community and because I wasn't driving myself and I couldn't take myself places and at the time when we were younger still – you wouldn't have gone in by yourself at the time. So, it wasn't really until Crosslinks and Youth Initiatives that I met people knowing that they were Catholic I suppose… and recognizing that we've been brought up quite differently here. My faith has always been very important to me, and I became a Christian very young, and I never struggled with my faith, you know it was always something I really held on to. And then meeting some of the guys then from West and just seeing how they're faithful… I had never seen a Catholic mass; I'd never seen a Eucharist being celebrated. On that first day that we did the drama in the city center I actually met my husband, because he was Adam in the play that day, and although we didn't get together for years and years it was the start of a really good friendship… And as we were talking and becoming more friends and engaging in the kind of cross community good relations discussions as part of Crosslinks there were all these little things coming out like "oh no I never knew that" … there were all these things you'd never have thought of until you had the conversation (Youth Initiatives Scotland 2020).

In the interview, Lynda talked about how connecting with others across religious and community lines was one of the most profound parts of the program. She spoke about the first time she seriously engaged in dialogue with her peers from the Catholic community about their experiences in the Troubles and how that experience helped her to build deeper connections with those people.

> [The dialogue] kind of got under the surface and it took us to a different level of friendship because we were actually being vulnerable, and we were sharing a lot. It was a lot of legacy of the past in terms of what they experienced during the Troubles. So that would be one of the kinds of things that kind of launched us into a different kind of friendship (Youth Initiatives Scotland 2020).

YI did not directly have information on the effects of their programming on levels of violence within communities, however, both the Good Relations Manager and Lynda Whinnery discussed the impact that YI's programming had on relationships between Catholic and Protestant young people. YI staff members find that participants in YI programming do form strong bonds across community and religious lines not only with their fellow participants in YI but also with each other's wider community networks and circle of friends. Although the YI staff members did not directly mention levels of violence or reconciliation, the success in relationship building is likely associated with Catholic and Protestant youth humanizing and trusting one another, as well as one another's communities which is then likely to result in lower levels of direct violence within their communities.

In terms of YI's decision to use interfaith versus single-faith programming, YI has always used some interfaith programming from the beginning. The organization began with the Crosslinks program, which brings together Catholic and Protestant youth, but this program focused more on building relationships through shared activities in the arts rather than serious interfaith dialogue. When YI began to implement dialogue-based programming, they decided to also utilize a combination

of both single-faith and interfaith approaches in order to reduces risks faced by participants. YI did not see these risks as externally related, such as to levels of violence in communities, but rather internally related to the participants themselves. Younger participants needed to first learn how to properly engage in meaningful, respectful dialogue within a group of similar peers before engaging across the religious divide.

Conclusions on Programming with Both Single-faith and Interfaith Approaches

Neither the Maranatha Community nor YI were able to provide conclusive evidence that their programming resulted in changes in the levels of direct violence within communities. Both emphasized the effects of their programming on allowing participants to humanize one another and build relationships across religious lines, with YI also emphasizing the wider community effects of their programming. This is likely associated with greater feedings of trust and reconciliation among participants, which likely would lead to lower levels of violence, but neither organization was able to say for sure whether their work had any effect on levels of violence.

On the other hand, both organizations emphasized that interfaith peacebuilding was always the ultimate goal of their programming, but they used single-faith programming to minimize any risks they associated with interfaith programming. For the Maranatha Community, this meant using single-faith peacebuilding up until the Good Friday Agreement led to a safer environment overall in Northern Ireland, while YI was less focused on the external environment in participants' communities and instead on the ability of participants themselves to appropriately engage in interfaith dialogue. This has led YI to use single-faith programming for younger participants as a stepping-stone to interfaith programming later on.

Therefore, although the Maranatha Community supports the hypothesis that as levels of violence fall throughout the conflict, interfaith peacebuilding is seen as a more viable option, YI does not support this hypothesis, as interfaith peacebuilding is not dependent on the stages of the conflict but rather the stages of life of the participants themselves. In both cases, however, single-faith peacebuilding on its own is not seen as enough and is instead only used to prepare participants for future interfaith programming or for when interfaith programming is not seen as an option.

Single-faith Programming

Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland

The Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland (ECONI) was formed in 1985 in opposition of the form of conservative evangelical politics spread by Rev. Ian Paisley through the Free Presbyterian church (Ganiel 2008a; Ganiel 2014). From its founding, ECONI was a single-faith Evangelical Protestant organization. ECONI's work focused on challenging evangelical political beliefs from an evangelical perspective in order to prepare them to engage with Catholics, and even with more liberal Protestants, within a shared society (Ganiel 2014; Power 2011a). The mission of ECONI is to "address our fellow evangelicals in order to encourage a continuing process of relating the Bible to our confused situation," (Power 2011a, 59).

With Paisleyism, Evangelical Protestantism and Unionism became intertwined to the point that many evangelicals associated Unionism with Godliness, which often led to distancing from, or hostility towards, others in order to prevent being associated with or influenced by "Godless" elements or ideas (Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney 2011; Power 2011a). ECONI saw this phenomenon as one that would inevitably make peace and

reconciliation extremely difficult since it often prevented any peaceful relationships from being created between evangelicals and others (Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney 2011; Power 2011a). At the same time, ECONI believes that it is important for evangelicals to engage in self-reflection and repentance for their own roles in any violence before attempting to engage across community lines (Ganiel 2014; Power 2011a).

ECONI felt that many evangelicals had to first be convinced that peace was even valuable before they could begin any true peace and reconciliation work within the community (Power 2011a). Because Protestants had come from a point of societal and political privilege within Northern Ireland, ECONI recognized that many Protestants were unwilling to make any concessions to the Catholic community, which made peace deals difficult to create (Power 2011a). As part of their programming, ECONI focused on exploring different forms of Christianity to help evangelicals see possibilities for common ground with other communities (Power 2011a). The organization also worked to teach participants about the benefits of an open, peaceful society for all and to prepare evangelicals with the proper tools so that they would be able to engage in dialogue about peace and reconciliation (Ganiel 2014; Power 2011a).

Because ECONI was founded and run by evangelicals, the organization was able to utilize evangelical symbols, terminology, and arguments to promote peace and inclusion rather than hostility and separation (Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney 2011). The organization taught what they considered to be a more Biblical perspective on peace and reconciliation, including the idea that exclusion, apathy, and/or hostility are not Biblical solutions to interacting with others (Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney 2011; Power 2011a). Through teaching a reexamination of the Bible, it argued that evangelicals needed to be active peacemakers

who were willing to cross societal boundaries, as was demonstrated often in the Bible through the healing work of Jesus Christ (Power 2011a). ECONI especially targeted those people and congregations who were the most conservatively anti-ecumenist, anti-cross community work (Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney 2011). With this focus, ECONI believed that even if they could not convince people of the benefits of ecumenism, they could at least transform a person's views to become anti-violence/pro-peace (Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney 2011).

David Porter, the director of ECONI described ECONI's mission and programming as follows:

> [ECONI] didn't say you can't be a Unionist and an Evangelical Christian. What it did say was that God is neutral on the constitutional future of Northern Ireland, that defending Ulster is not defending the gospel, no more than Uniting Ireland is bringing about the reconciliation of the gospel, loving our enemy, making peace, living peace with all people as far as possible is within us. It was basically in the first instance a call to our own community to live up to that. If that is what Christian discipleship is about then live for God and his glory alone in this community and that means forgiveness, it means love of enemy, it means commitment to being a peace maker, it means commitment to working for justice in society, it means repentance for how we have all screwed up and hated each other (Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney 2011, 140).

ECONI's main programming began with a program called ECONI Sundays, where ECONI distributed materials to evangelical congregations that provided guidelines to sermons and

discussions, with each Sunday focused on a specific theme, such as peace, justice, or reconciliation (Power 2011a). Prayer was also a central part of each ECONI Sunday, as ECONI believed that prayer would allow evangelicals the opportunity to self-reflect and ask for forgiveness in a way in which they felt comfortable (Power 2011a). Additionally, since prayer is an important aspect of all Christian traditions, it would also provide a starting place to discuss the similarities and differences between evangelicals and other Christians (Power 2011a). As congregations worked their way through ECONI Sunday programming, the themes also became more political, covering topics such as policing and weapons decommissioning (Power 2011a). ECONI felt strongly that once members of evangelical congregations began to understand these issues and become comfortable discussion them among themselves, they would be better prepared to discuss them with others in the future (Power 2011a).

In order to reach people outside of the congregations that were directly connected with ECONI, the organization also held a variety of public events, such as political forums, where Unionist politicians would be invited to engage in conversation with ECONI members, as well as members of the audience, on issues ranging from education to paramilitarism (Power 2011a). ECONI also hosted an annual conference, summer school for children and youth, and religious education programs for adults called the Programme for Christian Peacebuilding (Ganiel 2008a) By 1998, more than one-third of all Protestant congregations in Northern Ireland had participated in some form of ECONI programming (Ganiel 2008a).

ECONI's ultimate goal as an organization is essentially to no longer be needed at all because Evangelical Protestants would become willing and able to engage in peace and

reconciliation work with Catholics without ECONI's assistance. As one ECONI staff member said:

> ECONI is on the fringes of the church to pester and stir up the church, that's our task. And the ultimate aim of ECONI is to do itself out of a job… There's a sense in which we really should not exist because the emphasis that we bring, the particular aspect of the gospel that we seek to apply to sectarianism and divided society, should be at the heart of every church's ministry. We want to argue that this is not a kind of fuzzy, ecumenical, left-wing add-on. That the things that we are emphasizing are absolutely central to the things that make for peace (Ganiel 2008b, 487).

ECONI does not provide any information on the effects of their programming on levels of direct violence within communities. Additionally, while the Maranatha Community and YI discussed the effects of their programming on participants' abilities to humanize and build relationships with others, which are likely associated with greater trust and reconciliation, ECONI's focus is mainly on self-reflection and repentance.

ECONI does view its work as a stepping-stone to future interfaith programming but does not believe that evangelicals have reached a point yet where they are willing or able to properly engage in dialogue or meaningful contact across religious lines. As evangelicals engage in more self-reflection, repentance, and education, however, ECONI believes that eventually they will be prepared to engage in interfaith programming. Thus, ECONI does generally support my second hypothesis that interfaith programming increases over time as windows of

opportunity emerge for safer contact between groups. From ECONI's point of view, that window of opportunity has not yet emerged, but they are preparing evangelicals to be ready for interfaith contact when it does.

Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland

Evangelical Alliance (EA) is a large Protestant volunteer organization based out of the U.K. The Northern Ireland branch emerged in the early 1980s from a small Presbyterian volunteer group working towards peace and reconciliation that eventually became affiliated with the wider EA network (Ganiel 2008a; Ganiel 2008b). EA in Northern Ireland combines political lobbying with grassroots community programming to advance an Evangelical Presbyterian agenda separate from the politics and beliefs of the Free Presbyterian Church and Rev. Ian Paisley (Ganiel 2008b).

While Paisleyism is associated with a rejection of power-sharing and compromise by Protestant Unionists, EA works to promote evangelical beliefs that are pro-peace and pro-social justice for all in Northern Ireland (Ganiel 2008b). EA criticized the failure of many evangelical churches to embrace the idea of a Northern Irish society where Catholics and Protestants could coexist peacefully and for failing to adequately dissuade their church member for committing acts of violence (Ganiel 2008b). To promote change within the Evangelical Presbyterian community, EA developed materials that called on evangelicals to closely examine their own beliefs to determine whether or not they actually matched with Jesus' teachings and Biblical ideals of peace, loving one's neighbor, helping those in need, and so on (Ganiel 2008b).

One EA volunteer described the effects of EA's programming on their views towards people of other faiths as well as their personal understanding of Christianity as follows:

> I suppose Evangelical Alliance was one of the first organizations that I would have become involved in as a young minister and that would have been one of the things that opened my eyes to what I now regard as being a much more Biblical perspective of what Christianity is about. EA were involved with another organization called ECONI in the late 80s, early 90s and they were having a fresh look at what it actually means to be a citizen of the kingdom of God. And not to be a Christian whose political views are tempered by a particular understanding of Scripture. EA and ECONI gave me theological depth and also broke down some of the barriers that I would have erected between other Christians in other denominations and gave me an understanding that the body of Christ was broader than what I had anticipated it being (Ganiel 2008b, 487).

To engage with evangelical communities, EA leads community worship activities, such as prayer breakfasts, and religious education seminars, which explore topics such as the shared Christian heritage of Catholics and Protestants or the Biblical underpinnings of evangelical beliefs (Evangelical Alliance n.d.; Ganiel 2008a). EA also leads citizenship education programs that include conversations on the role of religion in politics and encourage people within the member churches to vote (Ganiel 2008a). Additionally, EA leads groups that volunteer to provide social services in disadvantaged communities, and throughout Northern Ireland almost 40 congregations and 70 volunteer groups are connected with EA (Ganiel 2008a).

Part of EA encouraging people to be more involved in their communities and even in politics was to encourage people not to accept the status quo of division in Northern Ireland

and to distance from the prevalent evangelical belief that evangelicals should separate themselves from society in order to maintain their faith (Ganiel 2008a). EA wants its members to see politics as a non-zero-sum game, where evangelicals could still maintain their personal beliefs while working towards a more equal and peaceful society for everyone in Northern Ireland (Evangelical Alliance n.d.; Ganiel 2008a). EA believes that churches had failed to adequately serve their congregations, which had resulted in fear among evangelicals that compromising with the Catholic population would result in losses for the Protestant community; EA strives to provide a new, peaceful vision of what community wellbeing among evangelicals could be (Evangelical Alliance n.d.). EA believes that if a more open and justice-oriented mindset could be developed within the evangelical community, new generations of evangelicals could work together with more liberal Protestants and Catholics to create mutual understanding and ultimately reconciliation and forgiveness (Evangelical Alliance n.d.).

EA did not have information available on the effects of their work on levels of direct violence in communities. EA's work is focused mainly on self-reflection, religious education, and political education within the evangelical community rather than focusing on building trust and reconciliation between religious communities. EA does condemn violence committed by evangelicals, however, and encourages evangelicals to think critically about their own roles in committing acts of violence or turning a blind eye toward such acts. Although encouraging evangelicals to interact and reconcile with other communities is the ultimate goal, EA is still in the process of working with evangelicals to create more a more open-minded, pro-peace mentality within the community before attempting to conduct work across religious lines.

Conclusions on Single-faith Programming

Neither ECONI nor EA were able to provide information on the effectiveness of their programming on reducing levels of violence, nor does either program focus specifically on relationship building, trust, or reconciliation directly; rather, these are goals that both organizations hope to work towards over time. Instead, both ECONI and EA focus heavily on self-reflection and education for members of the evangelical community specifically. Both organizations do also condemn apathy, hostility, exclusion, and violence by members of their communities as part of their work on self-reflection and repentance. Although this work could still have an effect on levels of violence, the effect is not known.

In relation to whether interfaith peacebuilding becomes a more popular form of peacebuilding over time as it becomes safer and more acceptable, both organizations do seem to support this hypothesis. For ECONI and EA, both organizations strive to build the capacity within evangelical communities for interfaith programming, whether eventually facilitated by these organizations themselves or conducted without the support of these organizations. However, neither ECONI nor EA feels that the evangelical community is currently prepared to engage productively with interfaith peacebuilding programming across religious lines as there is not enough understanding within the evangelical community on the benefits of peace, social justice, and/or cross-community work. Both organizations believe that interfaith programming should be the ultimate goal within faith-based peacebuilding but are waiting for the window of opportunity to appear within the evangelical community.

Interfaith Programming

The Ulster Project

The Ulster Project is an interfaith youth peacebuilding program founded in 1975 that takes youth from divided communities to participate in integrated exchange programs in the United States (The Ulster Project n.d.). The mission of the Ulster Project is explicitly religious and peacebuilding-focused, with the mission statement of the program reading: "Transforming Young Christians Into Leaders & Peacemakers" (The Ulster Project n.d.). The Project focuses on involving young people ages 14 to 16 from divided communities who have shown leadership potential (McInerney-Starr 2015). The young people are put into groups, each with an equal number of Catholics and Protestants, and are sent on summer exchange programs to cities across the U.S., where they are each paired with an American student of the same religion, gender, and age (*Faith in Friendship* 2017; McInerney-Starr 2015). After starting with one program in Delaware, the Ulster Project has now expanded to send Northern Irish young people to 19 cities across the U.S. (The Ulster Project n.d.).

While in the U.S., the groups engage in "Time of Discovery" where they sit in dialogue with one another and discuss issues that are important to members of each community, such as sectarianism, violence, racism, and immigration (McInerney-Starr 2015; The Ulster Project n.d.). Participants are encouraged throughout the program to think critically about their own beliefs and prejudices, as well as what it means to overcome prejudice, with the goal to encourage tolerance, trust, forgiveness, and friendship among participants that will persist even after they return to their home communities (Leonard, Yung, and Cairns 2015; McInerney-Starr 2015). Participants also examine tough issues such as what it would mean to be a member of a paramilitary group or what it would mean to engage in violence (McInerney-Starr 2015). Outside of the dialogue activities, the participants also participate in different teambuilding activities, service projects, and social

events together (McInerney-Starr 2015). These more lighthearted events give the participants the opportunity to form friendships with one another, which can also make the dialogue activities more comfortable for them (McInerney-Starr 2015). Additionally, each Sunday the participants attend a different church service in order to explore the similarities and differences between various Christian denominations (*Faith in Friendship* 2017; McInerney-Starr 2015).

The Ulster Project specifically believes that there is value in sending young people from Northern Ireland to the United States because it allows the Northern Irish young people the opportunity to completely leave their communities, escaping both sectarian violence and the opinions of their fellow peers, families, and community members, so that they can explore their own beliefs in a safe and open space (McInerney-Starr 2015). When the project first began, program leaders felt that the situation in Northern Ireland was not safe enough to involve young people in interfaith work within their own communities, so sending young people to the U.S. was a way for the program to still conduct the interfaith work they felt was crucial but in an environment that was safe for young people (Town Square Delaware 2018). In an interview with a Delaware newspaper, Ulster Project leader Amanda Finn talked about how the safety situation has changed over time.

> When [The Ulster Project] first began, the group traveling to Delaware from Portadown, Northern Ireland, had to leave in the middle of the night because the families didn't want their neighbors to know that their children were participating in a cross-community project for fear that they might be targeted by those who didn't agree with the mission of such programs. All of the planning meetings prior to their trip were held at the town hospital as it was

> the only neutral space; a Catholic would never set foot in a Protestant church or in the home of a Protestant and vice versa. Now, our Northern Irish participants return home proudly wearing their [Ulster Project] hoodies (Town Square Delaware 2018).

Additionally, because sectarianism between Catholics and Protestants is not an issue that American youth experience, the program believes that the Northern Irish students can learn from their American counterparts how to peacefully coexist and build friendships across denominational lines (*Faith in Friendship* 2017; McInerney-Starr 2015).

The Ulster Project believes in an interfaith approach, because they recognize that most young people in Northern Ireland do not have the opportunity to interact with others from different communities (McInerney-Starr 2015; The Ulster Project n.d.). This constant division makes it easy for negative stereotypes and attitudes to exist between Catholics and Protestants. For many participants, the Ulster Project is the first time they have even interacted with someone from a different religious community, and for the majority of participants, is the first time that they have formed friendships across community lines (McInerney-Starr 2015; Town Square Delaware 2018; The Ulster Project n.d.). Ulster Project leader Amanda Finn explained how the program is able to tell that the participants have made lasting friendships.

> We maintain strong ties with our past [Ulster Project] teens and their families both here and in Northern Ireland. We have a very active Facebook group which allows past participants to follow the journey each summer and to keep in touch with each other. Many past participants stay involved by serving on the board, being a leader, sponsoring an event for the teens during the summer

> program, or hosting a leader. We also have a lot of second-generation participants, both American and Northern Irish (Town Square Delaware 2018).

A survey of Ulster Project participants also found that participants in the program had significantly more out-group contact and friendships compared to non-participants (Leonard, Yung, and Cairns 2015). Specifically, they reported having more friends from other communities and reported visiting other communities more often than non-participants (Leonard, Yung, and Cairns 2015). The parents of Ulster Project participants have also reported that, after participation in the Ulster Project, their children seemed more open-minded about diversity, more tolerant of those of other faiths, and had new friendships with peers of other faiths (McInerney-Starr 2015). The Ulster Project also works with clergy in Northern Ireland to become involved with the program so that they can support the Northern Irish youth in their new spiritual journeys upon their return home (McInerney-Starr 2015). Notably, based on surveys from past participants, the Ulster Project also claims that no Ulster Project alum has joined any paramilitary organization (McInerney-Starr 2015).

In a documentary provided by the Ulster Project, former participants talk about their experience in the program. Participant Aislinn Hoy talked about how the program allowed her to form friendships across religious divides.

> It really upset me on how separate [Catholics and Protestants] are because there's this one girl who did the project with me and she lives right next door to me, and I did not know she existed until we both got on the Project because she's Protestant and I'm Catholic… and we meet up a lot… we're best friends (*Faith in Friendship* 2017).

Another former participant, Jake McCrae, talked about the impact the dialogue activities had on him and how that led to him building connections to others in the opposite community.

> The "Time of Discovery" was kind of a surprise to me, and it was probably actually my favorite part of it because we were discussing things like sectarianism – very much a very key issue in where we live – but we never get to discuss it… you really learn a lot and you meet a lot of people, and when you come back it's just this whole new world has kind of opened up with all these people you can now meet – friends of friends, and it's really opened up after that (*Faith in Friendship* 2017).

Ulster Project staff member and former participant James McLoughlin discussed the impact that program on him personally as well as on the participants he leads now.

> When I came back in 2012, I always promised myself that I'd become a leader again and when I was first able to it's really made me want to strive and work towards there being better community relations in Northern Ireland and to provide teenagers with opportunities to socially interact and get to know each other on a cross-community basis. The Ulster Project teenagers are bringing their peers into their friendship group that they formed on the project and therefore there's a loads more cross-community contacts being formed which is cool to see (*Faith in Friendship* 2017).

Ulster Project leader Fr. John Forsythe also stressed the effects of the Ulster Project not just on participants but on whole communities within Northern Ireland.

> I have seen hundreds and hundreds of young people totally changed by what the Ulster Project has does for them. It's not just 62 teenagers making friends with each other. It's those 62 teenagers, and each of those has a wider family… so thousands of people can be affected by the Ulster project… One a week they have a very serious retreat lasting three or four hours where they face into issues like sectarianism in Northern Ireland but racism in America as well, and really put into action that we are all God's children… and dismantling prejudice wherever they find it (*Faith in Friendship* 2017).

The Lord Mayor of Belfast from 2012-2013, Gavin Robinson, was an Ulster Project alum. Shortly after his term as mayor, Belfast faced a crisis when the city council voted to limit the number of days the British Union Flag could fly above city hall, which led to widespread protests, attacks on homes, and death threats to city leaders. When interviewed about the impact of the Ulster Project on his leadership as mayor, Robinson framed the impact through his response to the flag crisis.

> Growing up, I didn't get the opportunity to mix. Even at a young age at 15 or 16 it's hugely important. If I hadn't had the opportunity to challenge myself and to have in a safe context, as well the opportunity for others to challenge me, I wouldn't have smashed some of the myths that were in my head, the perceptions that I had that weren't only negative but potentially, over the course of decades growing up in my formative years, destructive. When we were in Milwaukee, we just realized how some of the issues that might be prevalent in Northern Ireland just didn't exist at all. So, for somebody from my background… going to a Catholic church is not the done thing… And I

> guess that was incredibly helpful in the path towards politics. I wanted to make sure I was not only doing the right thing as a civic leader, but I wanted to be seen to go the extra mile. I wanted to engage with people where ordinarily the people of Belfast would have expected me to have found an excuse to be doing something else… One thing I wanted to make sure, particularly in the issue of the flag, and particularly because I come from… quite a hardline Unionist area, where it would have been easy for me to talk from that perspective… I refrained from doing so. I thought it was very much my role to stand up for the city as a whole… and so that meant that my job was to one, work to bring about an end to the difficulties we had on the streets, but two, to galvanize the large silent majority within the city who felt that what was happening on the streets was not reflective of them (*Faith in Friendship* 2017).

In relation to my first hypothesis, the Ulster Project does support the idea that their programming has resulted in lower levels of violence through the claim that no Ulster Project participant has joined a paramilitary organization after their participation on the program. Besides this direct example, the Ulster Project also focuses specifically on forming trust, forgiveness, reconciliation, and lasting relationships between participants as well as participants' wider communities; participants, their families, and community members also support this claim, citing changes in the participants' attitudes and beliefs upon their return from the program. This is likely related to a reduction in violence as well, as participants learn to humanize one another and their

communities, but conclusive data on the effectiveness of the program on levels of violence is not available.

In terms of my second hypothesis, that over time as conflict deaths fall, the risks to interfaith peacebuilding programming also fall and windows of opportunity emerge for its implementation, the Ulster Project does generally support this idea. The Ulster Project acknowledges that there were significant risks to participation in its programming at the time of its founding, but as time has passed and the direct violence associated with the conflict has lessened, and the Ulster Project has become more well-known and understood within communities, safety risks for participants have fallen. Additionally, because the Ulster Project was committed to interfaith programming from the start, they chose to still implement such programming but managed to reduce risks by conducting their programming primarily in safe, neutral spaces abroad in the U.S.

New Life City Church Belfast

New Life City Church is a nondenominational Christian church, founded in Belfast in 1993 (Hope Builders International n.d.; New Life City Church n.d.). The church is uniquely situated on a peace line, or dividing wall, between the two most divided communities in Belfast: the Shankill Road community, which is almost 100% Protestant, and the Falls Road community, which is almost 100% Catholic (Hope Builders International n.d.; New Life City Church n.d.). These two communities are divided by tall peace walls, but the church is located in a building set into the middle of the wall, with half of the building in each community (Hope Builders International n.d.).

The church ministers to both Catholics and Protestants, and members from both communities regularly attend the services at the church (Hope Builders International n.d.). Along with regular church services, City Church also runs a community sports club, a coffee shop, and provides space for community events (Hurd 2019). These programs all aim to connect people from both the Shankill and Falls Road communities who would otherwise likely not meet or interact (Hurd 2019). The two communities faced some of the most severe violence during the Troubles and were known for having a strong paramilitary presence; because of this, many of City Church's members are former paramilitaries (Hope Builders International n.d.; Hurd 2019). In a news interview, Senior Pastor Jack McKee said the following:

> Among those that come into our church regularly Sunday after Sunday are those who are from terrorist backgrounds who at one time would have wanted to have killed each other… there was a time when I would have killed some of them. I was a soldier. And I just get amazed when I see people coming to faith in Jesus at any time, but knowing they come from a terrorist background and that they're able to come and sit in the same row from those who were on the opposite side and worship God alongside them, only God could have done that (Hurd 2019).

A church member and former Protestant Unionist paramilitary had the same sentiment.

> I have Catholic friends now, Catholic friends who, many years ago, I would have tried to kill (Hurd 2019).

Alongside the regular church services and community programs, New Life City Church has also formed activities that more directly deal with reconciliation. The church has held

outdoor communion services in both communities and church members often gather to play music at the peace wall gates that divide the two communities (McKeown 2016). These events allow for those who might not be a part of the church to still meet with others across the peace line and begin to form relationships with one another, as they are able to see the things they have in common, such as a shared love of God or music (McKeown 2016).

Another event sponsored by the church is the Cross Walk, where church members who feel so inclined are encouraged to walk through the streets of the other community carrying a cross to symbolize a shared Christian understanding, as the cross is a symbol for both Catholic and Protestant communities (Hope Builders International n.d.; Hurd 2019). A church member, and former IRA member, who was interviewed after participating in the Cross Walk discussed how the walk for him represented his own journey towards reconciliation.

> Today I carried the cross because I come from Republican West Belfast and today is my personal token of reconciliation to the Unionist Loyalist community and to literally raise that cross above that gun (Hurd 2019).

The work of the church is not without risk, however. As it is situated in one of the most divided neighborhoods in all of Northern Ireland, there is still significant opposition to the work of the church (Hope Builders International n.d.). The pastors of the church stated that both church members and they have received many death threats in the past from people who are opposed to the church's work (Hope Builders International n.d.).

Although New Life City Church was not able to provide broader data on the effects of its work on levels of violence within communities, personal testimonies from its church members suggest that the church has had an effect at least on an individual level for many

church members. The work of the church has led to some members of the Shankill and Falls Road communities to leave paramilitary groups and to build relationships and reconcile with those they once might have considered enemies.

New Life City Church has been interfaith in its mission since its founding and accepts that risk is an inherent part of such programming. However, it should be noted that the church was founded in 1993, only five years before the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. Therefore, while the church may have always been willing to accept the risk that comes with interfaith programming in such a divided community, they may already have been operating within a window of opportunity provided by lower levels of direct violence across Northern Ireland leading up to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. This may have allowed the church to conduct programming that might have been more difficult if it had been founded a decade or two before.

Corrymeela Community

Corrymeela Community is an interfaith community and peacebuilding organization founded in 1965 (Davey n.d.; Tyler 2015). Corrymeela works to bring people in from divided areas to their center in Ballycastle on the north coast of Northern Ireland where people engage in dialogue, community building activities, and relaxation away from the conflict in their home communities (Davey n.d.; Tyler 2015). From the start, the founder of Corrymeela, Ray Davey, insisted on an interfaith model; he believed that only through personal contact could humanizing relationships be created or restored between people on each side of the conflict and reconciliation be achieved (Davey n.d.; Robinson 2015; Tyler 2015). Corrymeela's mission is to welcome everyone to their site, regardless of a person's background or faith, as they believe that through providing a safe space, people will feel

comfortable enough to both share their own experiences and consider the experiences of others (Davey n.d.; Robinson 2015; Tyler 2015).

Davey also believed strongly that reconciliation, trust, and forgiveness are skills that need to be practiced at an individual level in order for them to be implemented between people in conflict on a societal level (Corrymeela Community n.d.). By providing a variety of opportunities for people across the religious divide to meet and interact, Corrymeela gives people the chance to practice and experience reconciliation, trust, and forgiveness firsthand; people can take what they learned from these small interactions at Corrymeela back to their home communities and use them as guidance for future encounters with others (Corrymeela Community n.d.).

Early on in the work of the Community, staff members observed that dialogue alone was not enough to form reconciliation, trust, or forgiveness between participants, so Corrymeela began focusing on relationship-building before dialogue; they felt that once people were comfortable with one another, they would be able to humanize their fellow participants and from their work towards goals like forgiveness (Corrymeela Community n.d.). Corrymeela participant John Morrow described what it was like to practice reconciliation across the religious divide.

> We had to learn, in sometimes painful ways, to hear each other, without trying to convince each other that 'we were right.' We learnt that part of reconciliation involves living and accepting unresolved issues at times, as well as honesty and openness (Robinson 2015, 123).

Corrymeela's programming shifted to cater towards people at all levels, with school groups, church groups, families, and even government officials attending their programs, which can

range from traditional dialogue groups centered around reconciliation, storytelling workshops to share conflict experiences and discover common ground, remembrance programs, post-trauma healing programs, faith education workshops, shared recreation activities like sports or drama camps, and respite programs (Corrymeela Community n.d.; Davey n.d.; Robinson 2015; Tyler 2015). Corrymeela also began establishing local cell groups beyond the Ballycastle center, where people who had volunteered at Ballycastle, or even just attended a Corrymeela event, could take their knowledge back to their home community (Corrymeela Community 2010; Robinson 2015). Corrymeela also describes itself as an "intentionally Christian" space and acts of nondenominational Christian worship are incorporated in all of their activities (Tyler 2015).

A Corrymeela staff member described the importance of having a variety of activities beyond dialogue alone as follows:

> By the early nineties, we began to understand the limitations of talk or discussion. Often, when we evaluated the group's experience, we would regularly find that the group would name the creative learning and recreational activities as having been the most important part of it. Many of the young people and some of the adult groups had little or no experience in and/or comfort with engaging with each other through words… In light of this experience, we began to think more creatively about these activities. Large elements of what had previously been termed "recreation", were transformed in both content and use to become what we now know as "adventure learning"… These activities have become increasingly adapted and designed

> to create experiences which allow group members to enter new relationships with one another at many different levels (Corrymeela Community n.d.).

Corrymeela also worked to remove people from conflict-heavy areas to try to prevent people, especially young people, from being caught in violence or joining paramilitary organizations. Corrymeela volunteer Yvonne Naylor described this part of the Community's work.

> I know in the early 1970s Corrymeela started bringing families out of areas like Turf Lodge and Ballymurphy so that they didn't get involved [in the fighting]. Teenagers who were vulnerable were being brought out of the estates and there were so many people at Corrymeela they couldn't put them all up, and so several local Ballycastle schools let us use their classrooms and/or provided mattresses and bedding (Robinson 2015, 121).

Ray Davey founded Corrymeela as an interfaith community with the recognition that interfaith programming carries with it an inherent risk within the context of Northern Ireland (Tyler 2015). The Community has tried to mitigate the risk by providing programming that is geographically distant from the main conflict areas, but their work is still not risk-free (Tyler 2015). Corrymeela instead operates on the principle that "nothing worth doing is without cost" and recognizes the security risks as an inherent part of their programming that ultimately can serve to bring participants closer through the shared experience of overcoming fear to come together for peace (Tyler 2015). Corrymeela staff member Frank Wright explained how the Community saw a peace agreement as vital for reducing the risk towards participants in their interfaith programming.

> [Reconciliation work] involves meeting each other across divisions in different ways so as to undermine previous separate certainties. Such

> possibilities of meeting can often be fragile and hostage to the wider atmosphere of inter-communal fear and violence that may be threatening or occurring… We were always clear that a stable political settlement was vital for cross-community trust building; without a stable political settlement the work was always at risk. We were also aware that without a certain amount of trust you couldn't have a stable political settlement. Therefore, from our earliest days we ran political conferences and members were involved in political parties. We also had conversations with paramilitaries, encouraging them to become constructively involved in politics and community building (Corrymeela Community n.d.).

Although Corrymeela was not able to provide information on the specific effects of their programming on levels of violence, they were able to provide some information on activities that might be related to lower levels of direct violence. Firstly is Corrymeela's work in taking vulnerable people out of conflict-heavy areas in order to prevent them from becoming caught up in paramilitary activity. By taking possible combatants out of the conflict situation, Corrymeela theoretically reduced the amount of direct violence that was able to be committed in these areas. Besides this work, the Corrymeela Community also focused heavily on providing participants with experiences in which they could practice trust, reconciliation, forgiveness, and building relationships across communities. This work is likely to also be associated with reduced levels of violence, but Corrymeela does not have any information on the specifics of the effects of this work.

Corrymeela has always been focused around interfaith peacebuilding. From its start, Corrymeela's founder, Ray Davey, was adamant in his belief that true reconciliation could only be achieved through humanizing contact with other across conflict lines. Corrymeela recognized that risk was an inherent part of such programming, though risk was seen not as something that had to be completely avoided but rather as something that could actually bond participants together. Even so, Corrymeela was purposefully based in the countryside on the northern coast of Northern Ireland, away from the most violent conflict areas. This provided participants with a place of respite away from the violence as well as a safe space where they could engage in peace and reconciliation work without facing as severe of security risks as they might if they attempted to engage in such work within their own communities. Therefore, while Corrymeela did not wait for a window of opportunity in the conflict in which to begin interfaith programming, it was able to always provide such programming by intentionally creating a safer space and by acknowledging that risk was inevitable.

Conclusions on Interfaith Programming

Compared to the other cases of peacebuilding programming, the cases of interfaith programming provide the most information on their effect on levels of direct violence. The Ulster Project claims that no participants have joined paramilitary organizations, New Life City Church has former paramilitary members worshiping together in a building that straddles two of the most violent neighborhoods in the conflict, and the Corrymeela Community worked during the conflict to bring vulnerable people to their center to help them avoid becoming involved with paramilitary organizations. Reconciliation and relationship-

building is also an important part of all three organizations' work, which likely coincides with lower levels of direct violence, however none of the organization were able to provide specific information or data on any effects. Overall, while the interfaith organizations provide slightly more support for my original hypothesis, the results are still fairly inconclusive.

In relation to my second hypothesis, all three organizations provide support for the theory that interfaith programming becomes more common as the risks associated with it decrease. In the cases of these three interfaith programming examples, however, all three have been interfaith from their founding, but they all pursued interfaith programming with the knowledge that it carried security risks for participants. The Ulster Project and the Corrymeela Community both worked to alleviate some of the possible risks by bringing participants out of their own communities into neutral, safe spaces to engage in interfaith programming. The Ulster Project also specifically stated that since their founding in the 1970s, the risks associated with their programming have decreased and participants can generally openly talk about their experiences within their home communities. New Life City Church does not do anything specific to alleviate risks for their members, but because it was founded in 1993, close to the time of the Good Friday Agreement, it is possible that they were already within a good window of opportunity to pursue interfaith programming, since at that time direct violence had decreased across Northern Ireland from earlier decades, and they could operate with a more acceptable level of risk.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In this study, I worked to answer the question: how effective is interfaith peacebuilding programming compared to single-faith peacebuilding programming at reducing the level of violence in communities facing violent religious conflict? In reviewing the literature, I found that each form of peacebuilding programming is associated with slightly different uses and situations, but no systematic comparison of the outcomes and effects between these two types of programming had been done before. Utilizing contact theory and constructivism, I hypothesized that communities facing violent religious conflict in which members participate in interfaith peacebuilding programming will see lower levels of violence within that community than if members participated in single-faith peacebuilding programming. To test my hypothesis, I used a most similar systems design to analyze cases of faith-based peacebuilding programming within Northern Ireland; I used both geographical and temporal data on conflict deaths and cases of peacebuilding programming to conduct a quantitative analysis of the effects as well as interviews and reports from programs and organizations to conduct a qualitative analysis.

The geographical data showed that an increase in cases of interfaith peacebuilding is associated with a decrease in the number of conflict deaths over time. While these results did provide support for my hypothesis, the results also could point to a second, alternate hypothesis: as levels of violence fall over the course of the conflict, the risks associated with interfaith peacebuilding decrease, and interfaith peacebuilding becomes more popular and widespread. Therefore, in looking at the interviews and reports for the individual cases of peacebuilding programming, I analyzed each case for its support, or lack of support, in relation to both my original and alternate hypotheses.

Overall, there was not enough data to provide conclusive evidence in support of my first hypothesis. Both the cases of interfaith programming and the cases that utilized both approaches discussed reconciliation, trust, and relationship building, which are likely to be associated with lower levels of violence, while the cases on single-faith programming focused more on self-reflection and repentance. Additionally, the three cases of interfaith programming were also able to provide anecdotal evidence of their work at directly encouraging and preventing people from engaging in violence, but none of the programs were able to provide any conclusive data on the effects of their work on levels of violence within communities as a whole.

There was more support for my second hypothesis. Both of the cases that utilized both approaches discussed using single-faith programming as a tool to use when the risks to interfaith programming were too high. However, only one of the cases saw the risks as related to the conflict environment, and in this case, the organization did wait until the conflict situation became less violent before attempting interfaith programming as I hypothesized. The other case saw the risks of interfaith programming coming from a lack of maturity and preparation among participants themselves and therefore provided opportunities for interfaith programming not as the conflict situation changed but as participants themselves grew and changed.

Both cases of single-faith programming discussed how they used single-faith approaches as a stepping-stone to future interfaith work; these cases also cited the need for greater preparation, education, and open-mindedness among participants before they would be able to properly engage in an interfaith environment. These two cases saw future interfaith programming as necessary but did not view the communities they worked within as having

yet reached a window of opportunity in which interfaith peacebuilding programming was possible. Although neither of these cases of programming have yet begun utilizing interfaith approaches, this still follows my second hypothesis that, as the situation continues to improve in Northern Ireland, organizations currently using single-faith programming may see opportunities to begin interfaith work.

The cases of interfaith programming also generally support my second hypothesis. All three cases acknowledged that risk was an inherent part of their work but chose to still use interfaith approaches because of their perceived benefit for participants. Two out of the three cases minimized the risks for participants by conducting programming outside of their home communities and conflict hotspots while the other likely reduced its level of risk incidentally because it was founded closer to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. These cases all support the idea that interfaith programming is associated with risks, but none of these programs felt the need to wait for improvements in the conflict situation, at least not on purpose, to begin their work. Instead, they recognized risk as inherent while finding ways within their programming structure to reduce any risks to an acceptable level for participants.

Implications

Despite the lack of concrete data on the effects of faith-based programming on levels of violence from programs and organizations conducting such programming, one clear observation was that, in all seven of the cases analyzed, interfaith peacebuilding was the ultimate programming goal because of the perceived benefits for reconciliation, humanizing others, building trust, and building relationships. This matches what both contact theory and constructivism have to say about faith-based peacebuilding; although single-faith peacebuilding can help participants begin to develop a desire for peace and reconciliation,

only direct contact with others across conflict lines can actually create it. Contact with others in peacebuilding programming provides opportunities for participants to humanize one another and build trusting relationships that often even extend into the wider community, all of which happens through changing the norms of interaction between parties and their understanding of the conflict and their place within it. Single-faith programming can be useful for reducing security risks faced by participants or helping participants prepare for future interfaith contact, but single-faith programming on its own is not enough to create lasting, peaceful relationships within divided communities.

For programs and organizations conducting faith-based peacebuilding programming, this study shows the need for more data collection on program outcomes and effectiveness for participants and wider communities. Additionally, more systematic data collection is needed overall to catalog programs and organizations conducting faith-based peacebuilding programming within a city, area, or country. Better data could lead to clearer conclusions about what forms of programming generally, and even what aspects within certain cases of programming specifically, lead to lower levels of violence.

Limitations

Although this study provided further confirmation that interfaith peacebuilding is more useful for fostering trust, reconciliation, and relationships among participants, more data is needed in order to answer the question of what effects faith-based peacebuilding has on levels of violence within communities. Although the analysis of geographical data clearly showed an inverse relationship between the number of cases of interfaith peacebuilding and the number of conflict deaths, a lack of data from programs and organizations conducting faith-based peacebuilding programming on the effects of their programming made it difficult

to definitively state whether my original or alternate hypothesis was true. Although the analysis of the cases of programming provided more support for my alternate hypothesis, the sample size of cases for which I was able to conduct interviews or find enough other reports in order to perform a qualitative analysis was small compared to the number of cases I was able to include in my geographical data analysis.

A lack of systematic data on faith-based peacebuilding programming within Northern Ireland in general also meant that I had to create my own dataset of cases of programming from a variety of scholarly articles, webpages, and news articles related to peacebuilding in Northern Ireland. This means that there are likely more cases of programming that were not included in this study, especially if they were smaller or short-lived and therefore less likely to be included in one of these resources.

Additionally, the fact that this study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic proved challenging for data collection. Many websites of programs and organizations that conduct faith-based programming had notices that their offices were closed due to the pandemic and contact might be delayed. I believe this may have led to fewer responses for interview or information requests than I originally anticipated, and in one case did result in an interview cancellation.

Suggestions for Future Research

In order to provide an even clearer look at the effect of different forms of faith-based programming on levels of violence, future studies could expand on the analysis of geographical data that I conducted. Including Northern Irish census data on population within areas over time, and even on levels of community segregation if available, as well as controlling for these variables within the statistical analysis, could provide a more accurate

look at the effects of programming. Although the fixed effects model included in my analysis helped to control for things such as differences in population in areas over time, including census data directly would provide the most accurate results.

Future research could also expand on the dataset of cases of faith-based programming in Northern Ireland. Because I believe that there are likely smaller or more short-lived programs that I could include in my dataset based on the resources available to me, future research could be conducted to delve deeper into smaller local news sources or community and church archives. This could provide an even more complete picture of the landscape of faith-based peacebuilding in Northern Ireland and thereby also provide even more accurate results.

Lastly, in order to better answer my original and/or alternate hypothesis, more interviews and reports could be collected and analyzed from other cases of peacebuilding programming not included in the qualitative analysis of this study. More case analyses would also help to determine how generalizable the results I found in support of my alternate hypothesis are to Northern Ireland more widely. This study could also be replicated for other cases of religious violence in which faith-based peacebuilding played a role to determine how generalizable my results are to other contexts outside of Northern Ireland.

Appendix A: Interview Documents

Analyzing the Effectiveness of Single-Faith versus Interfaith Peacebuilding in Violent Religious Conflict

Protocol ID	2020/11/23
Principal Investigator (PI)	Sydney Hanes
PI Type	Student
Faculty/Staff PI	Matt Krain 11/17/2020
Faculty/Staff PI Acceptance Status	Accepted 11/17/2020 3:08 PM EST
Department	Political Science
Principal Investigator (PI) Institution	
Co-PIs	
External PIs	
Review Type	Exemption
Approval Status	Exemption Verified
Based On	(2) Tests, Surveys, Interviews
Submitted By	Sydney Hanes
Date Received	11/17/2020
Date of Completion	11/20/2020
Date Approved	11/20/2020
Approval Expires	*Approved Without Annual Report*
Proposed Start Date	12/07/2020
Date Closed	
Protocol Type Menu	
HIPAA	
Subjects	
Other Subjects Type	
Approximate Number of Subjects	10
Protocol Categories	
Protocol Description *	11/17/2020 Research Protocol.pdf
Consent Form	11/18/2020 Consent Form.pdf
Notifications	11/18/2020 Reviewer Revisions Required - IRB ID: 2020/11/23.p... 11/20/2020 Exemption Notification - IRB ID: 2020/11/23.pdf

Abstract

For my independent study, I am researching the effectiveness of single-faith versus interfaith peacebuilding programming at reducing levels of violence in communities facing violent religious conflict. Although existing research exists analyzing the effectiveness of each form of faith-based peacebuilding on their own, there is no existing literature directly comparing the two. In order to compare the two methods of faith-based peacebuilding programming, I am using a comparative case study approach to look at both single-faith and interfaith peacebuilding programming within the conflict in Northern Ireland. Through interviews, I hope to gather more information on how effective program leaders or participants believe single-faith or interfaith programs to be at reducing violence and fostering trust and reconciliation as well as on what specific aspects of programming they believe led to these outcomes.

Annual Reports

Amendments

Adverse Events

Event / Date	Status / Comments / Files	Submitted By
No Adverse Events Found.		

Research Protocol

Background information

For my independent study, I am researching the effectiveness of single-faith versus interfaith peacebuilding programming at reducing levels of violence in communities facing violent religious conflict. Although existing research exists analyzing the effectiveness of each form of faith-based peacebuilding on their own, there is no existing literature directly comparing the two. In order to compare the two methods of faith-based peacebuilding programming, I am using a comparative case study approach to look at both single-faith and interfaith peacebuilding programming within the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Specific aims of my research

The goal of my research is to ask: *how effective is single-faith peacebuilding programming compared to interfaith peacebuilding programming at reducing levels of violence in communities facing violent religious conflict?* Through interviews, I hope to gather more information on how effective program leaders or participants believe single-faith or interfaith programs to be at reducing violence and fostering trust and reconciliation as well as on what specific aspects of programming they believe led to these outcomes.

Location where the research will be conducted

Interviews will all be conducted remotely through video calls.

With whom the data and/or conclusions will be shared

Data and conclusions of this study will be shared with my advisor, second reader, and the review board if requested. Excerpts of data may eventually be shared with the students and faculty at the College of Wooster through my research presentation, and a finished copy of my independent study will be available to read at the College's library after its completion.

Methodology of your study

I will contact a variety of peacebuilding or religious organizations in Northern Ireland based on whether their website or other sources, such as news articles, discuss their faith-based peacebuilding work. I will ask whether I can interview people associated with their organization or program who helped lead or participated in faith-based peacebuilding programming. I plan to interview people who have experience with single-faith peacebuilding programming as well as those who have experience with interfaith, aiming for an equal number of both. I will use the interview responses to look for whether common themes are expressed by those who have experience with single-faith programming as well as those with interfaith regarding the effectiveness of each. Additionally, I will analyze responses to see whether one form of faith-based peacebuilding is considered more effective.

At the start of each interview, I will introduce myself and remind the interviewee about the purpose of the interview. I will hand over an informed consent form to be read and

signed. Once informed consent has been granted, I will proceed to ask the following questions, recording answers using a voice recorder if the interviewees give permission or by hand (pen and paper) if not:

Faith-based peacebuilding efforts can broadly be defined either as single-faith or interfaith. I am considering single-faith peacebuilding programming to be any in which participants are primarily part of the same faith tradition and interfaith programming to be any involving participants from more than one faith tradition.

1. Would you describe the program as primarily single-faith, interfaith, or some combination of both approaches?
    a. *(If a combination):* What aspects were primarily single-faith? What aspects were interfaith?
2. Could you describe the structure of the program?
    a. What kinds of activities or dialogue did participants/you engage in?
3. Could you describe who participated in the program?
    a. What was/were the primary religious background(s) or affiliation(s) of participants?
    b. *(For interfaith programming):* How was the group made up in terms of percentages of participants from different religious backgrounds or affiliations?
4. *(For leaders):* Could you describe your role within the programming?
5. How effective do you think the programming was at fostering trust or reconciliation among participants and within the wider community?
    a. How do you know that?
6. Do you think the programming had an effect on levels of violence within the community?
    a. If so, can you describe the effect?
7. What aspects of the programming did you find most effective?
8. What, if any, aspects of the programming, do you think, if changed or improved, could have led to more effective outcomes?
9. Did the wider community support the programming work?
    a. How do you know?
    b. Did participants/you feel safe participating in the programming?
10. Do you think the programming had lasting effects on the participants/you and/or on the wider community?
    a. If so, in what way?
11. Have you ever participated in any other programs that you would consider to be interfaith/single-faith *(whatever is opposite to what we have been discussing)*?
    a. If so, how did your experiences with the programming compare?
    b. Did you find one more effective than the other?
        i. If so, why?
12. Is there anything we did not discuss that you would like to share or follow up on?
13. Is there anyone else you think that I should talk to?

Storage and handling of audio recordings and handwritten notes from interviews

Audio recordings and transcriptions will be stored on a password-protected computer, and any handwritten notes will be stored in a safe location. All recordings and handwritten notes will be destroyed at the completion of my independent study.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY
THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER

Analyzing the Effectiveness of Single-Faith versus Interfaith Peacebuilding in Violent Religious Conflict
Principal Investigator: Sydney Maureen Hanes, College of Wooster Department of Political Science

Purpose
You are being asked to participate in an interview by Maureen Hanes for her Independent Study, a senior capstone thesis at the College of Wooster. The purpose of this project is to analyze the effectiveness of single-faith versus interfaith peacebuilding programming at reducing levels of violence within communities facing violent religious conflict.

Procedures
If you decide to volunteer, you will be asked to answer several questions about your involvement with faith-based peacebuilding programming. Each interview will take approximately 30 to 40 minutes to complete.

Risks
There is a possibility that some interview questions might trigger memories of violence, as some questions may cause participants to revisit difficult experiences during the conflict and peacebuilding process.

Benefits
There are no direct benefits to you for your participation. An indirect benefit is that we learn more about the effectiveness of different forms of faith-based peacebuilding.

Compensation
There will not be compensation for participation in this study.

Confidentiality
All information that you provide will be held confidential. You will only be referenced in the final study by your position or affiliation with the programming in which you have experience, unless you otherwise request to be named.

Costs
There is no cost to you beyond the time and effort required to complete the interview described above.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw
You may refuse to participate in the study. If you decide to participate, you may change your mind about being in the study and withdraw at any point during the experiment.

Questions

If you have any questions, please ask. If you have additional questions later, you can contact me by email at shanes21@wooster.edu You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Matt Krain, at mkrain@wooster.edu.

Consent to be Interviewed

Your signature below will indicate that you have decided to volunteer to be interviewed, that you have read and understand the information provided above, and that you are at least 18 years of age.

Signature of participant _____ Date _____

Consent to Have Interview Audio Recorded

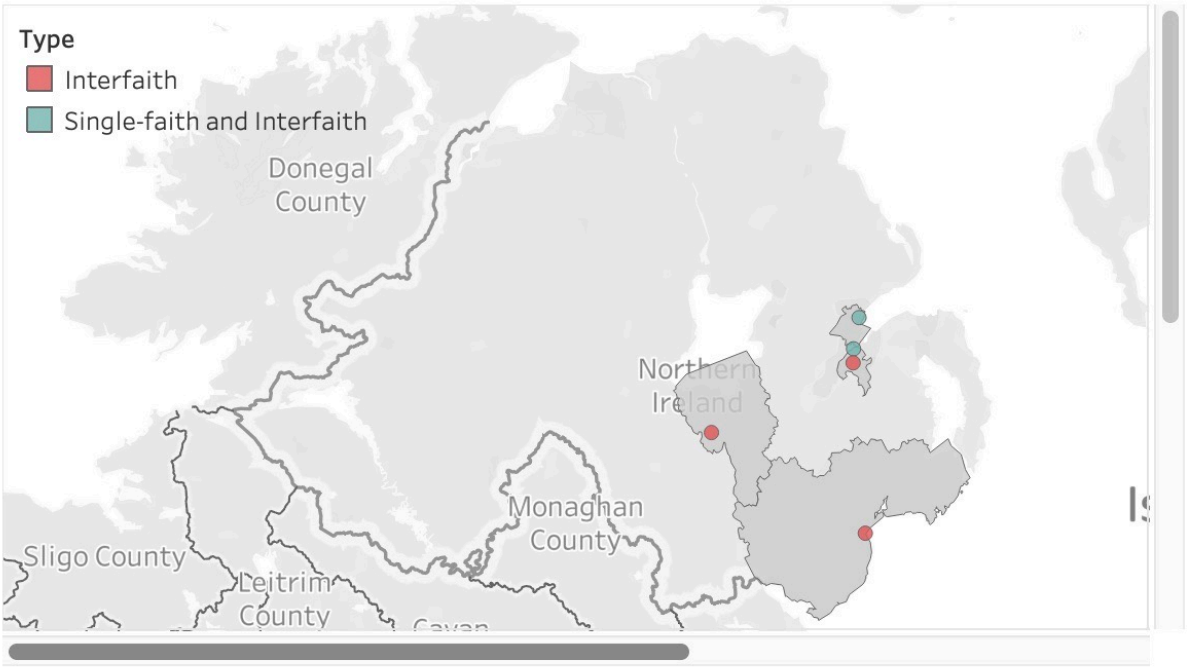
Your signature below indicates that you consent to having this interview audio recorded to ensure accuracy in the transcription of answers. You may choose not to have it audio recorded in which case I will take notes of your responses by hand. All recordings and notes will be destroyed at the completion of the study.

Signature of participant _____ Date _____

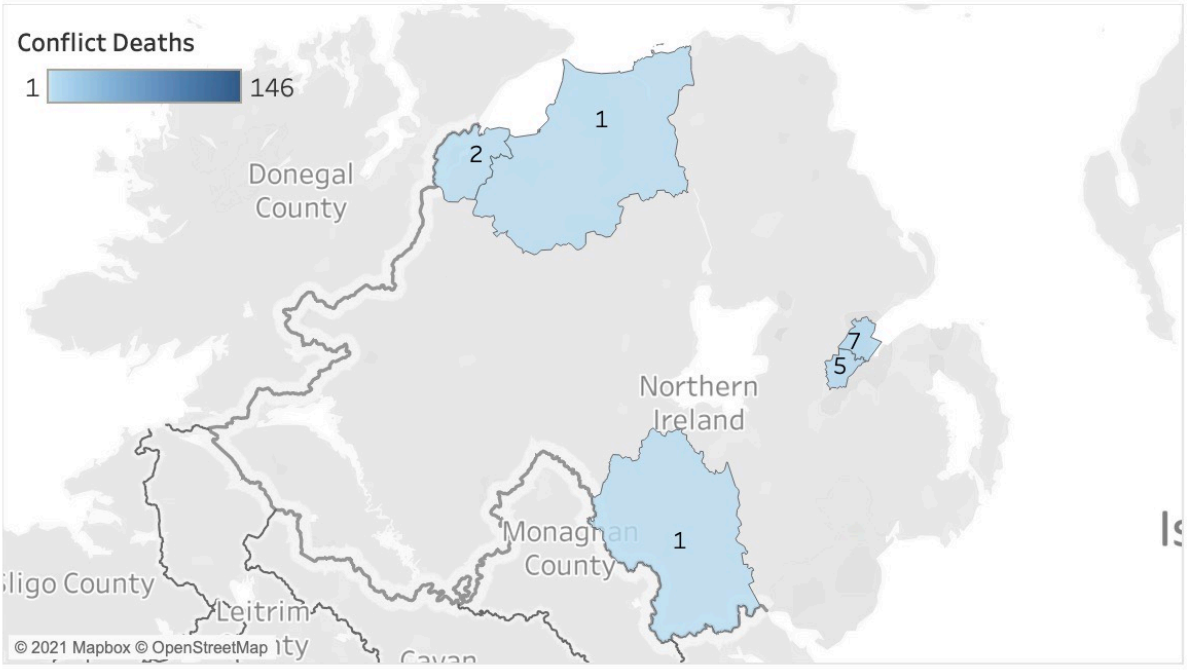
You will be provided a copy of this form.

Appendix B: GIS Data Map

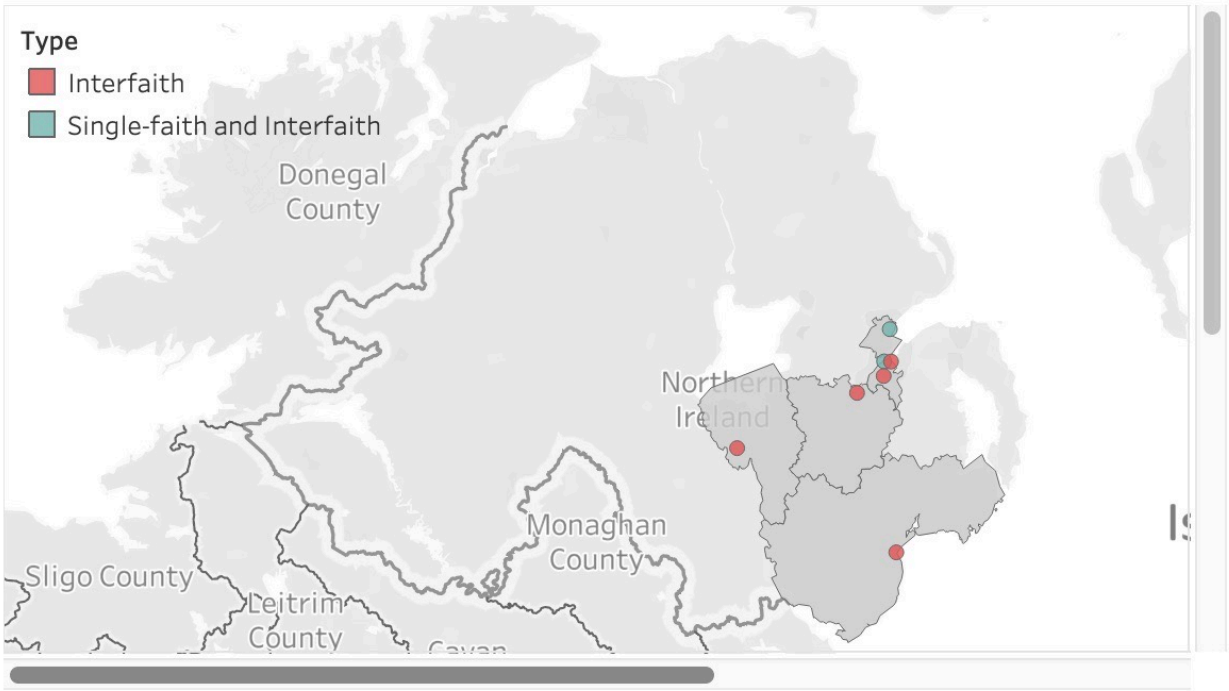
Peacebuilding Programming - 1969



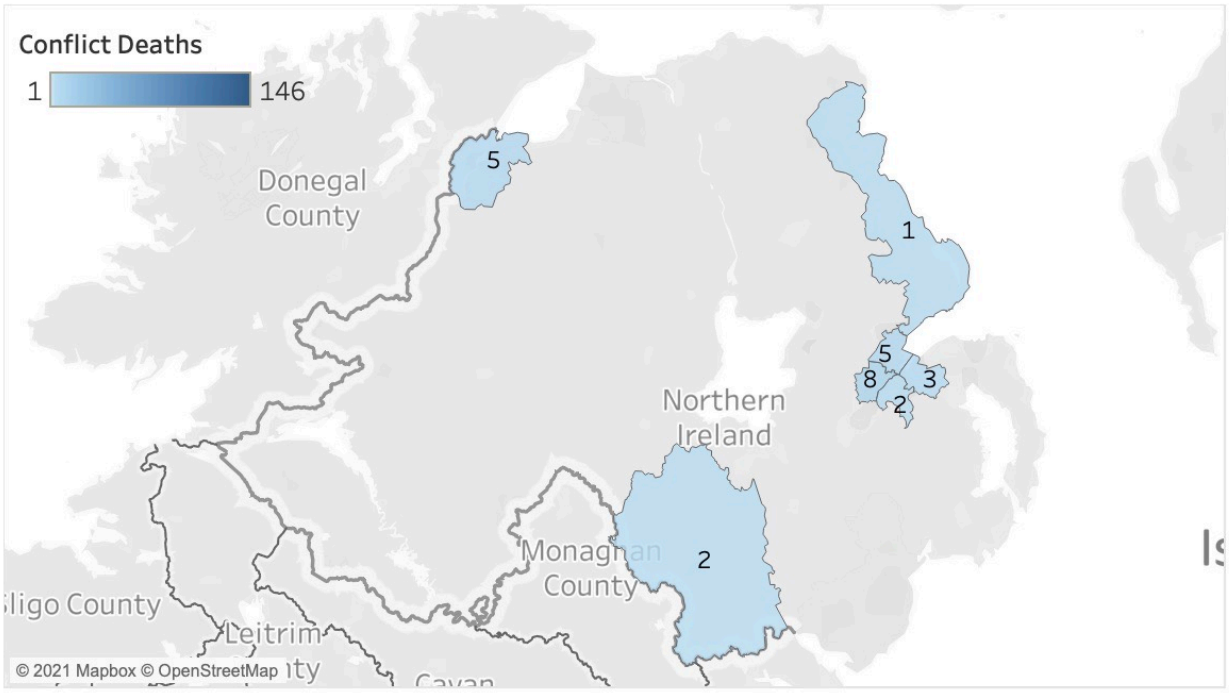
Conflict Deaths - 1969



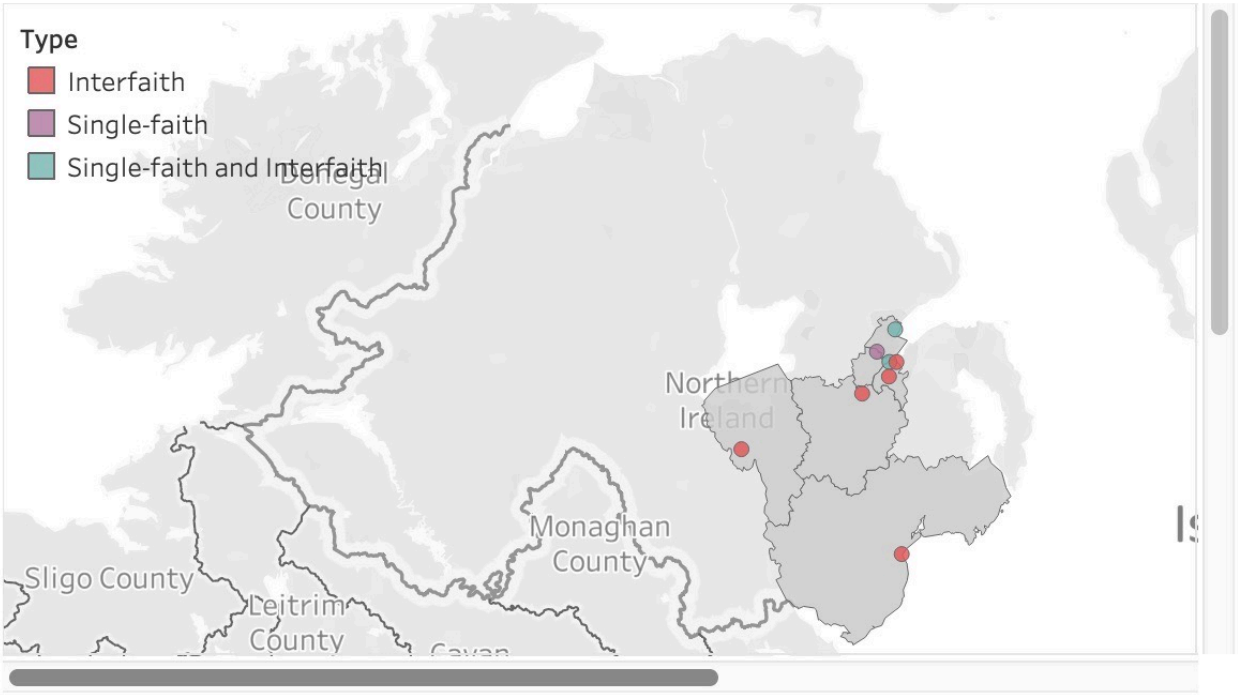
Peacebuilding Programming - 1970



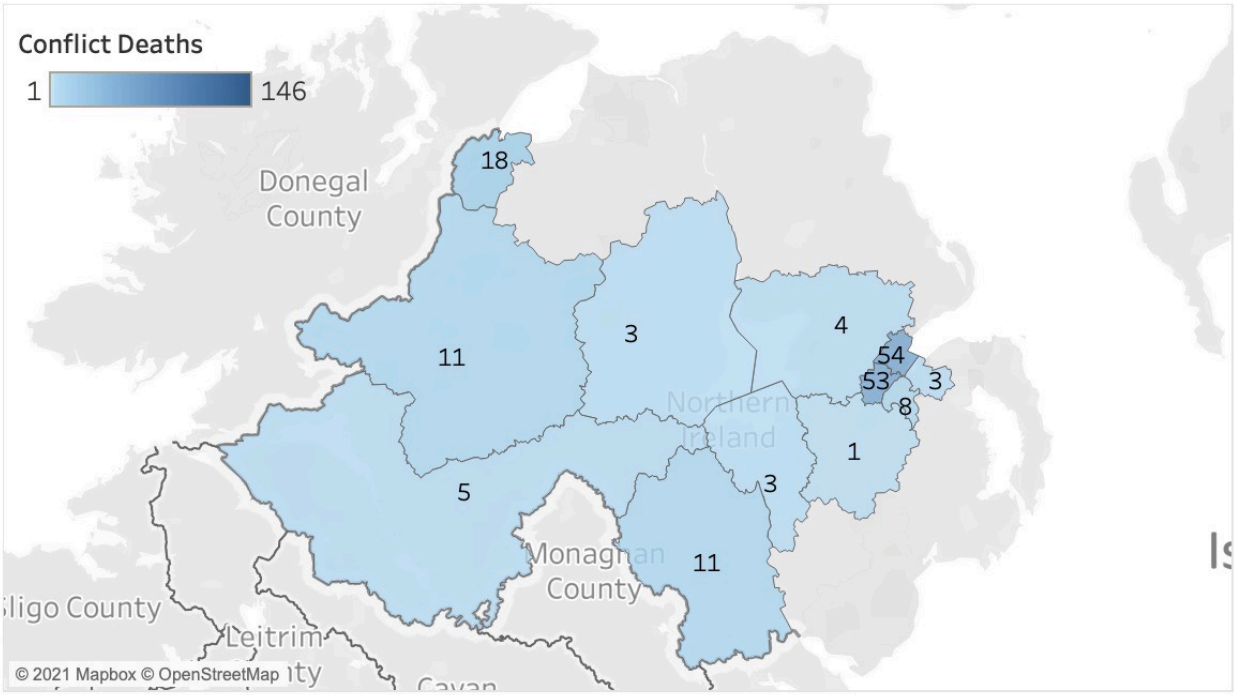
Conflict Deaths - 1970



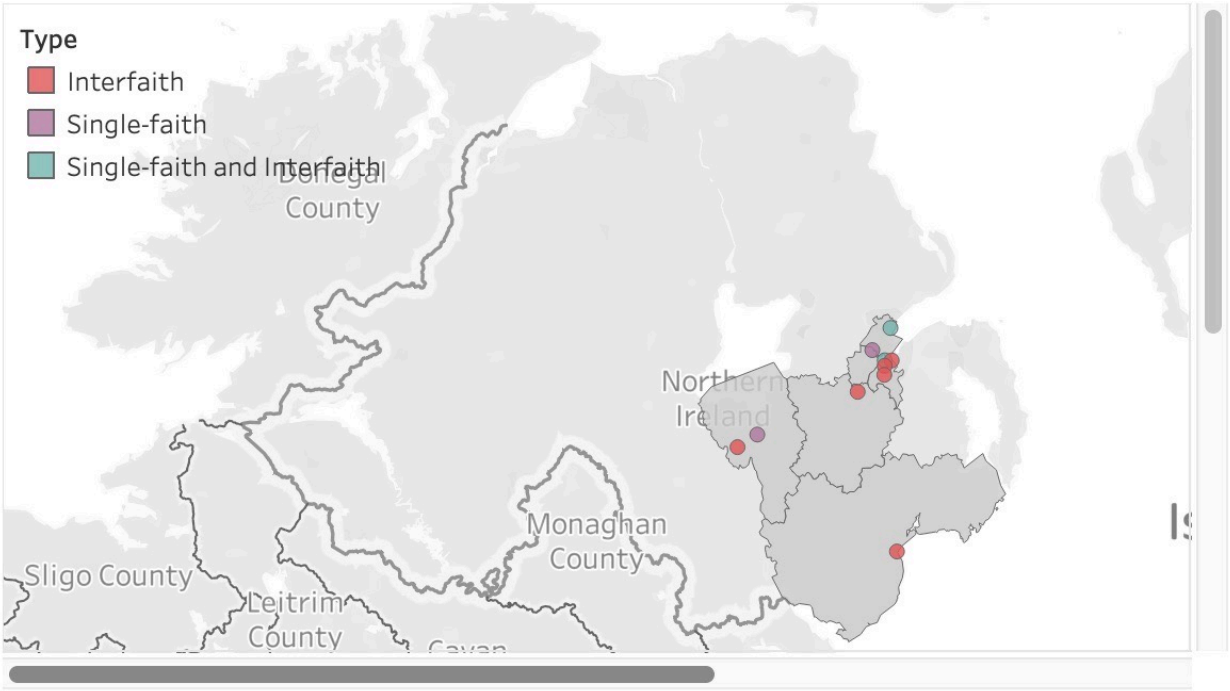
Peacebuilding Programming - 1971



Conflict Deaths - 1971



Peacebuilding Programming - 1972



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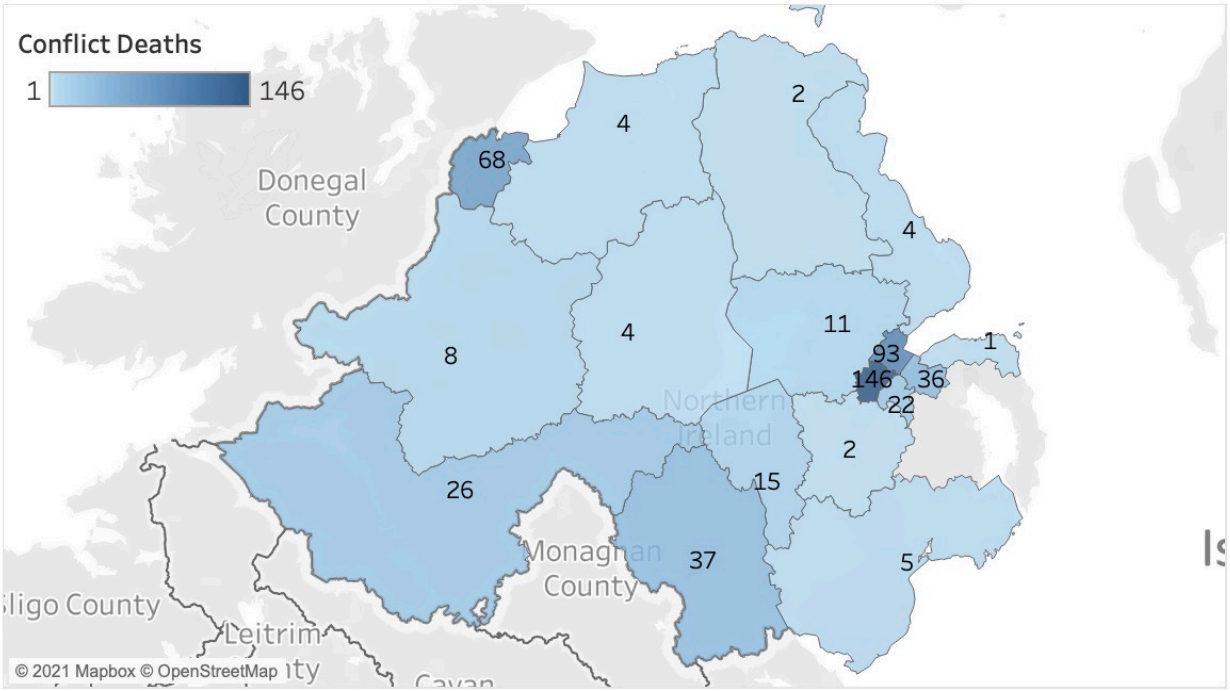

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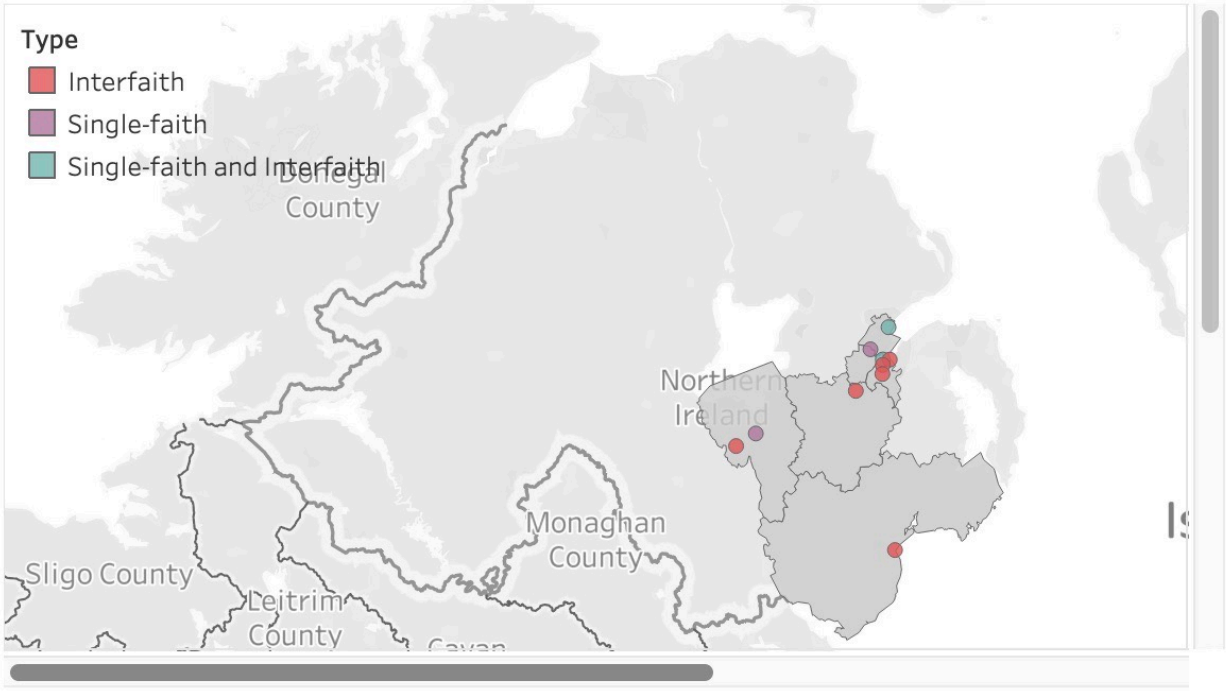

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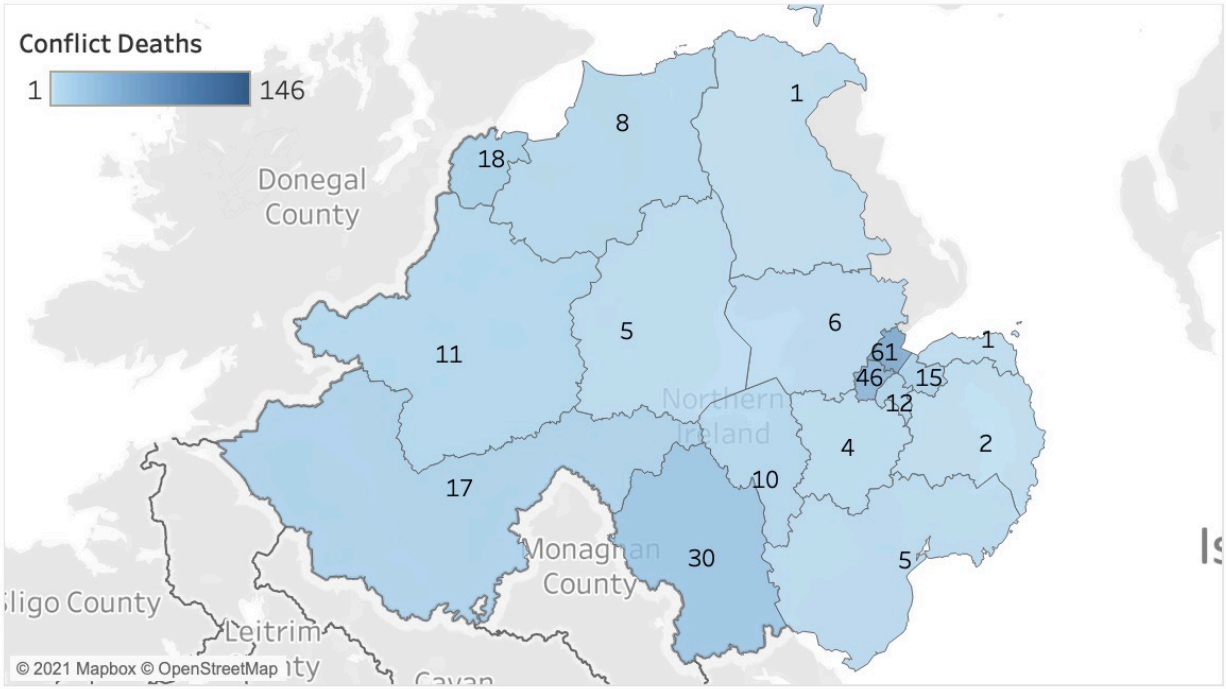
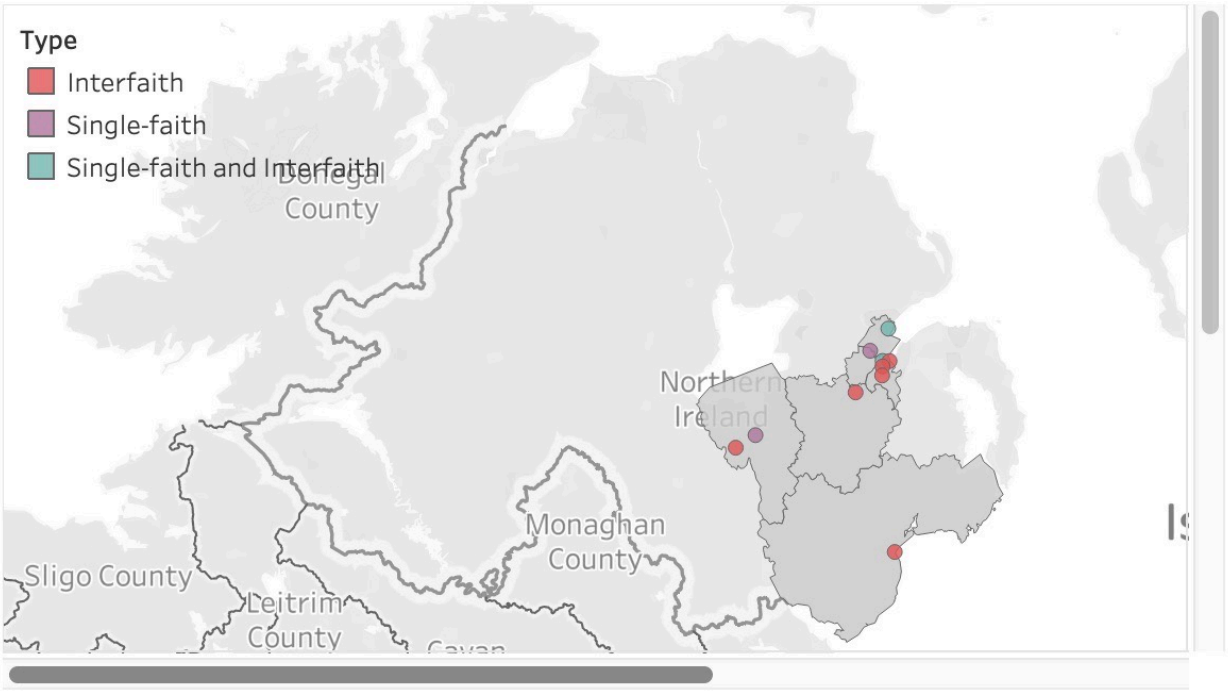
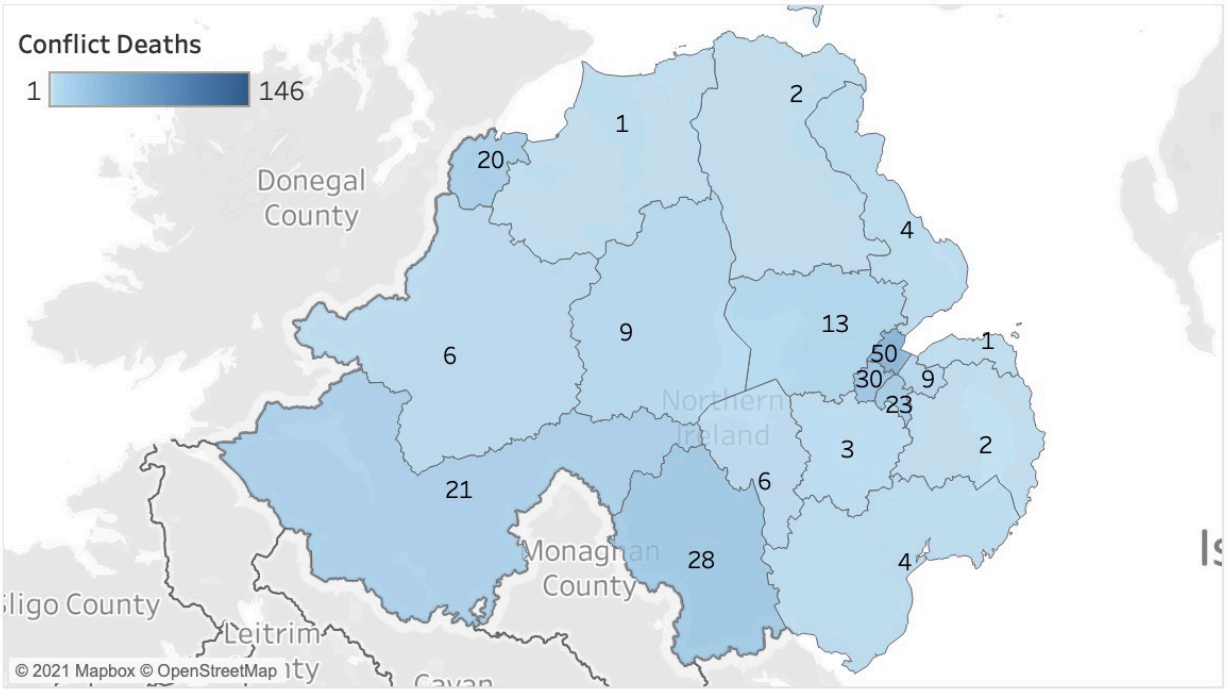


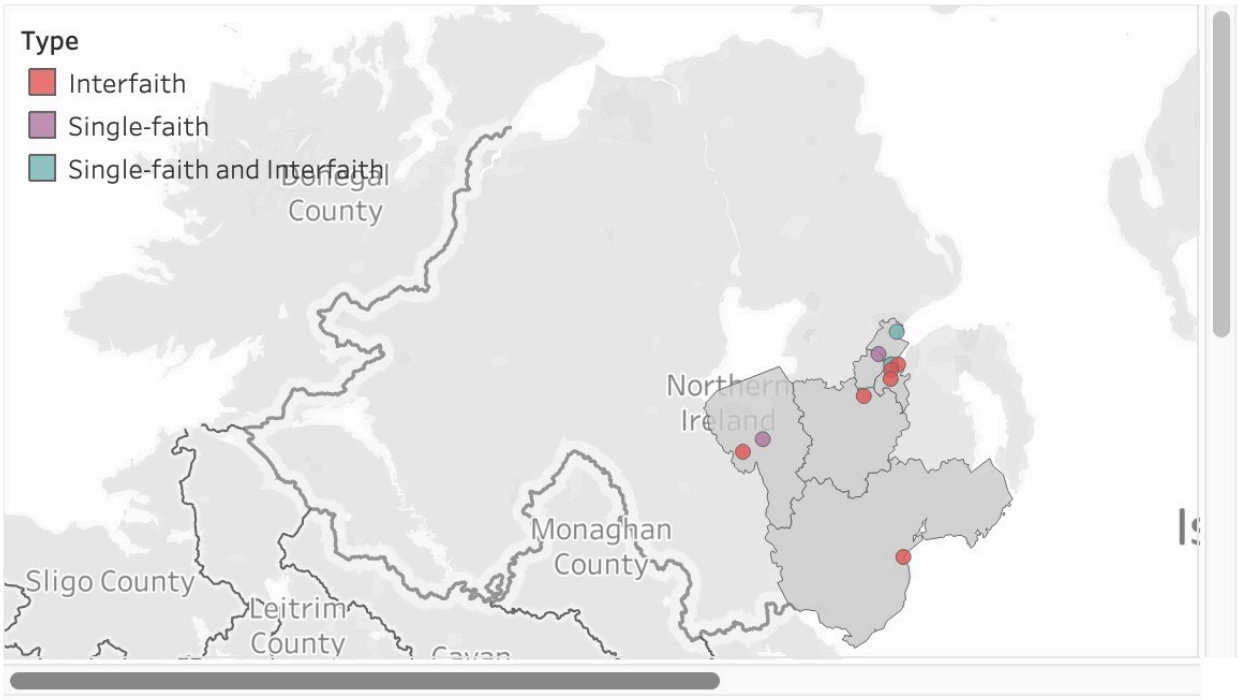
Peacebuilding Programming - 1974



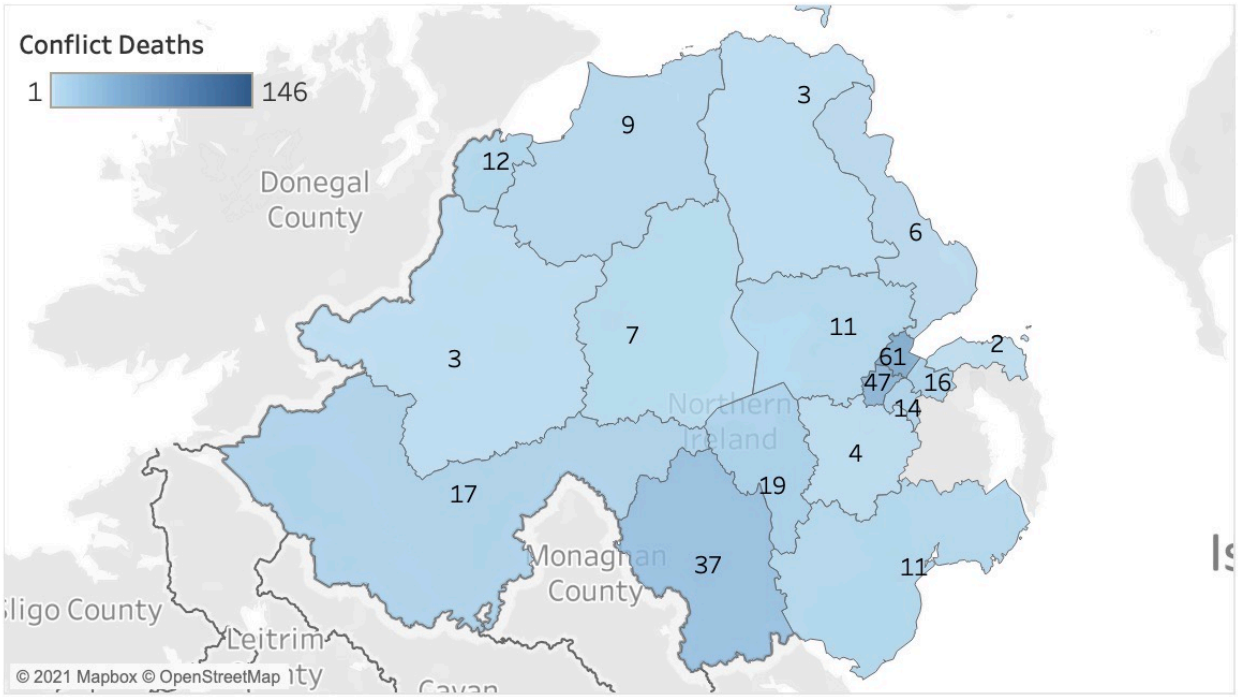
Conflict Deaths - 1974



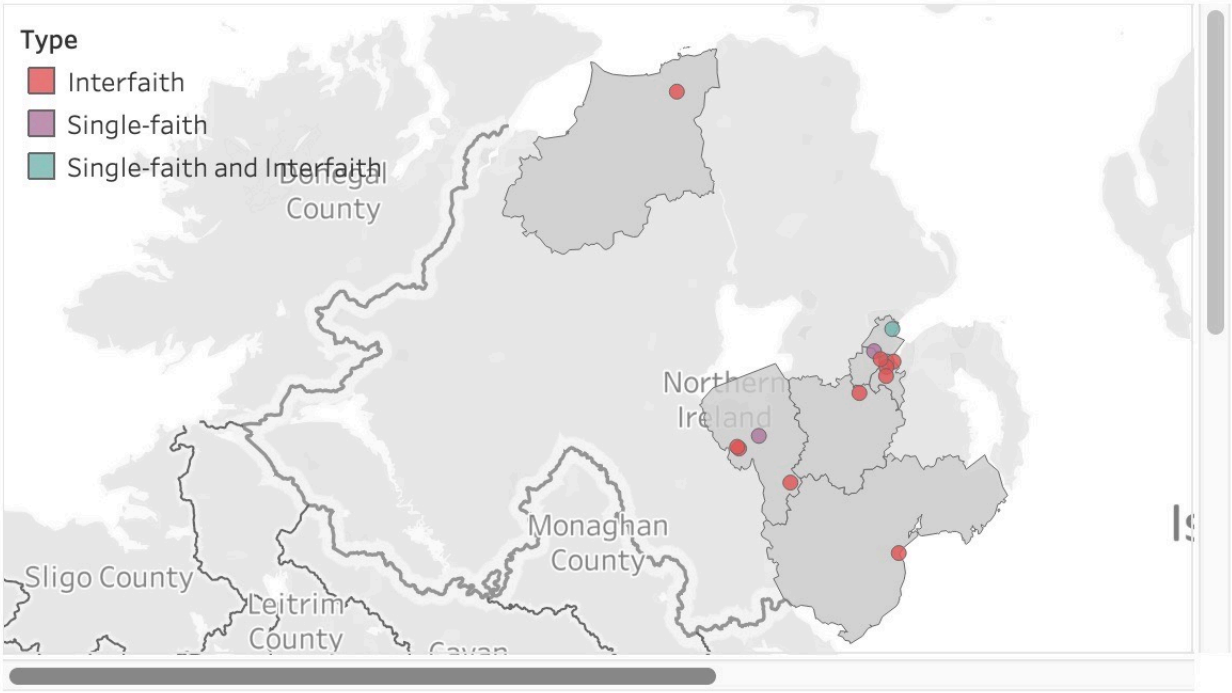
Peacebuilding Programming - 1975



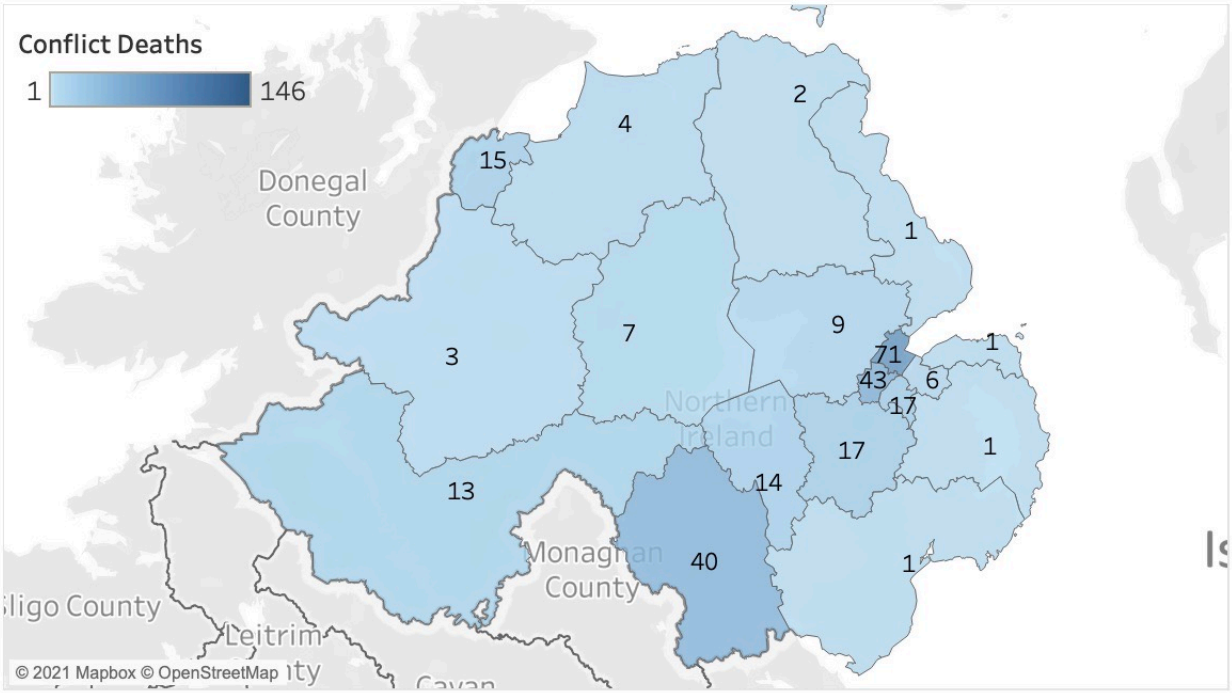
Conflict Deaths - 1975



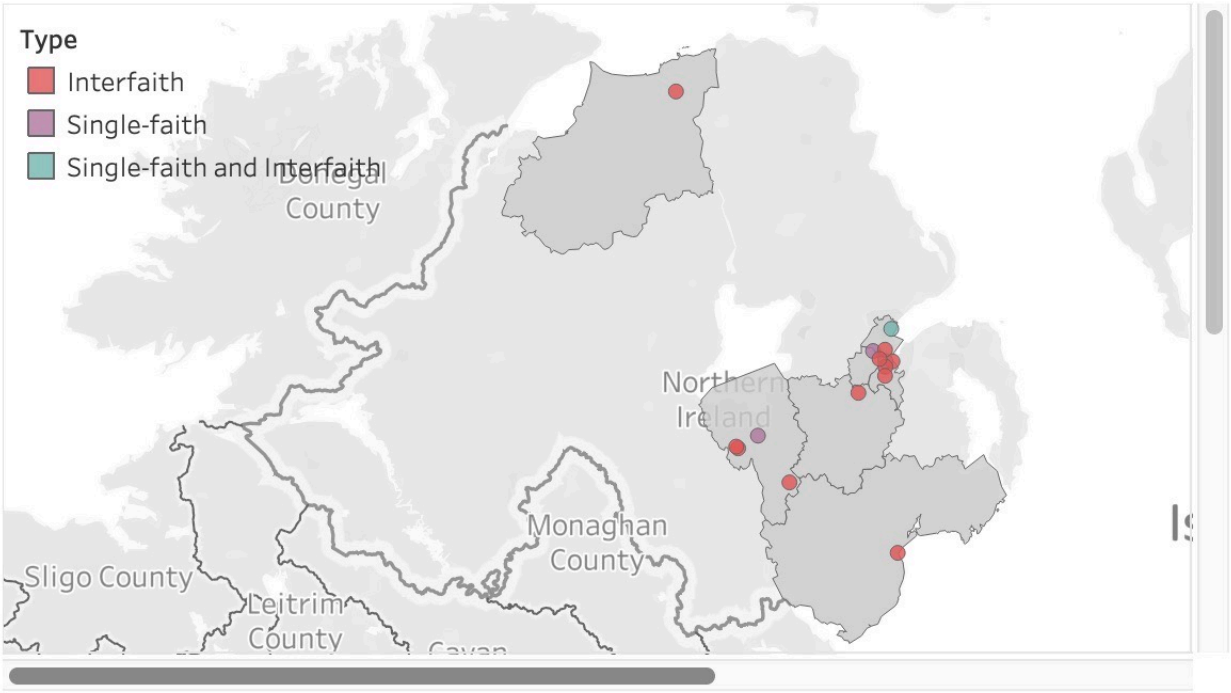
Peacebuilding Programming - 1976



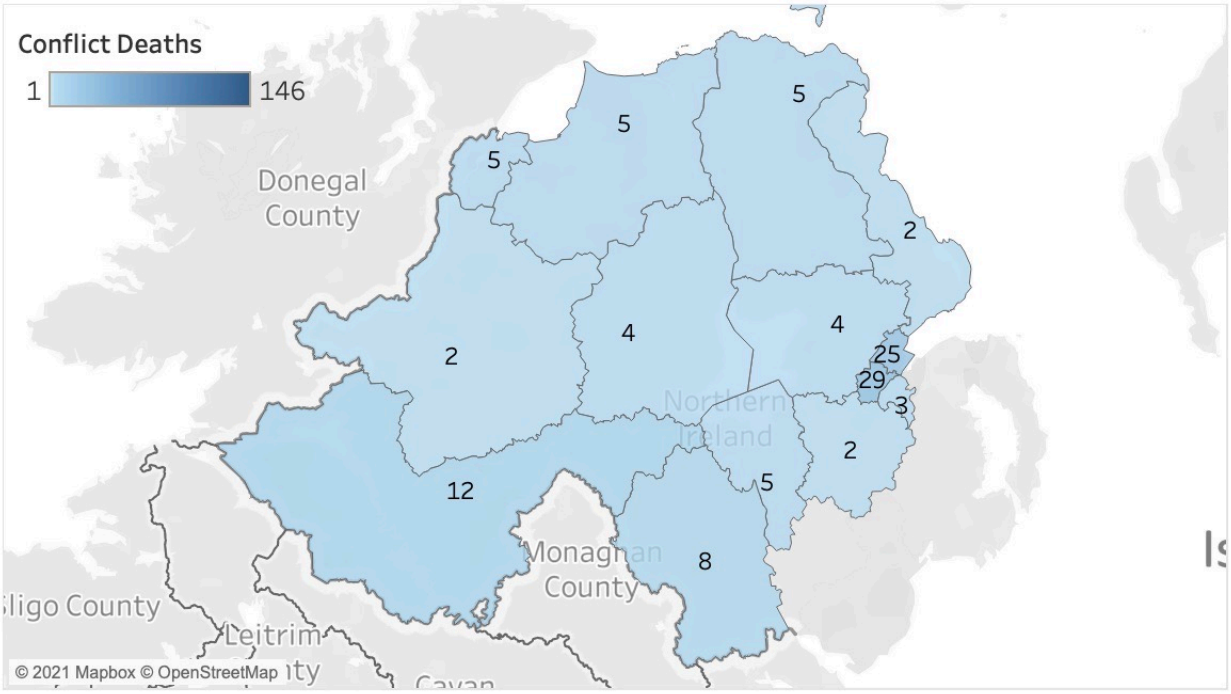
Conflict Deaths - 1976



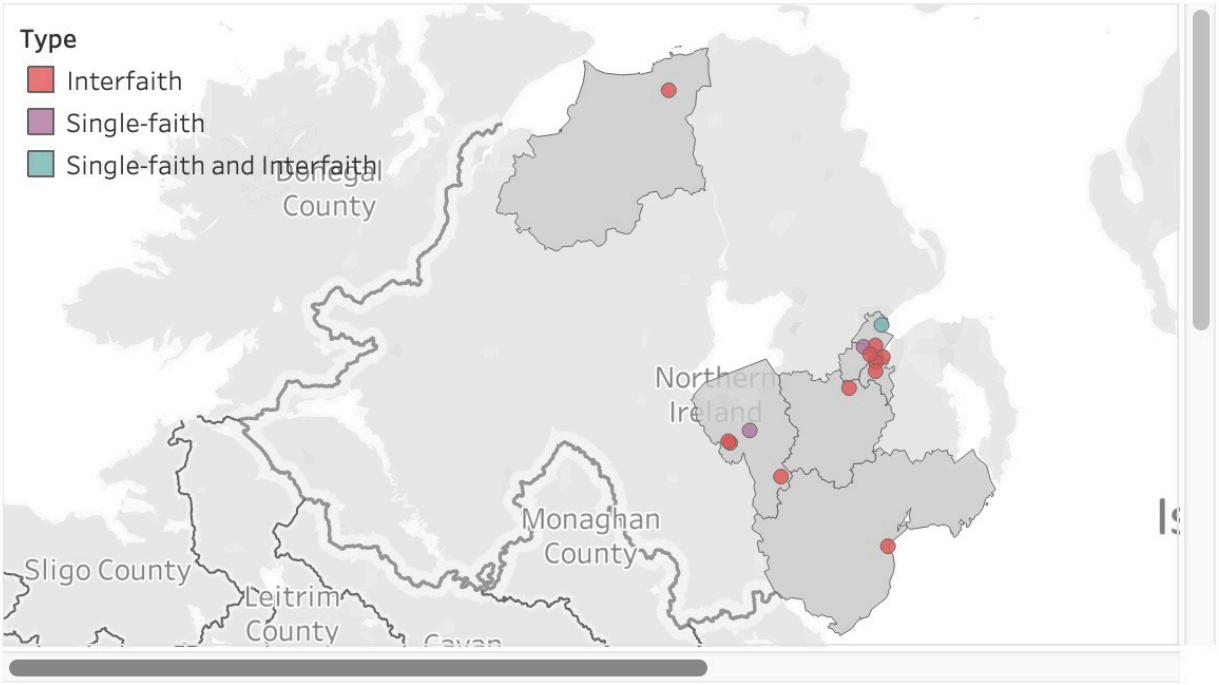
Peacebuilding Programming - 1977



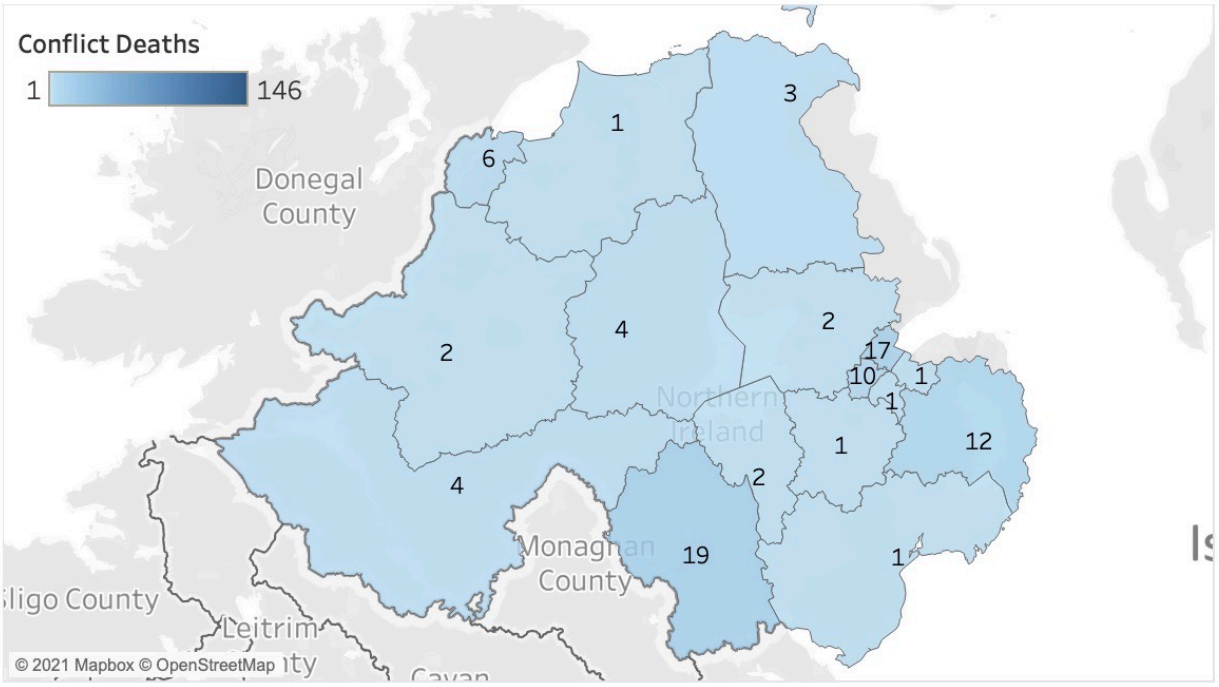
Conflict Deaths - 1977



Peacebuilding Programming - 1978



Conflict Deaths - 1978



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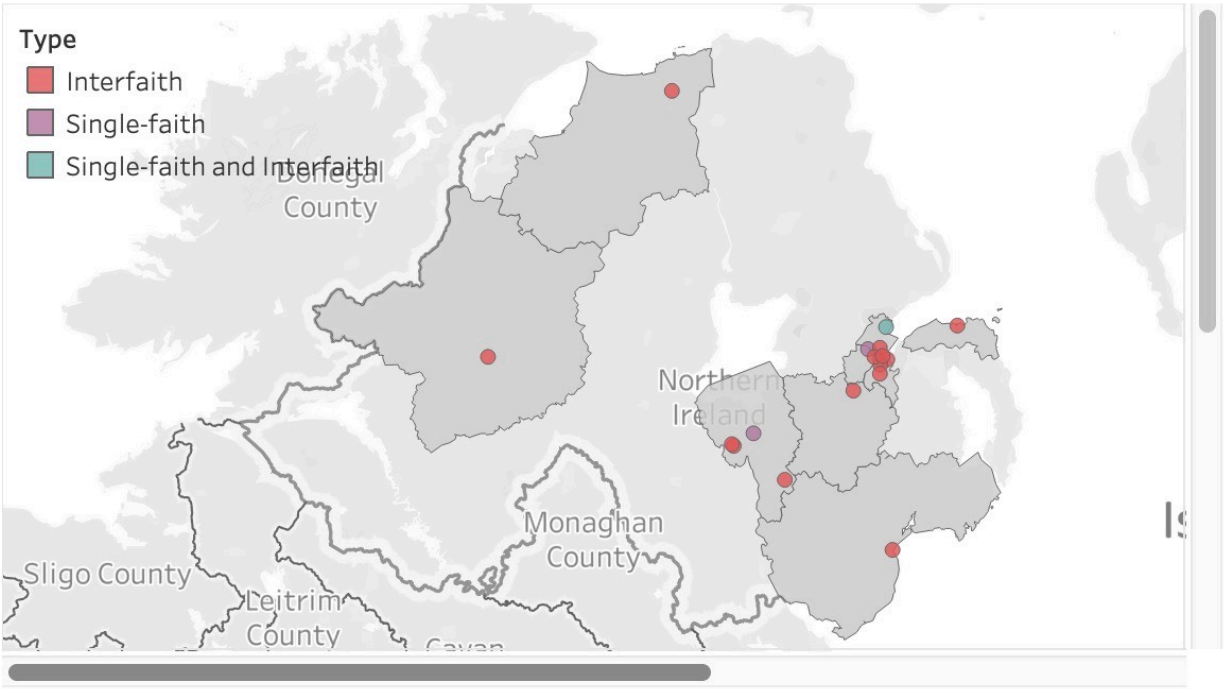
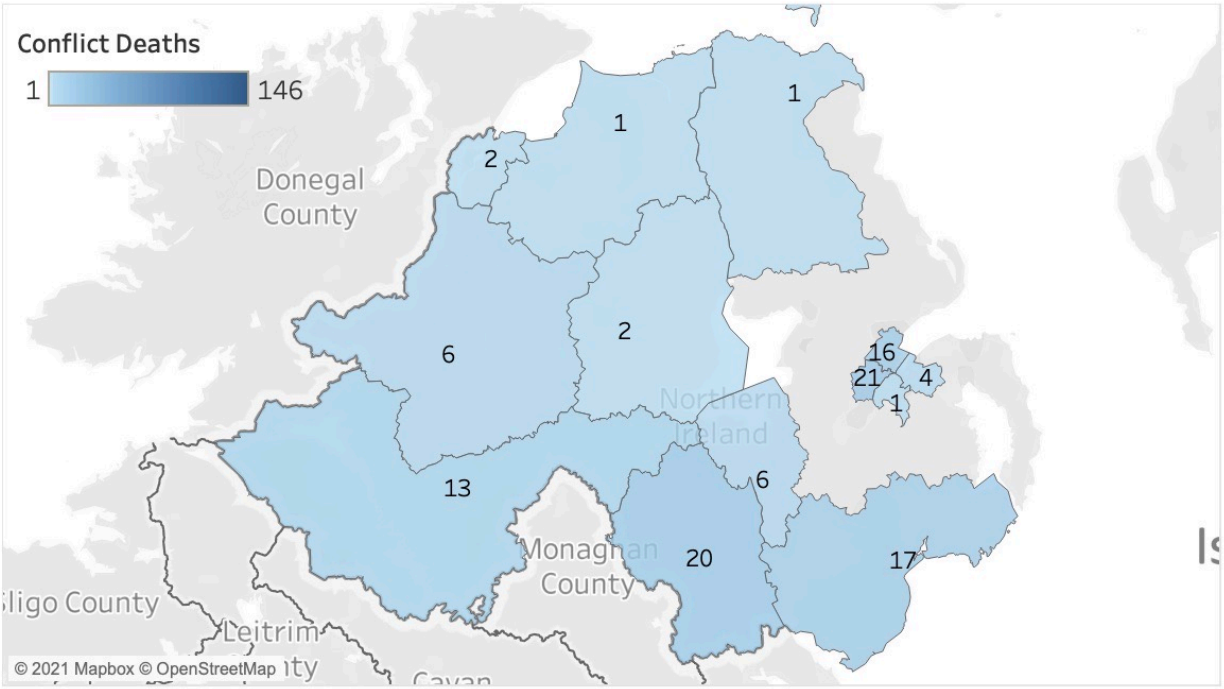
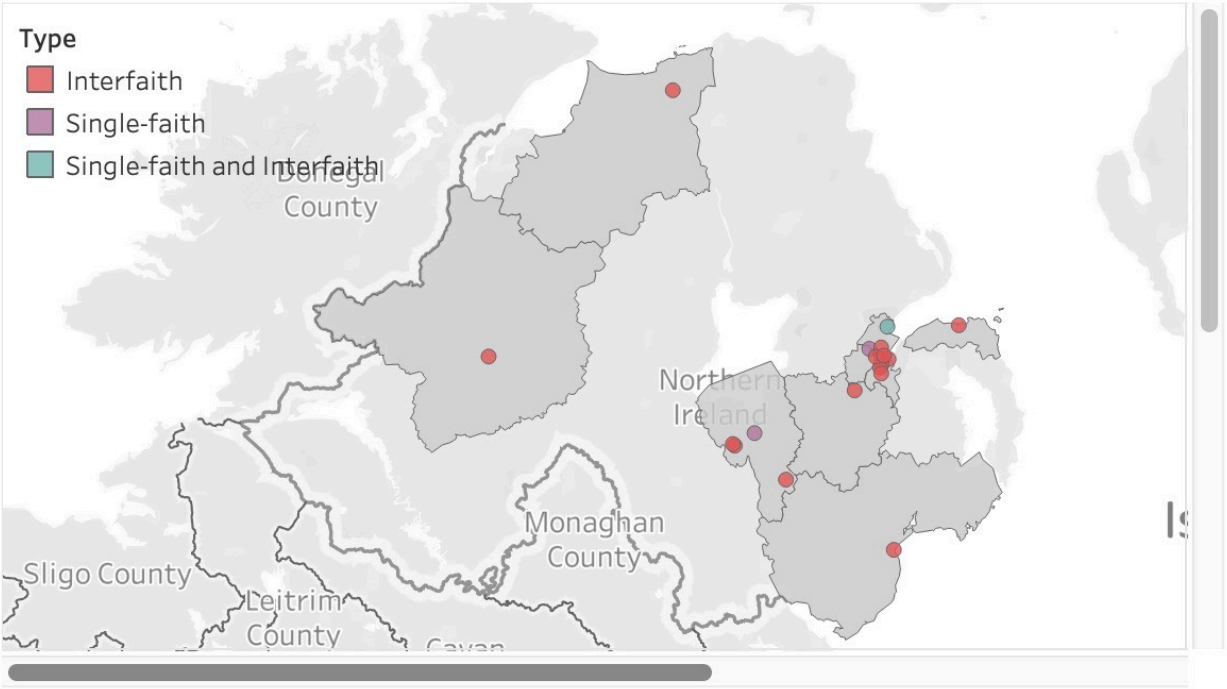


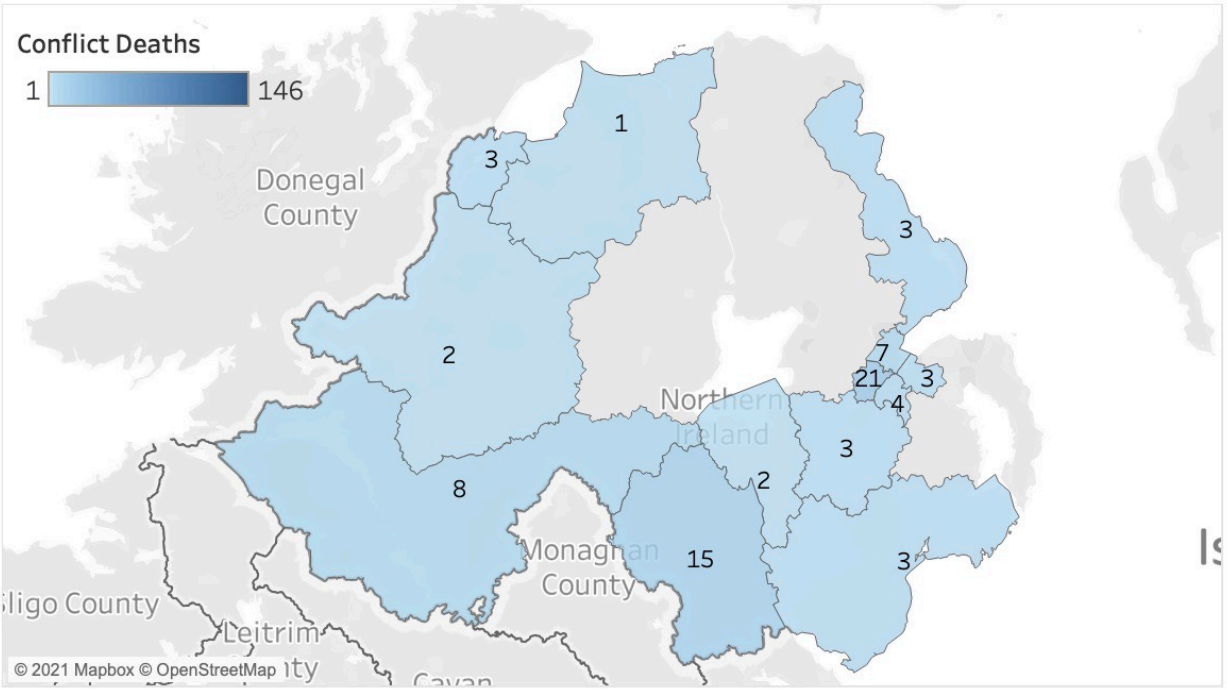
Conflict Deaths - 1979



Peacebuilding Programming - 1980



Conflict Deaths - 1980



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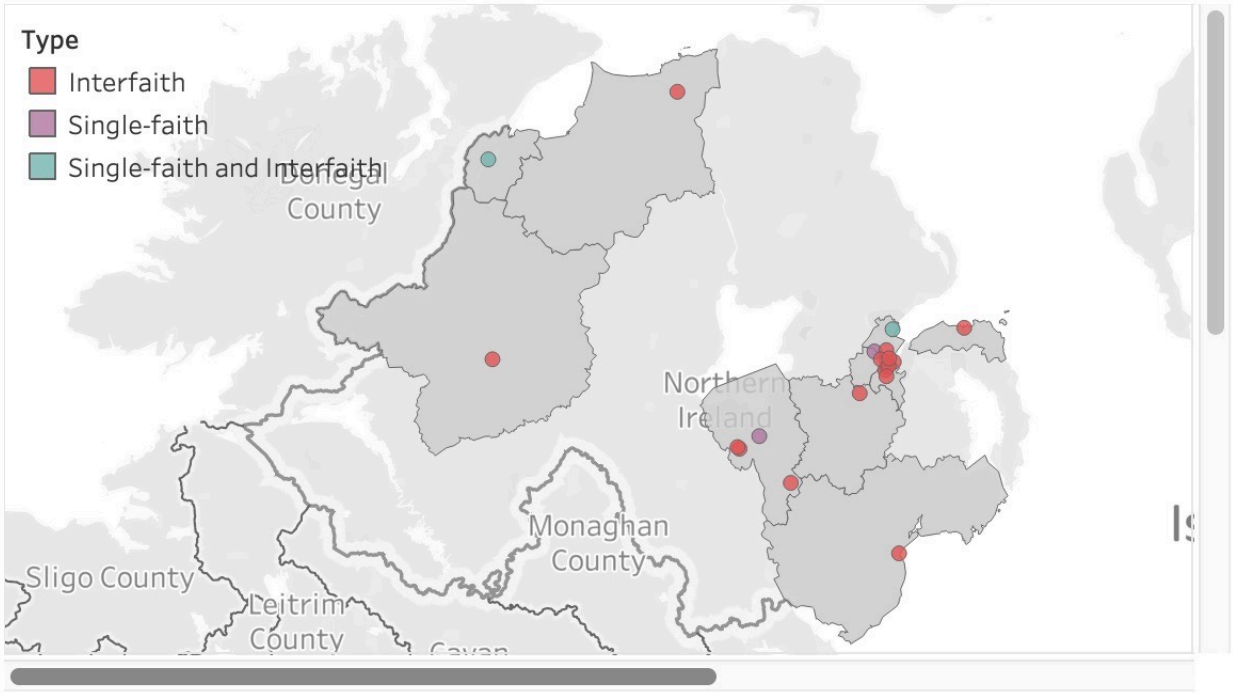
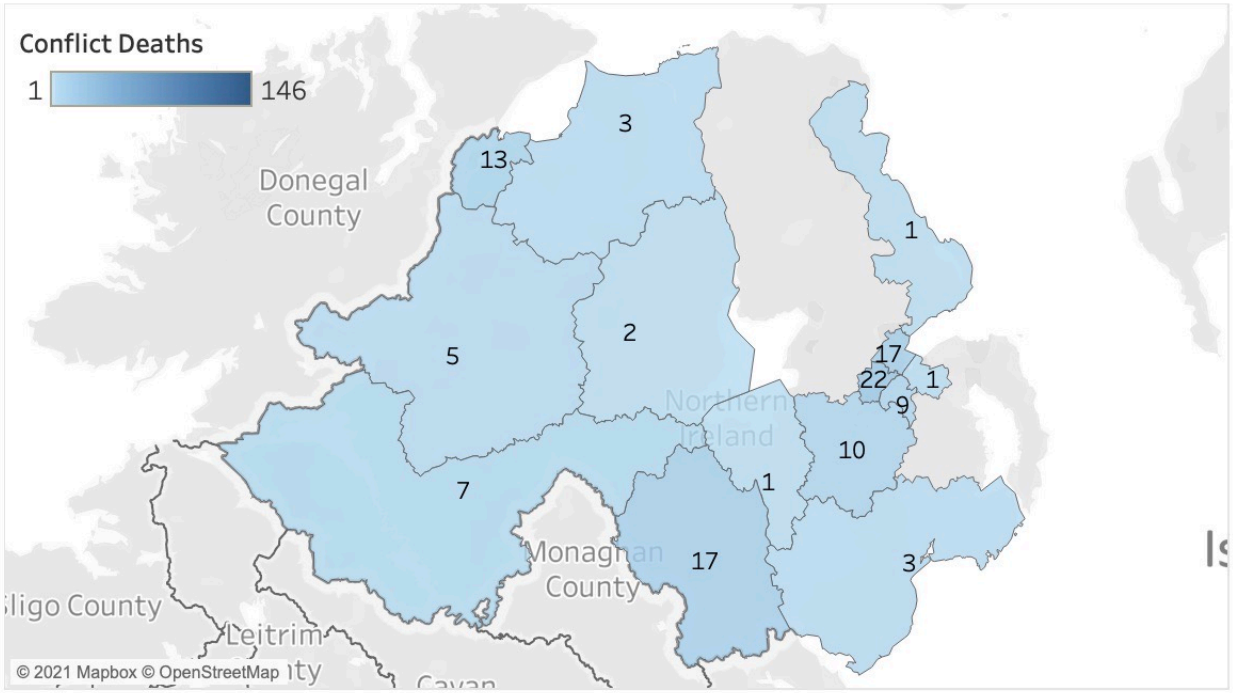
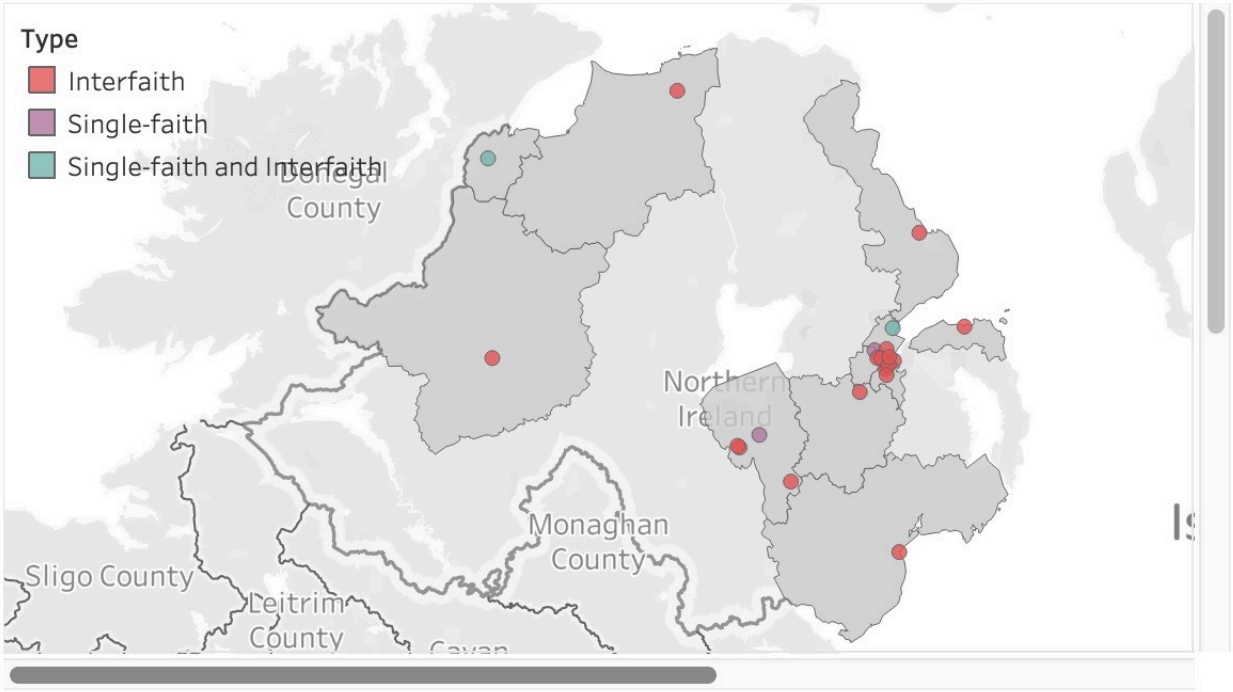


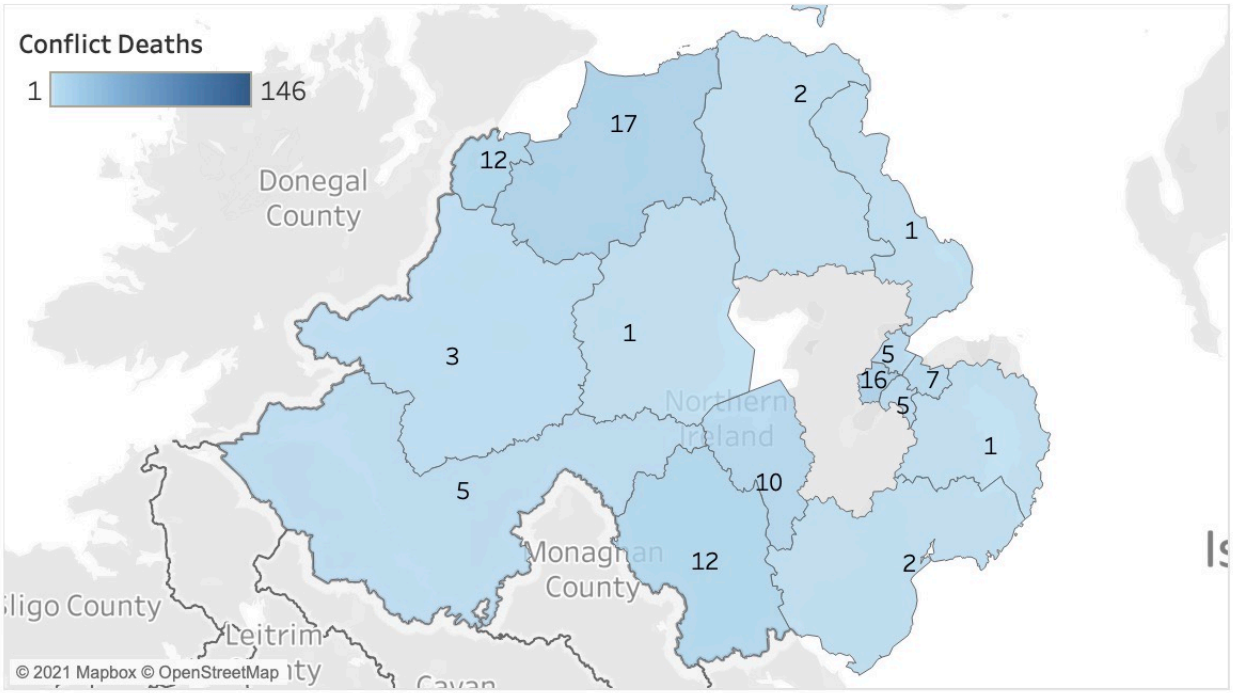
Conflict Deaths - 1981



Peacebuilding Programming - 1982



Conflict Deaths - 1982



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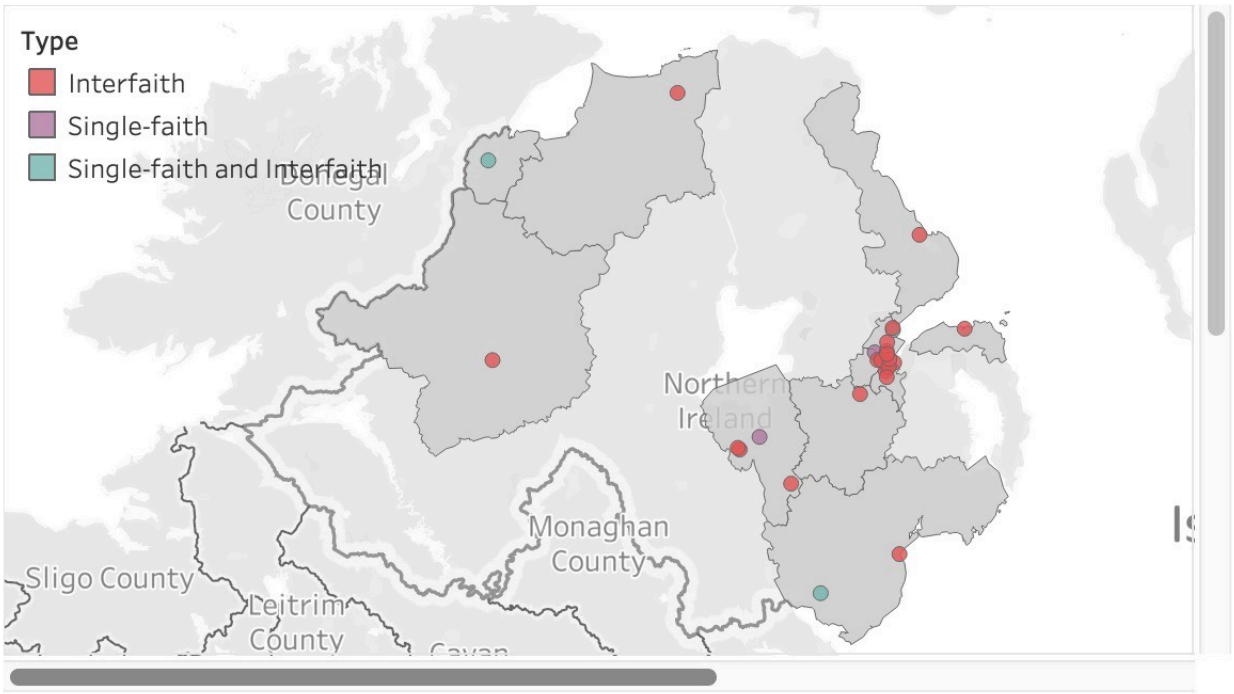
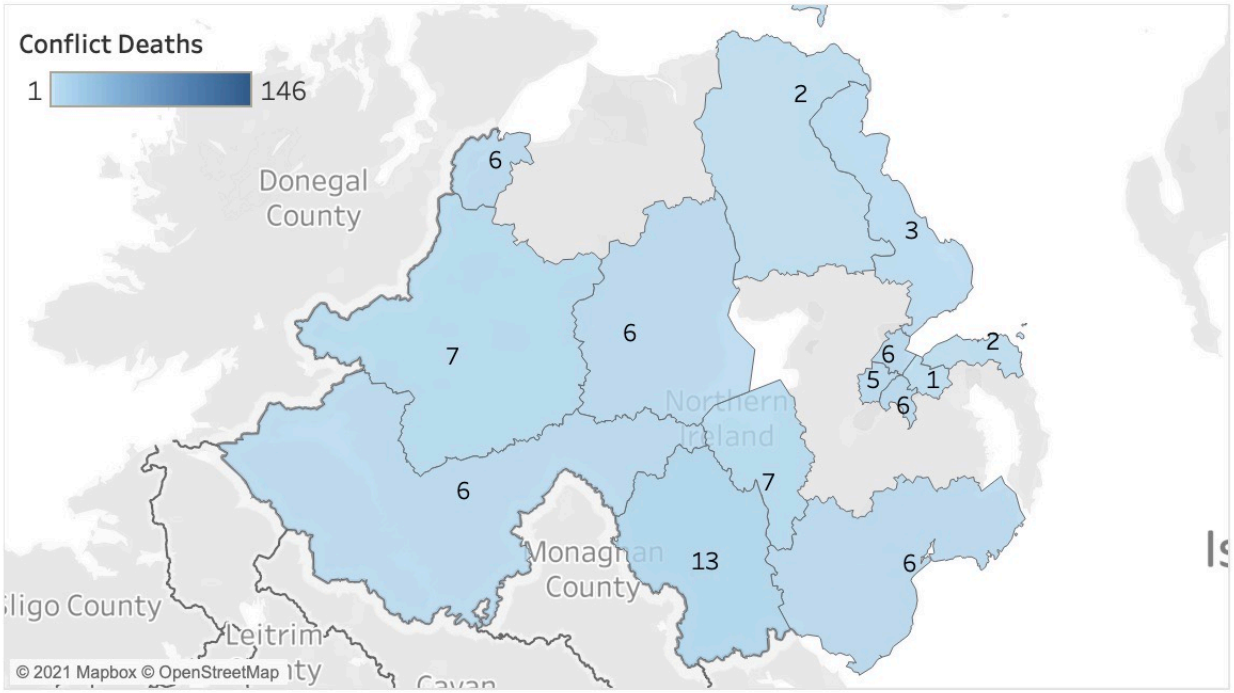
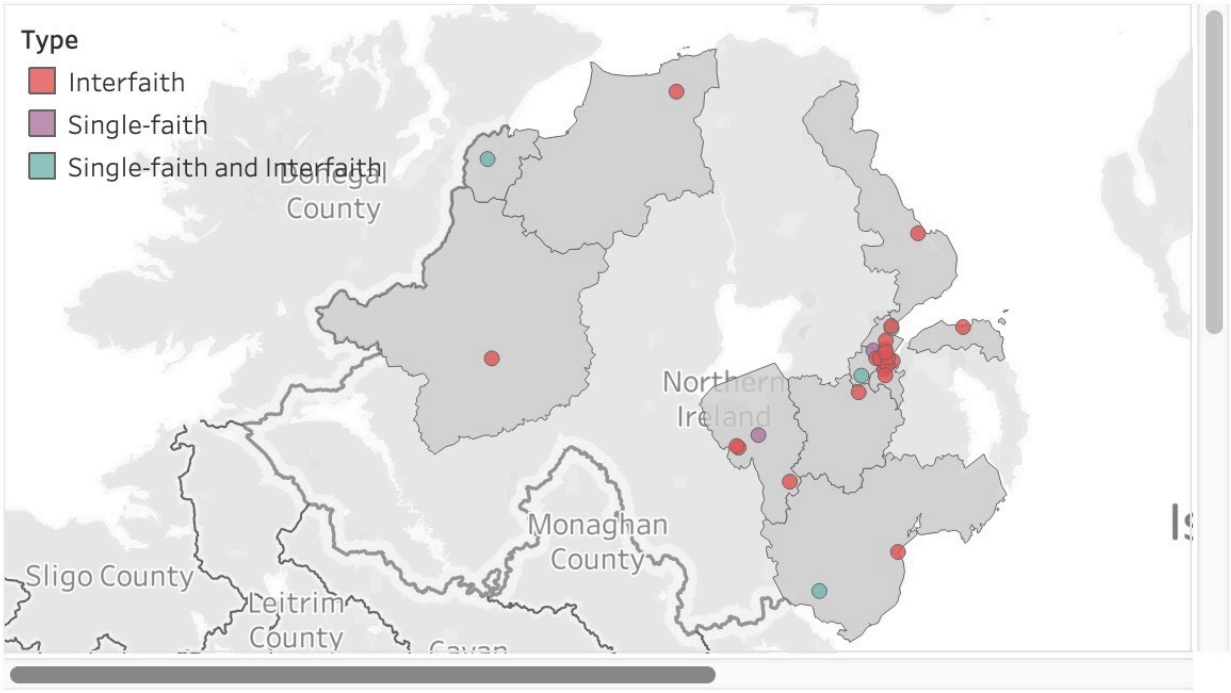


Conflict Deaths - 1983



Peacebuilding Programming - 1984



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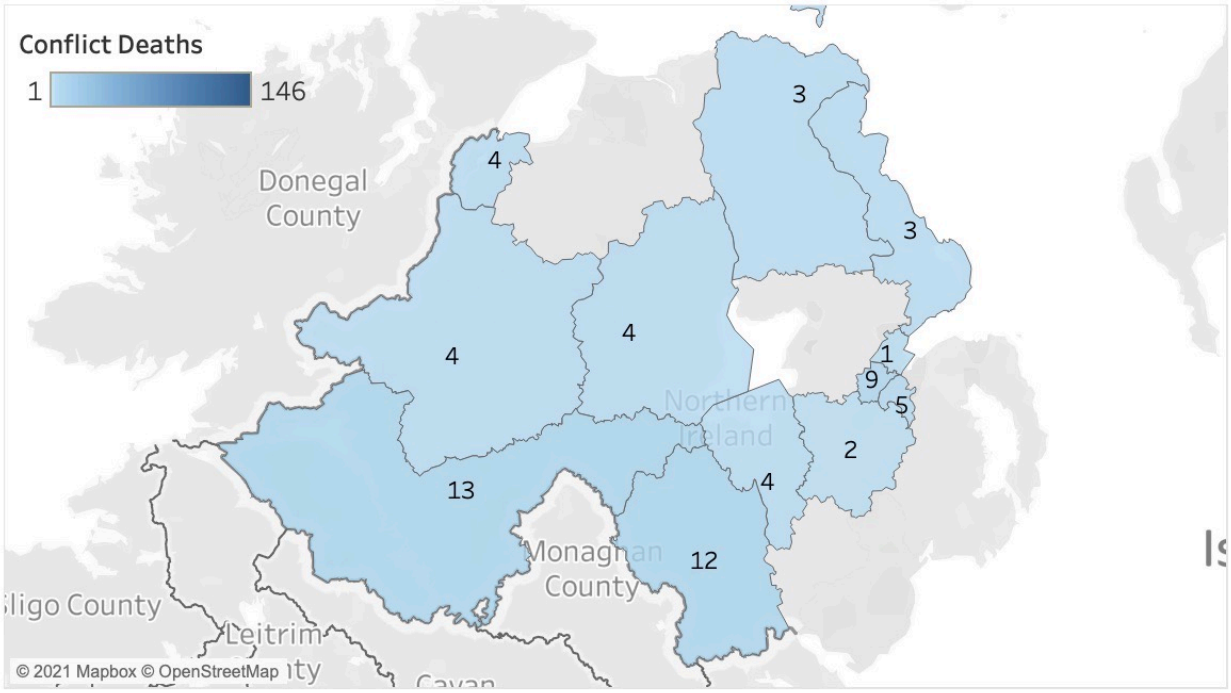

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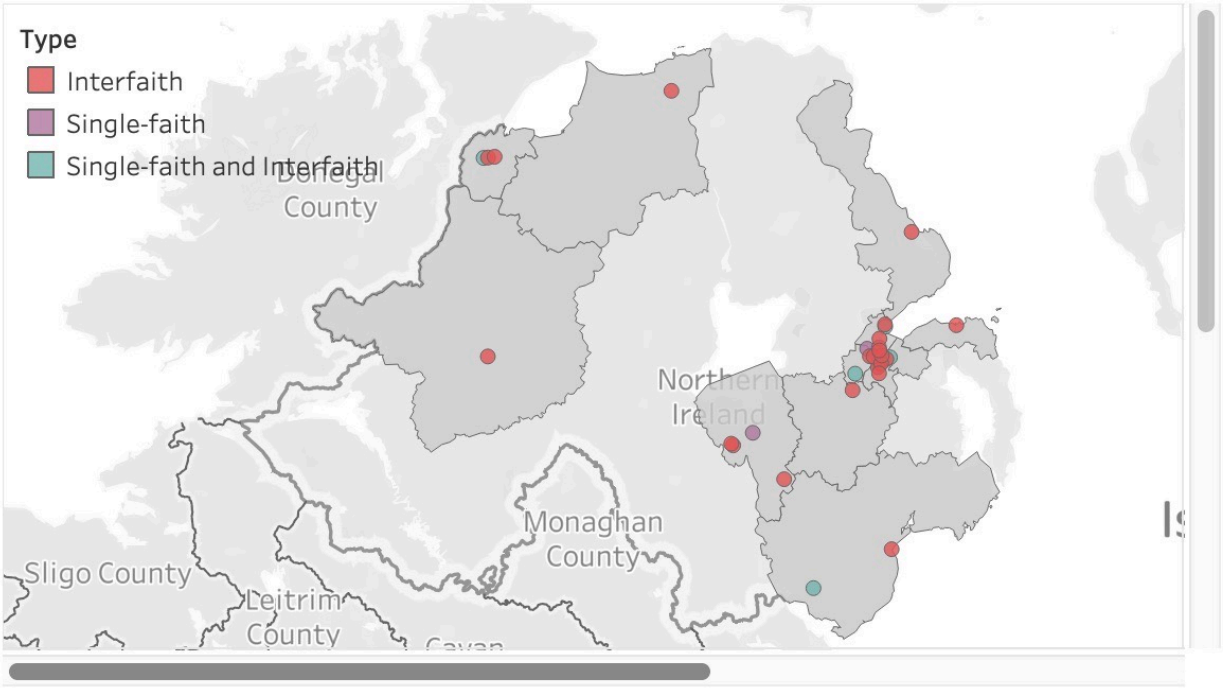

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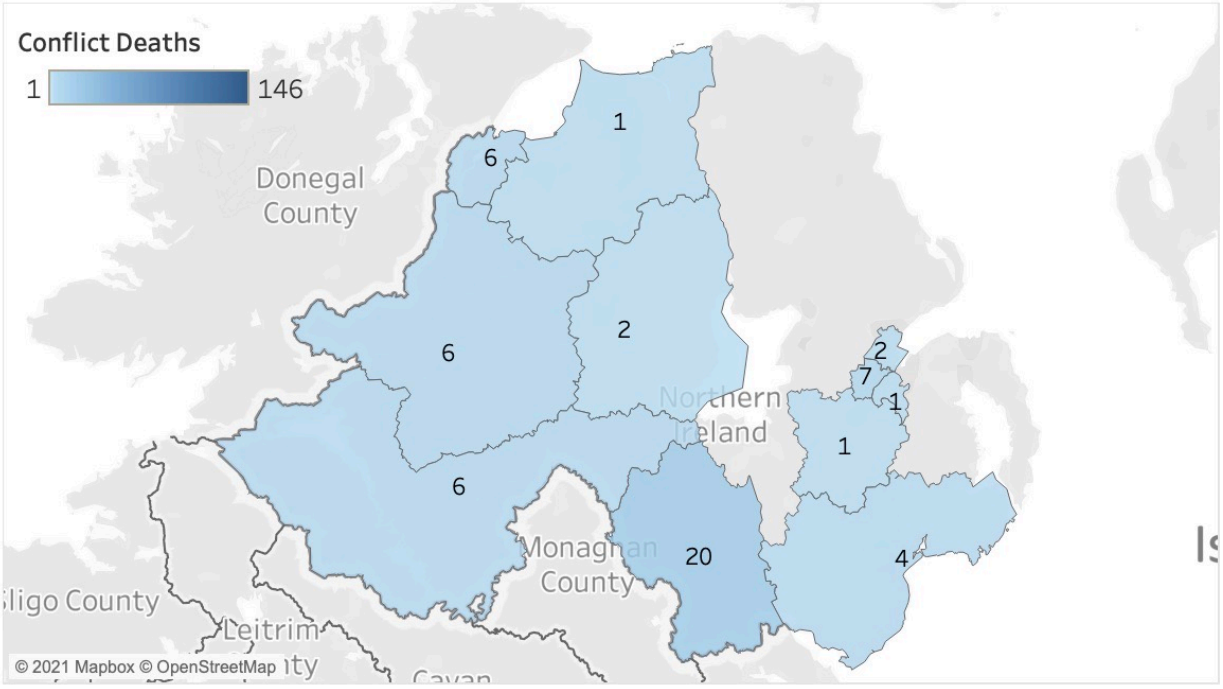

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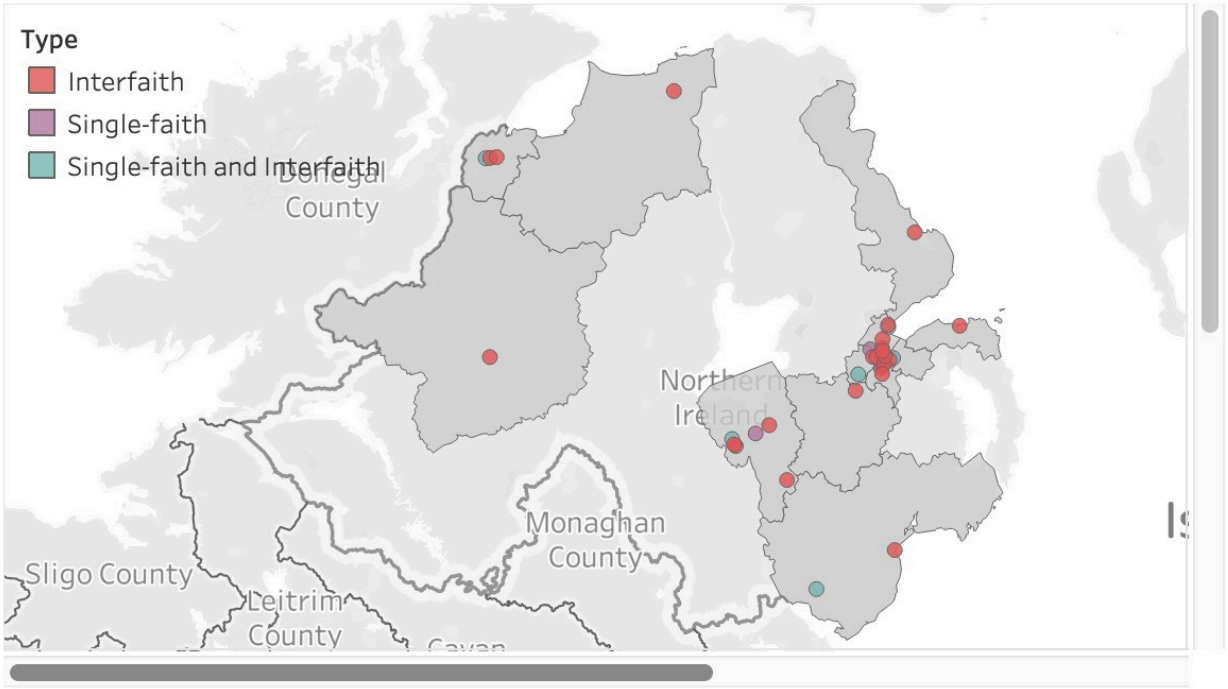
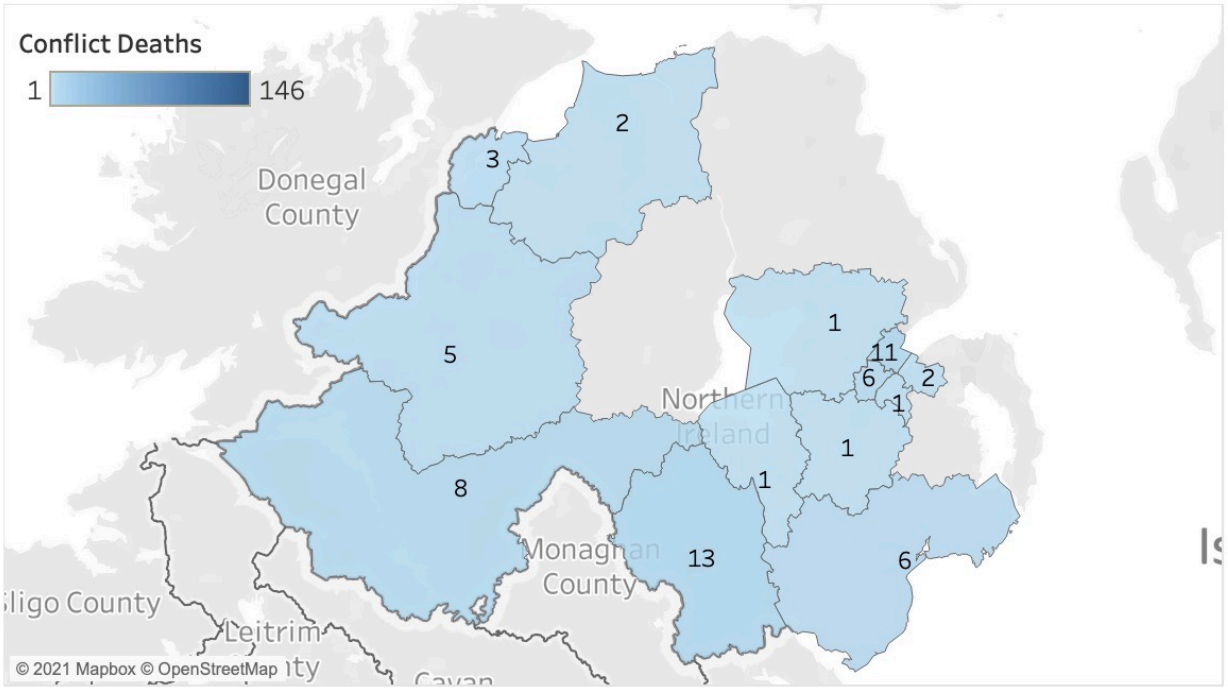


Conflict Deaths - 1986



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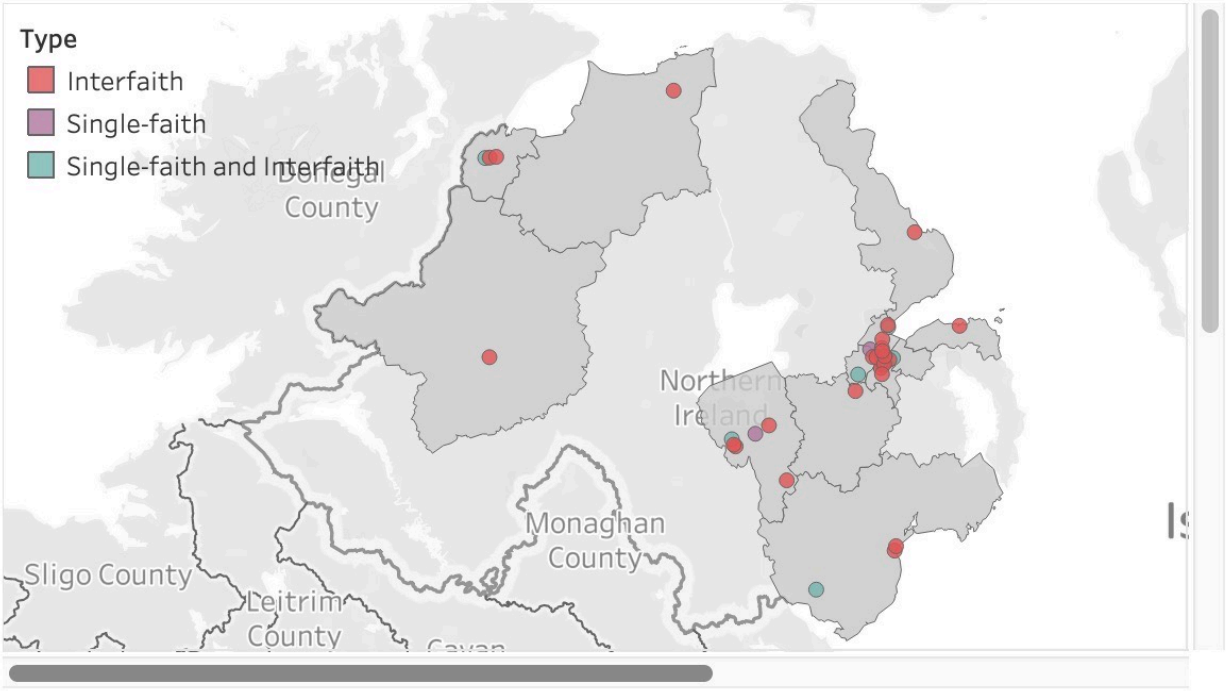
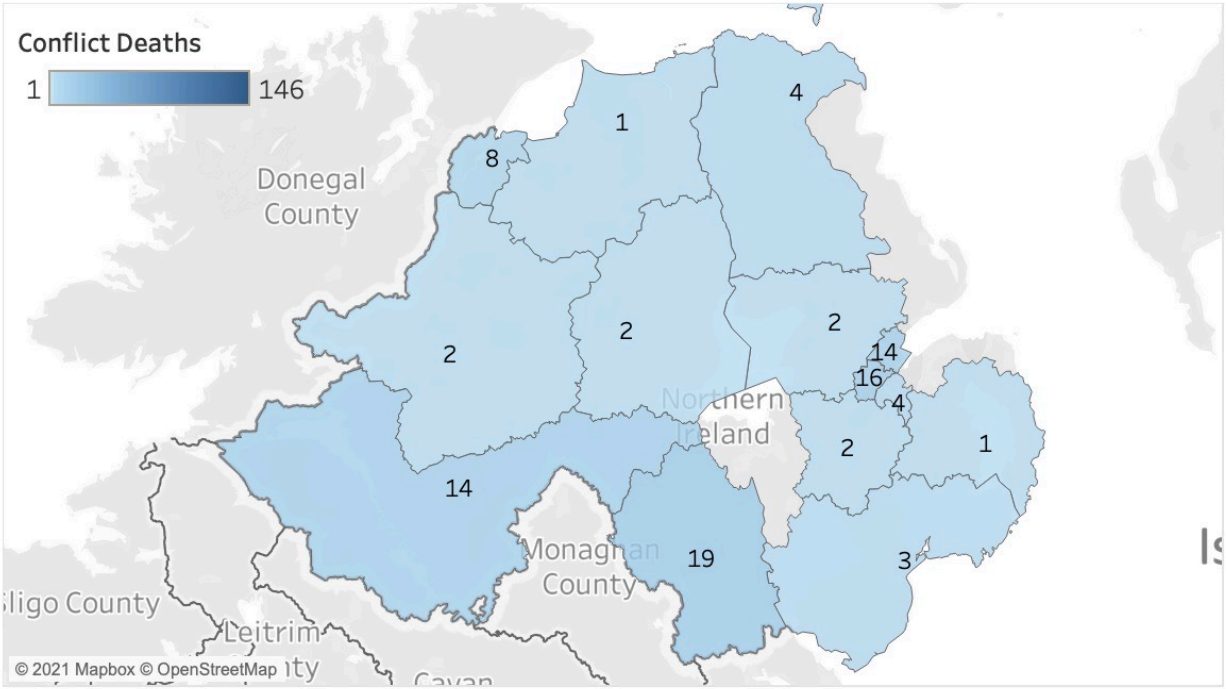
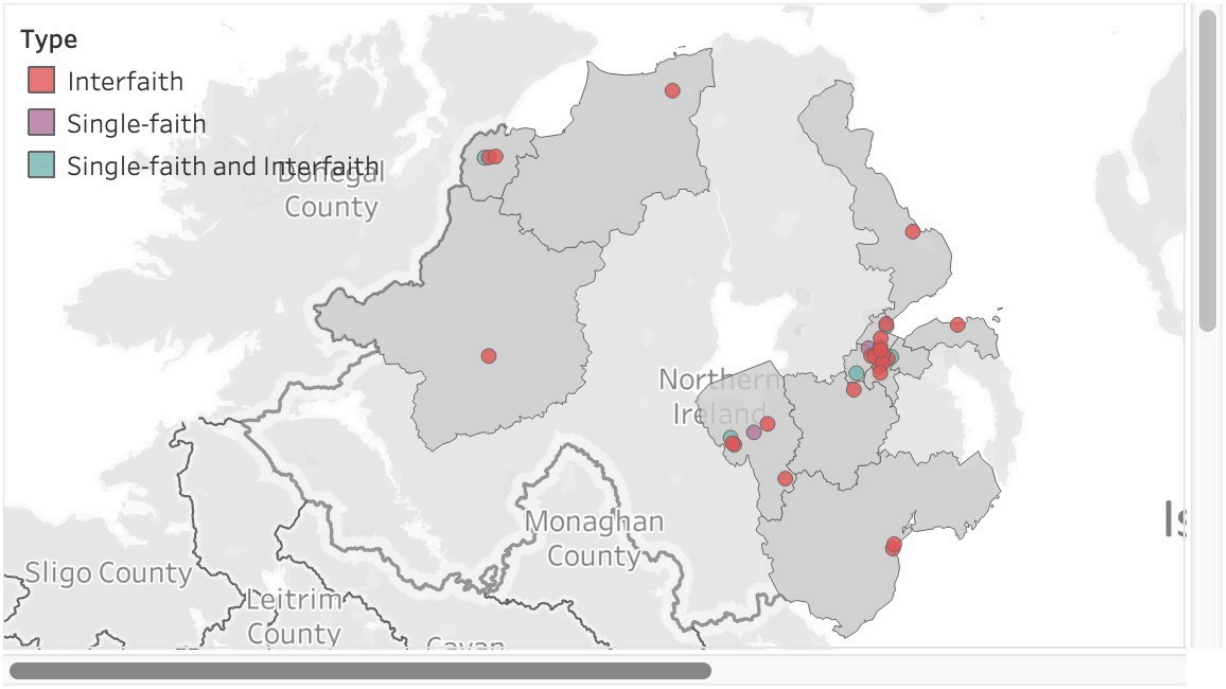


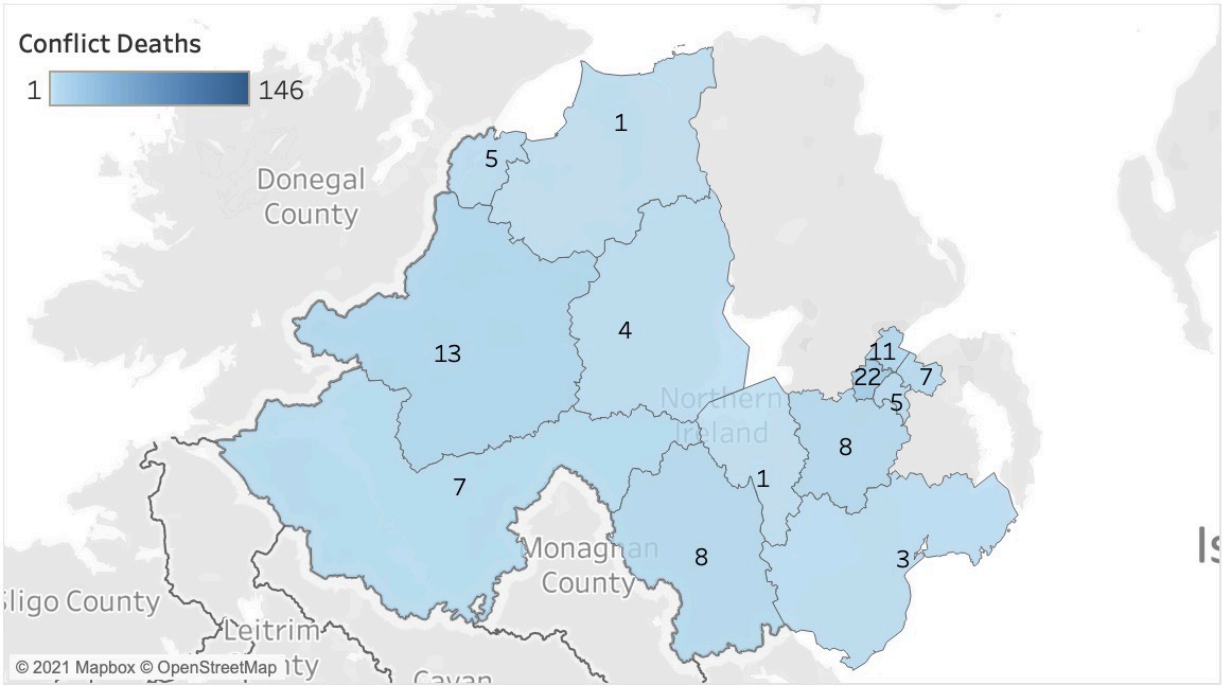
Conflict Deaths - 1987



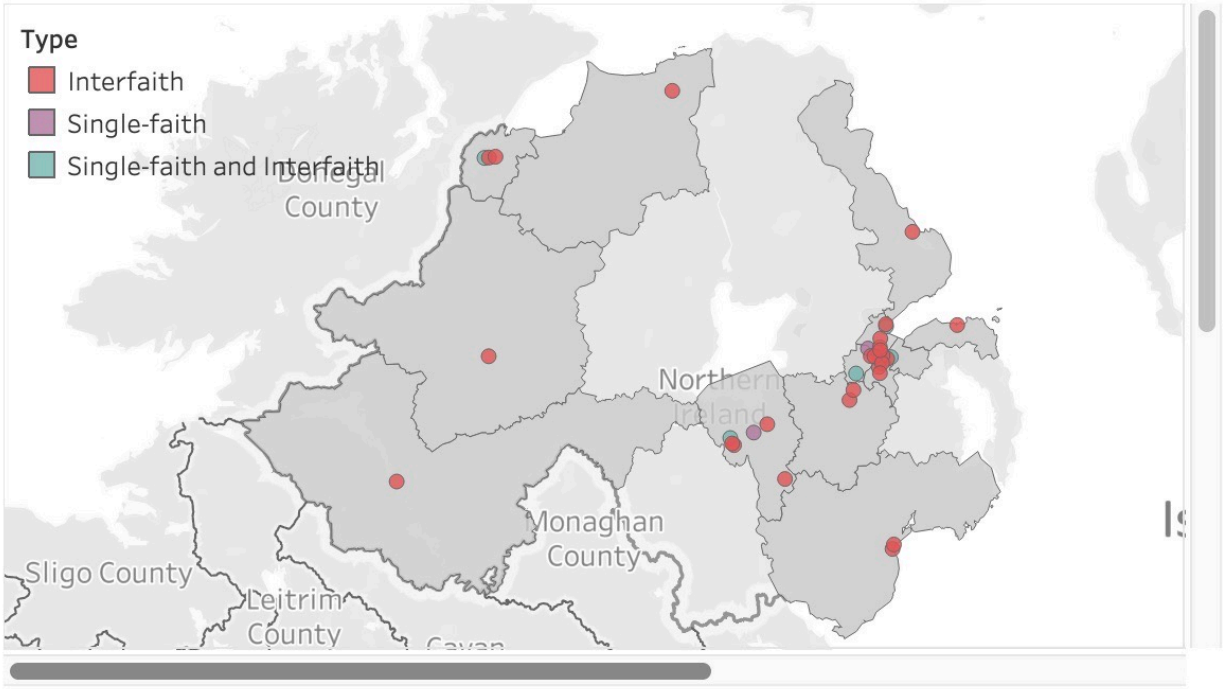
Peacebuilding Programming - 1988



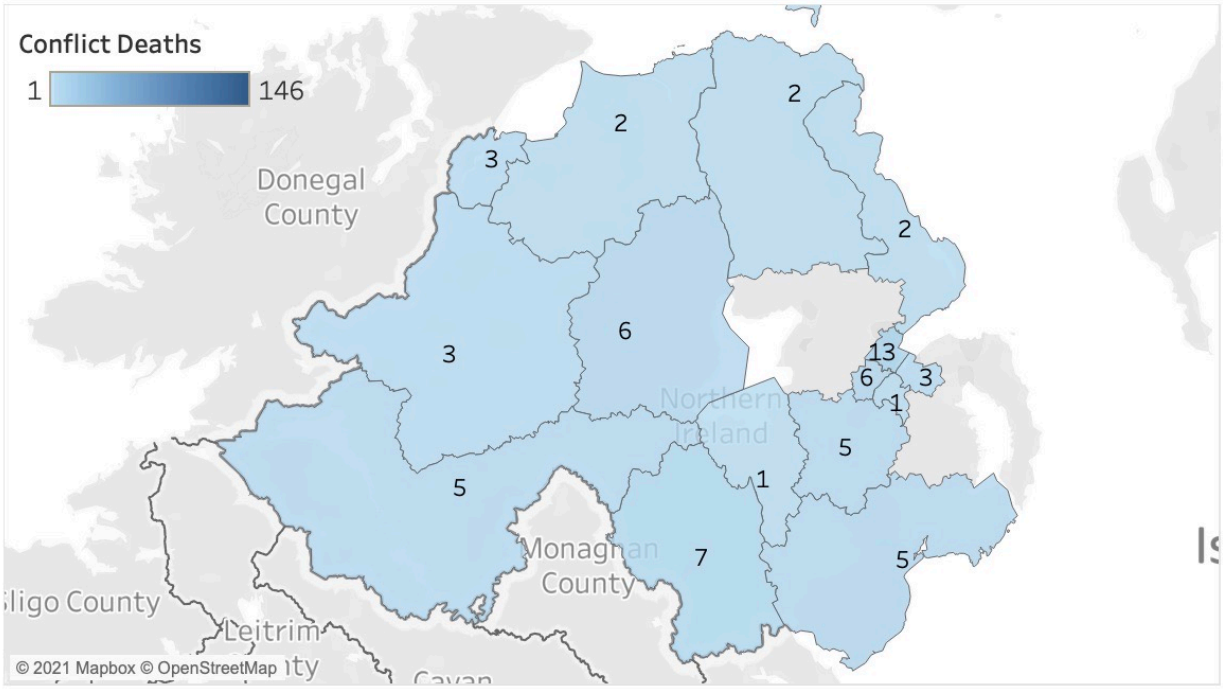
Conflict Deaths - 1988



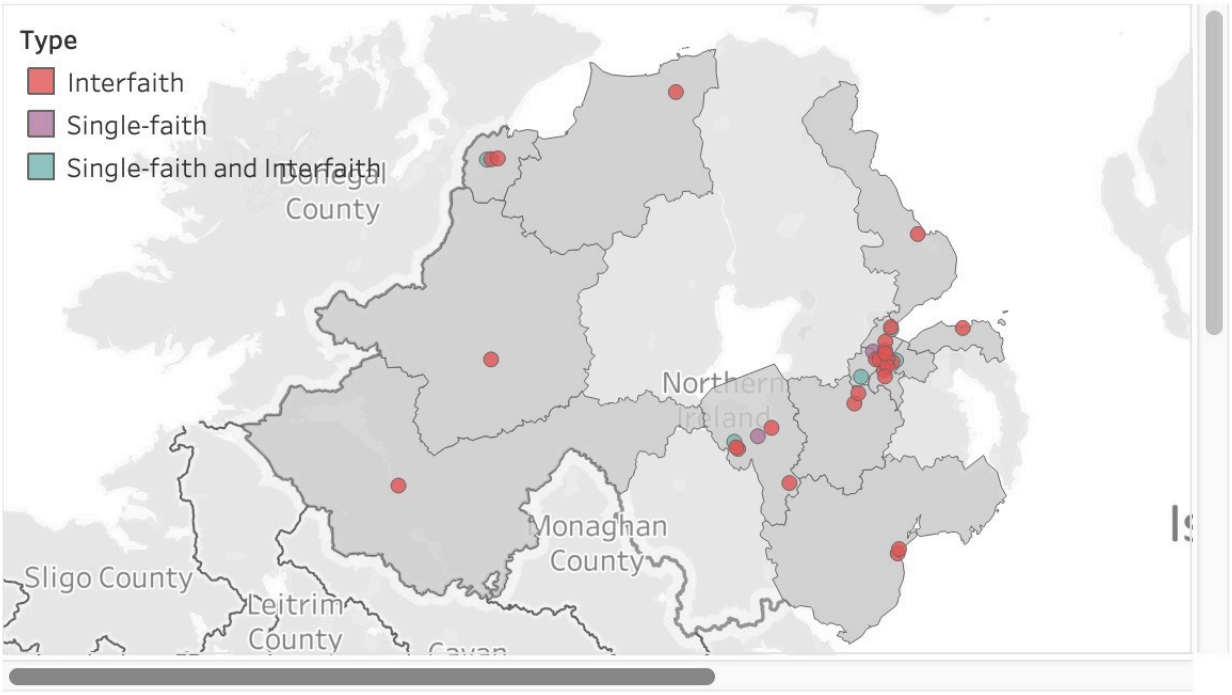
Peacebuilding Programming - 1989



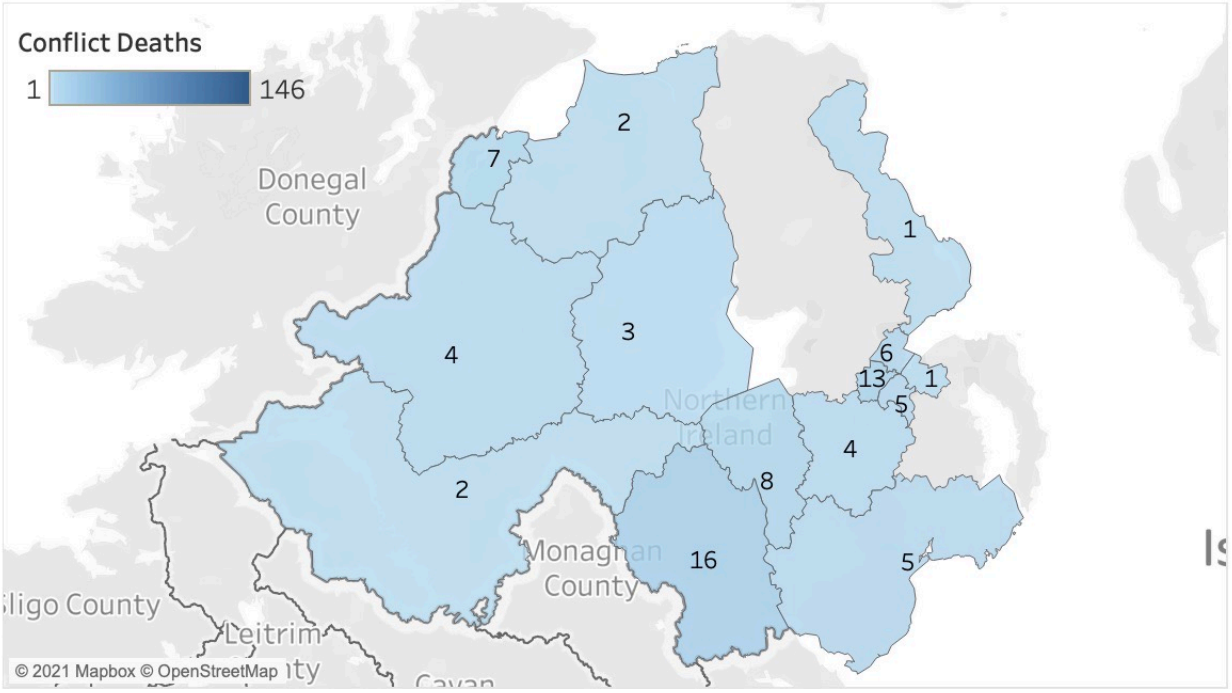
Conflict Deaths - 1989



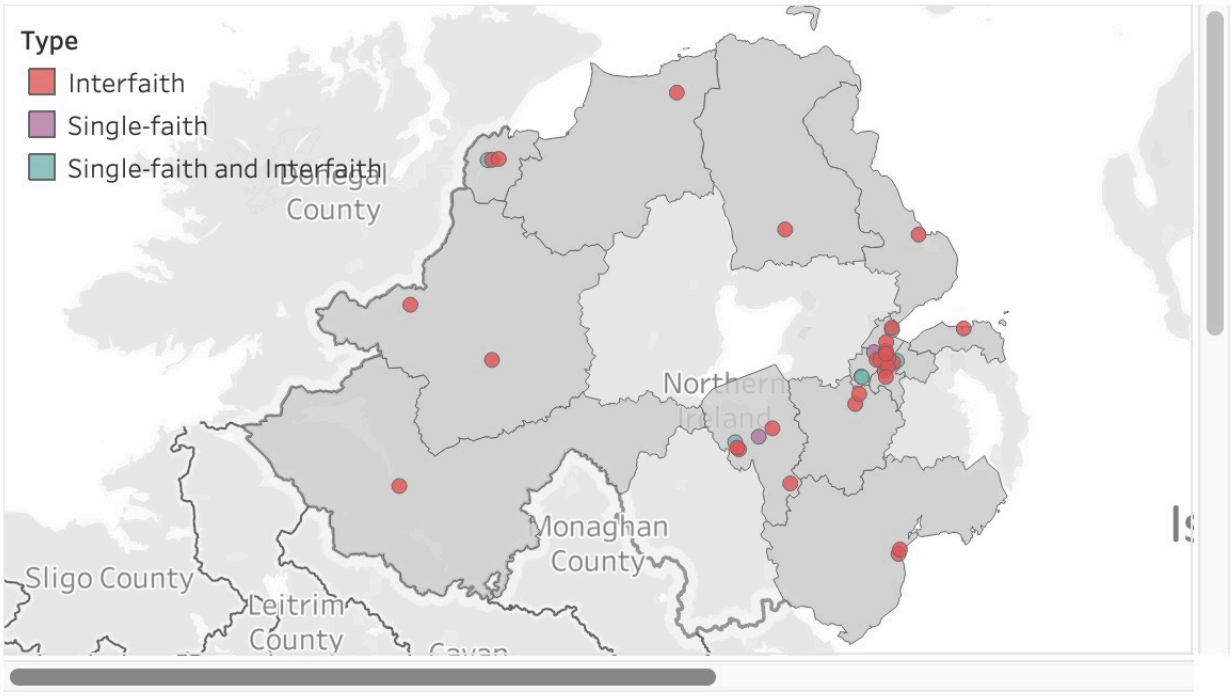
Peacebuilding Programming - 1990



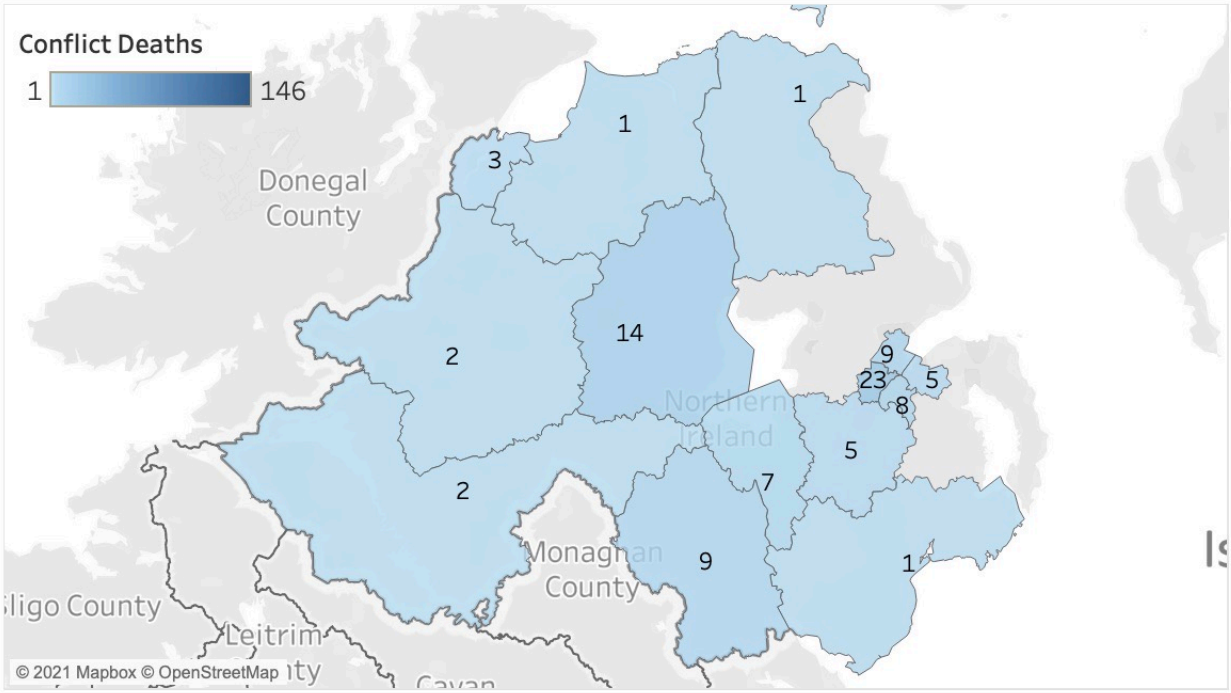
Conflict Deaths - 1990



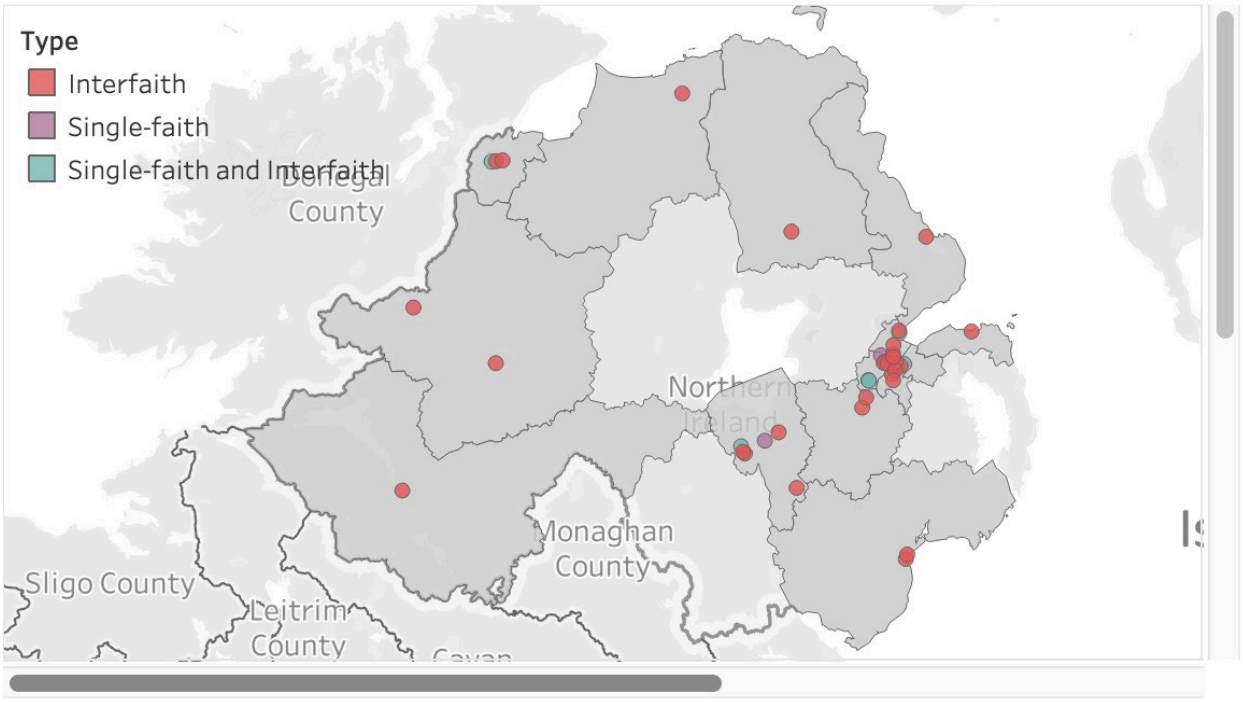
Peacebuilding Programming - 1991



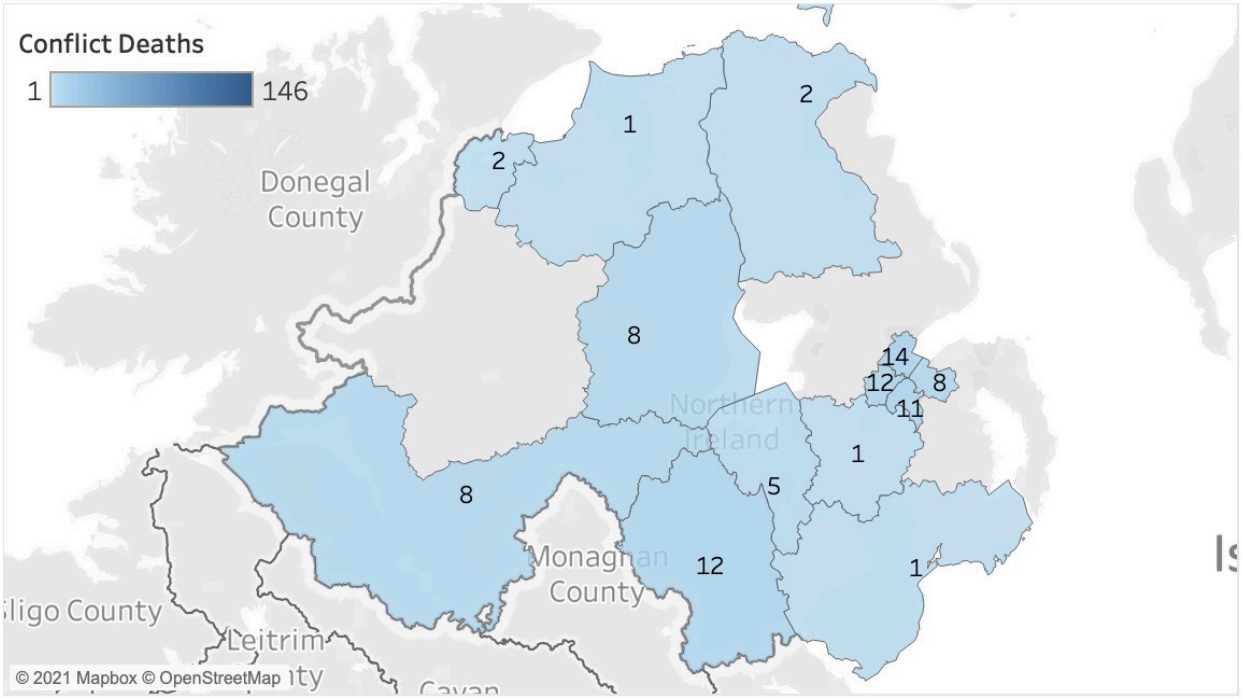
Conflict Deaths - 1991



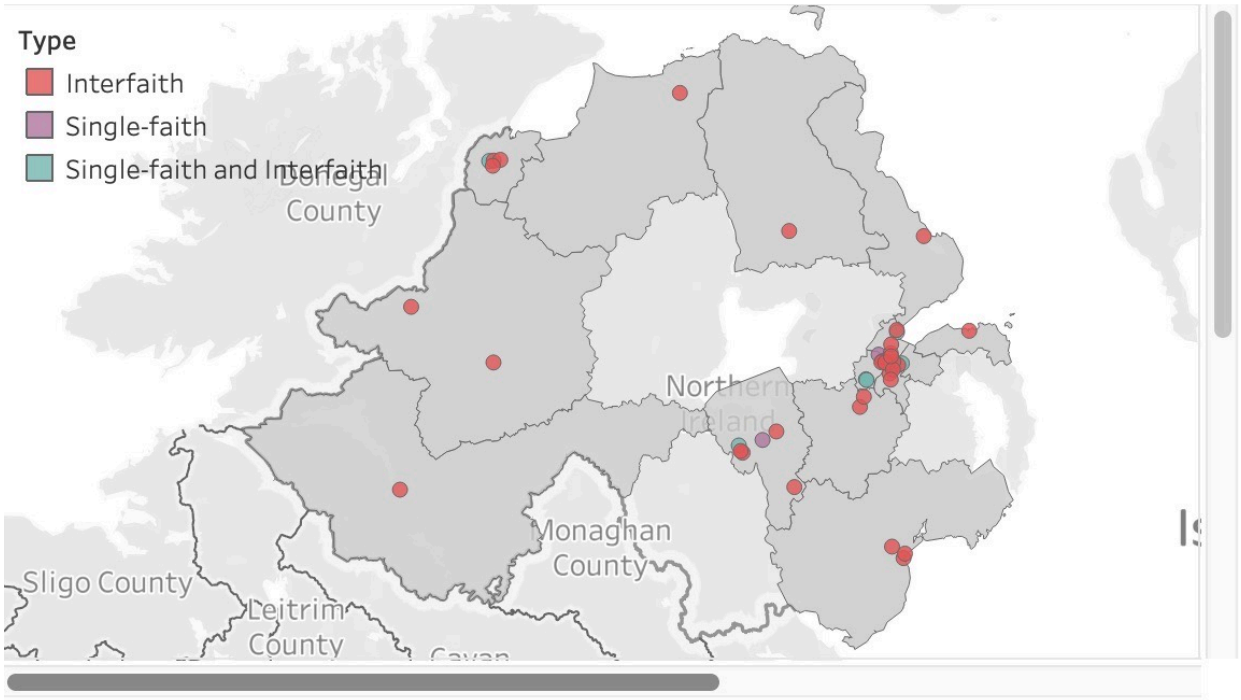
Peacebuilding Programming - 1992



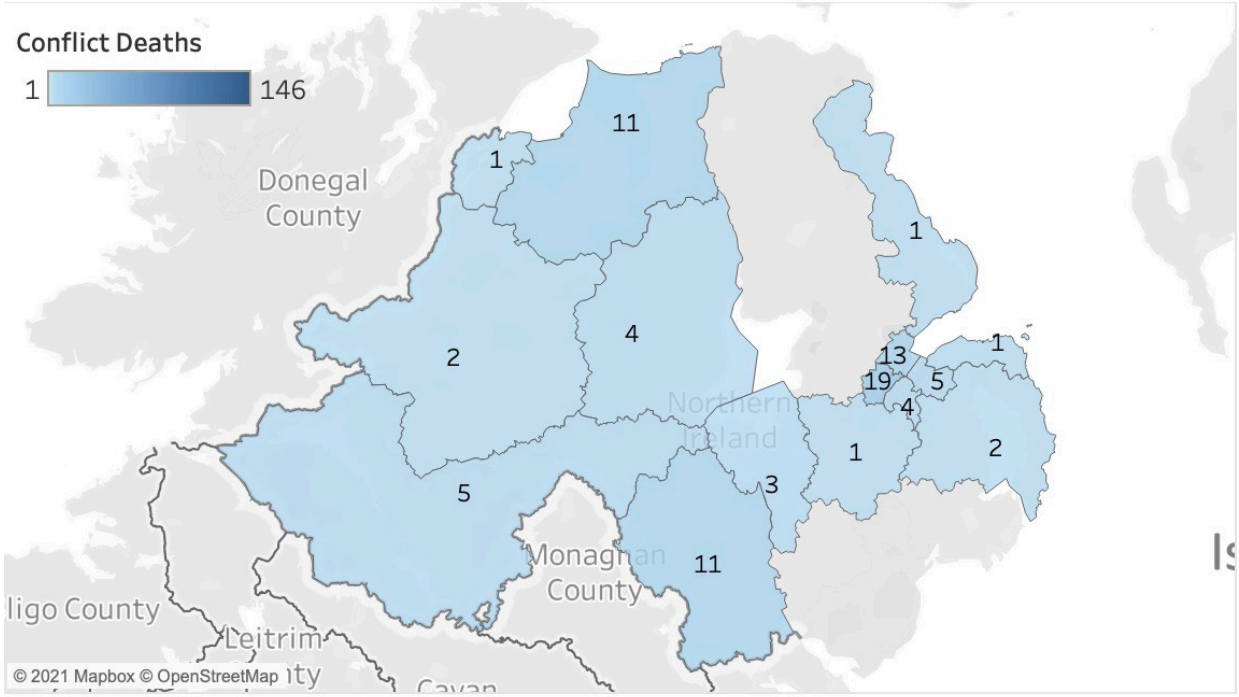
Conflict Deaths - 1992



Peacebuilding Programming - 1993



Conflict Deaths - 1993



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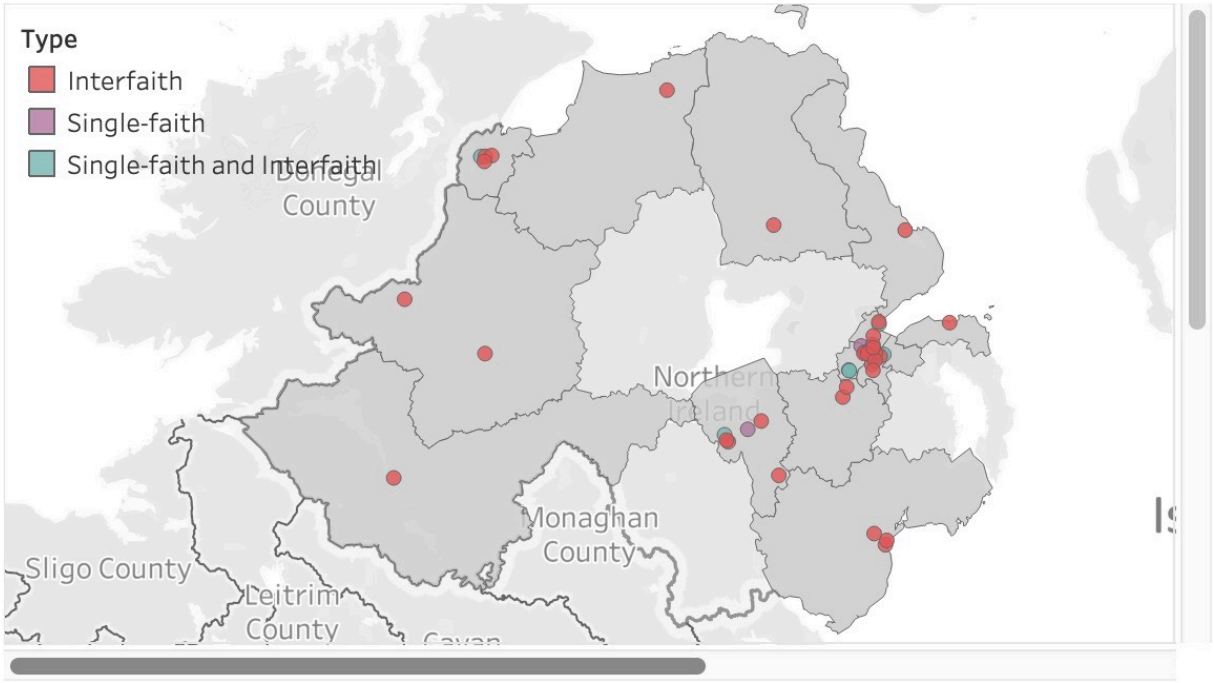
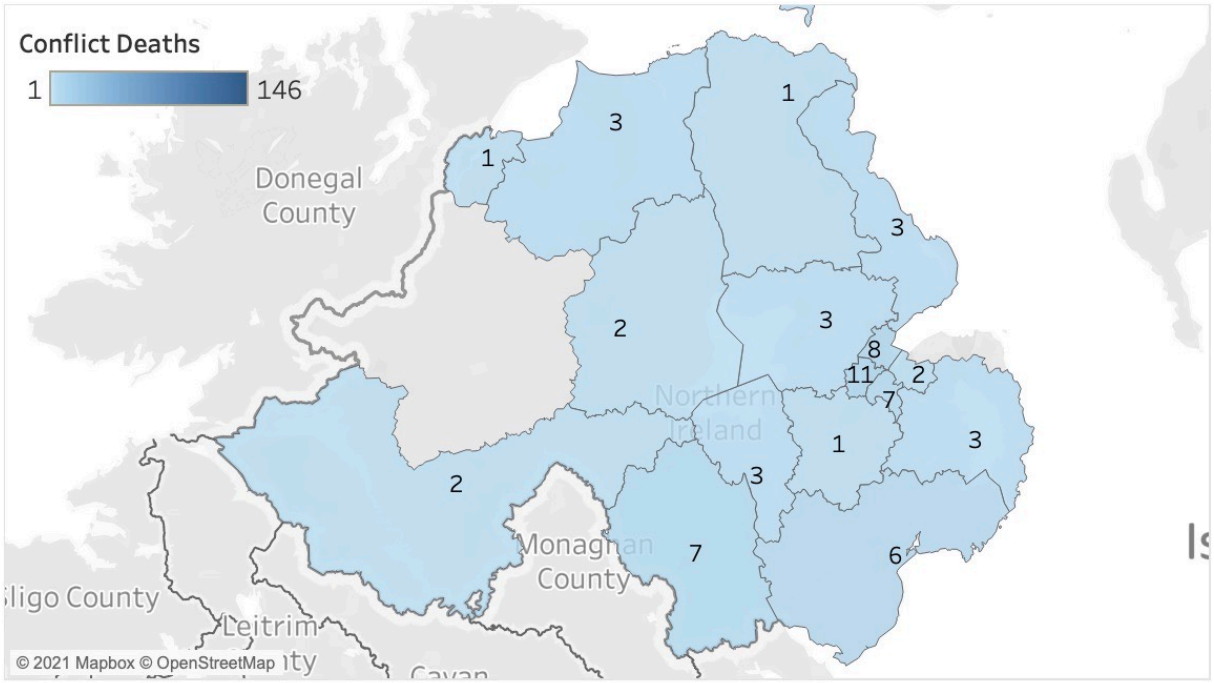
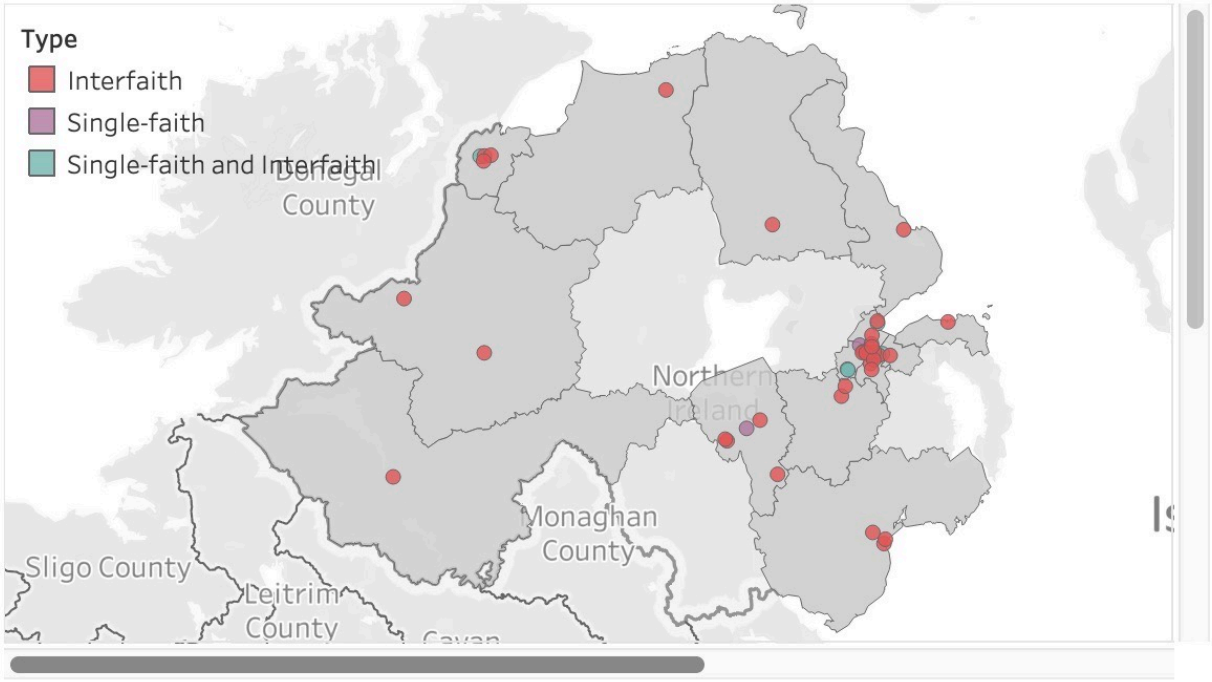


Conflict Deaths - 1994

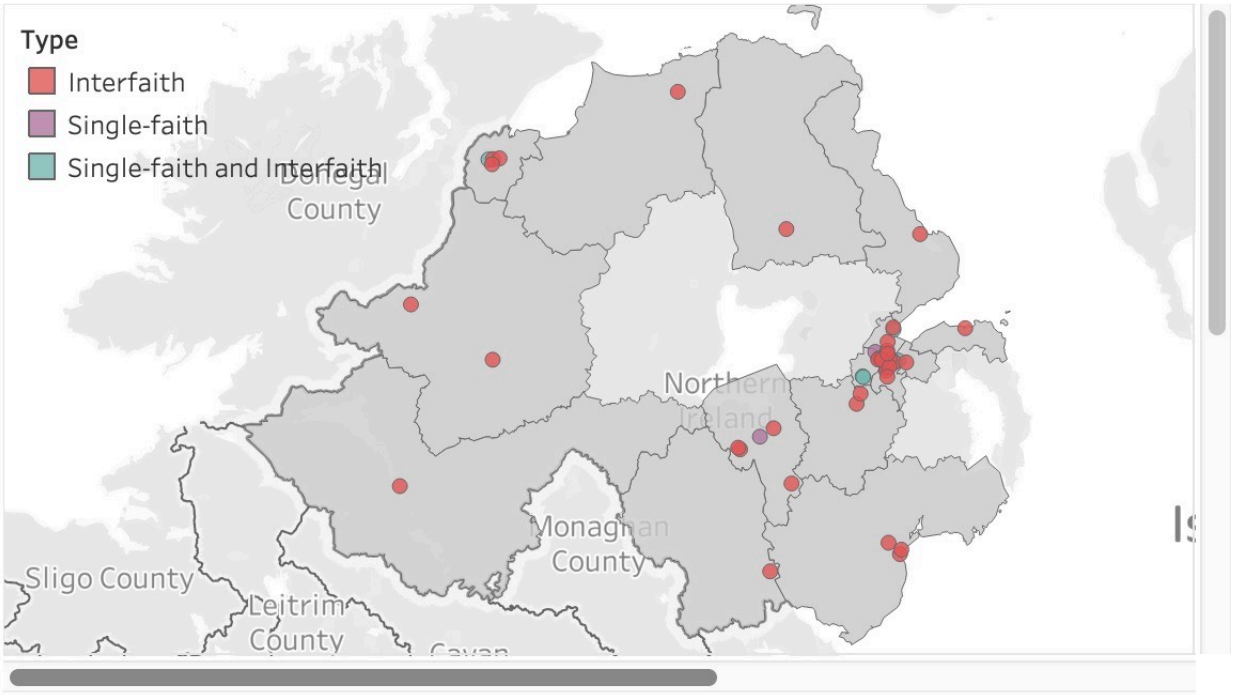


Peacebuilding Programming - 1995

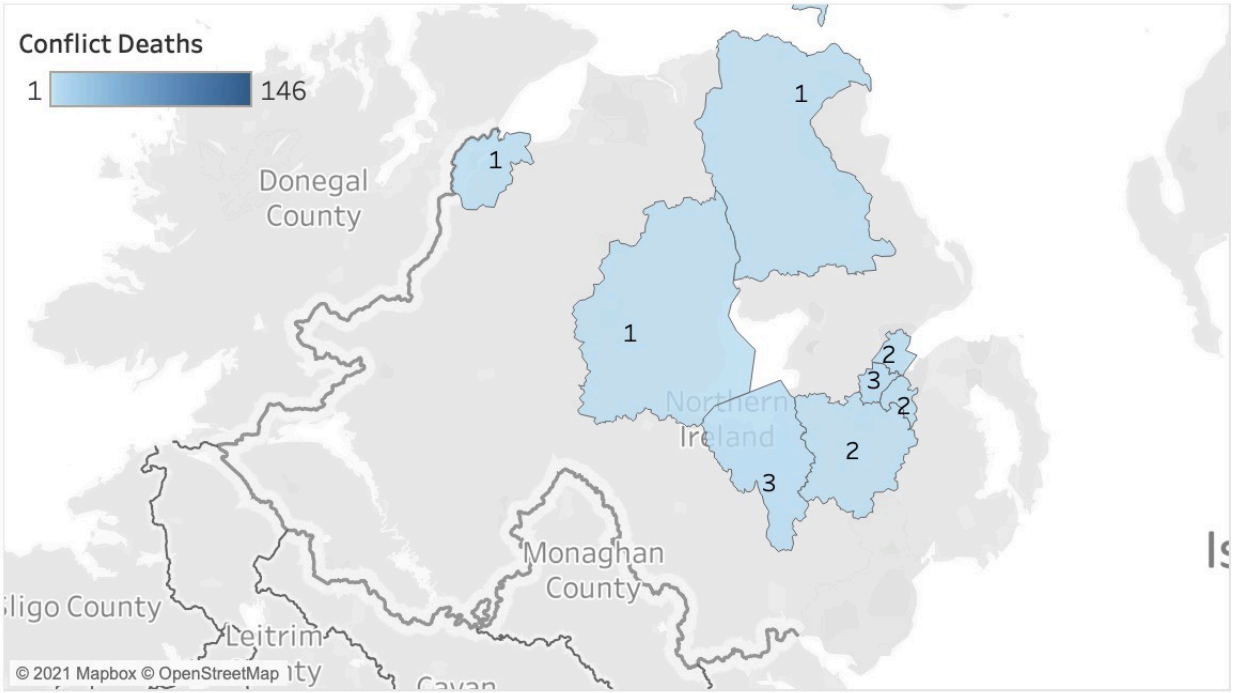


Conflict Deaths - 1995

Peacebuilding Programming - 1996



Conflict Deaths - 1996



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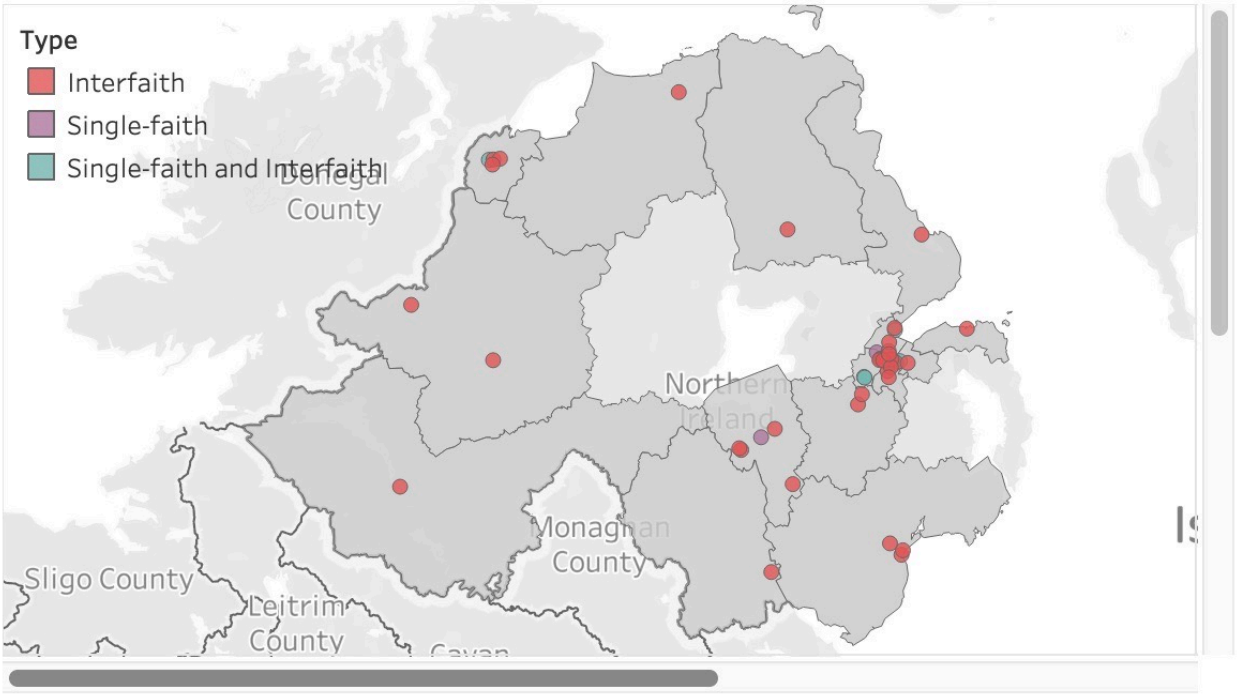
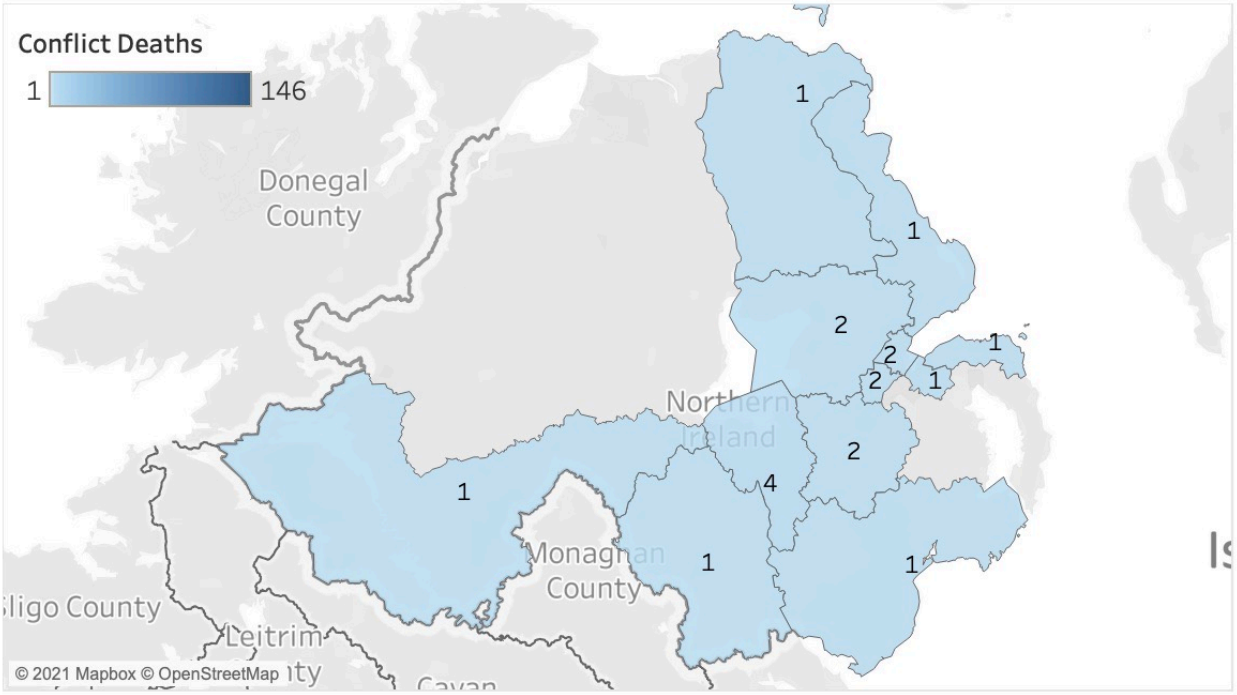


Conflict Deaths - 1997



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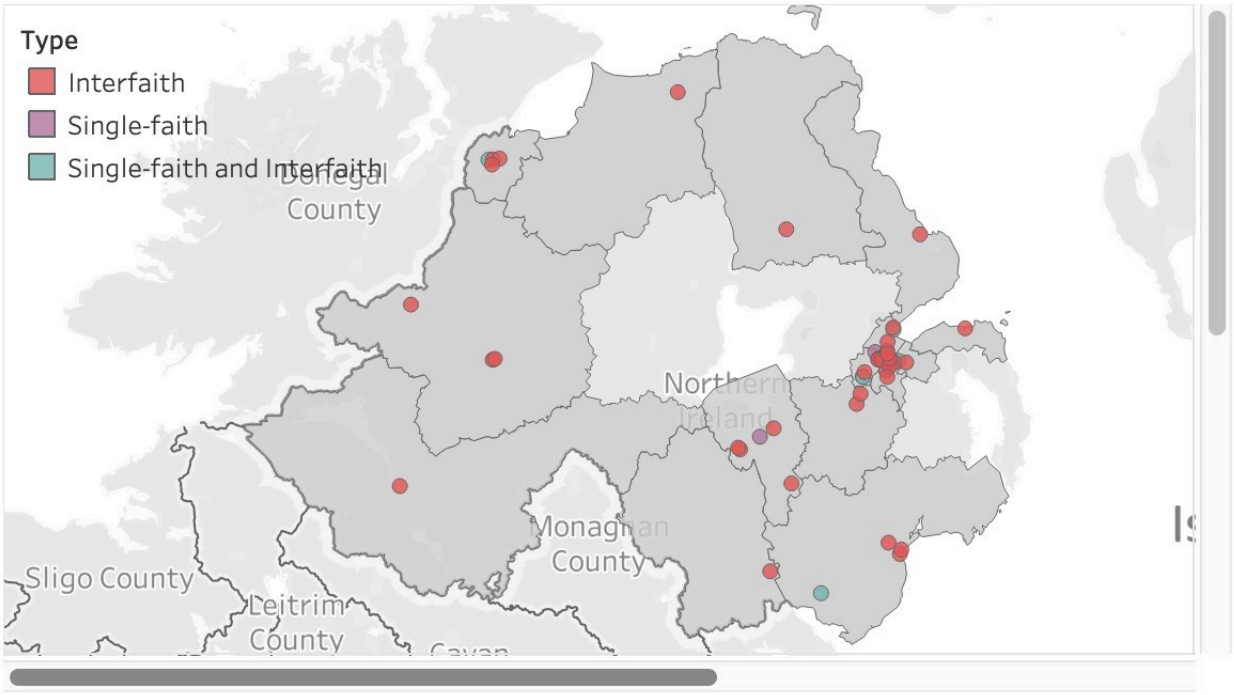
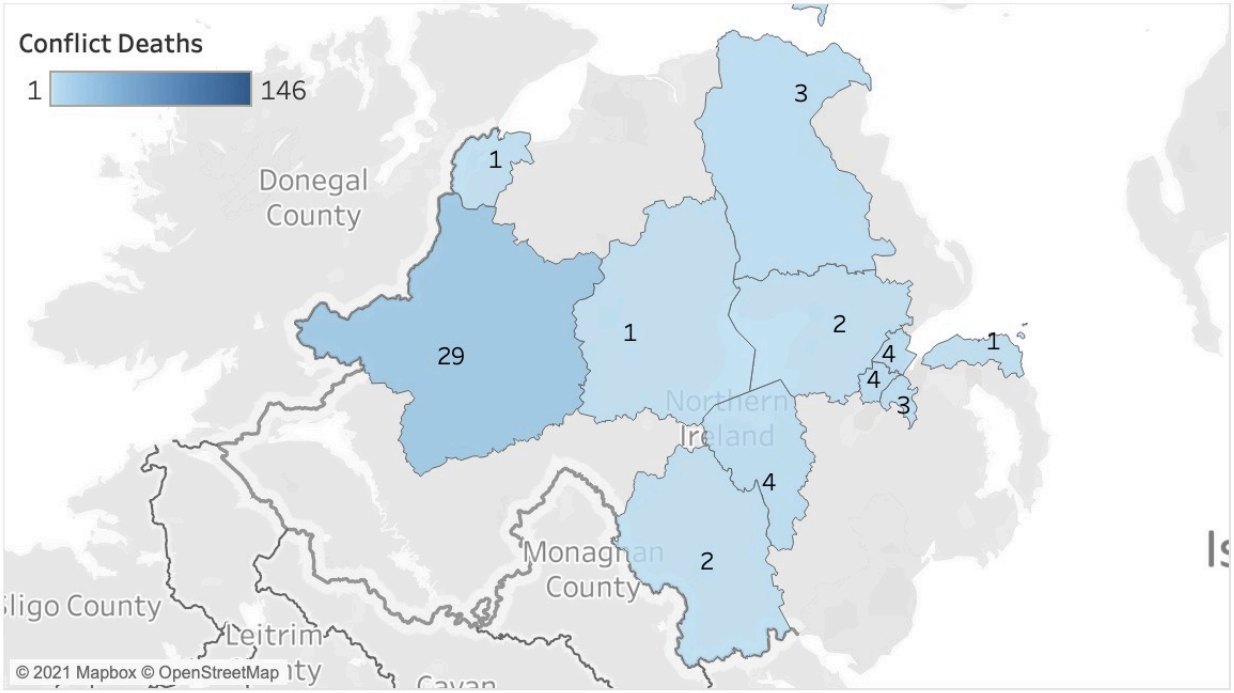


Conflict Deaths - 1998



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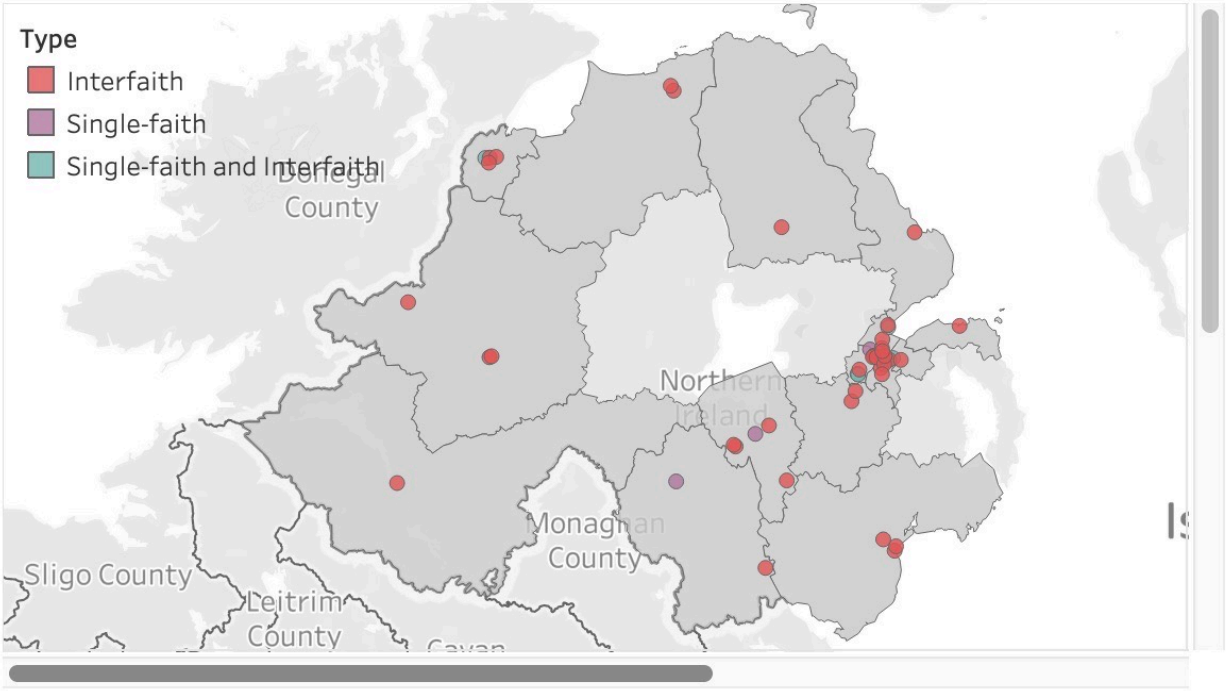

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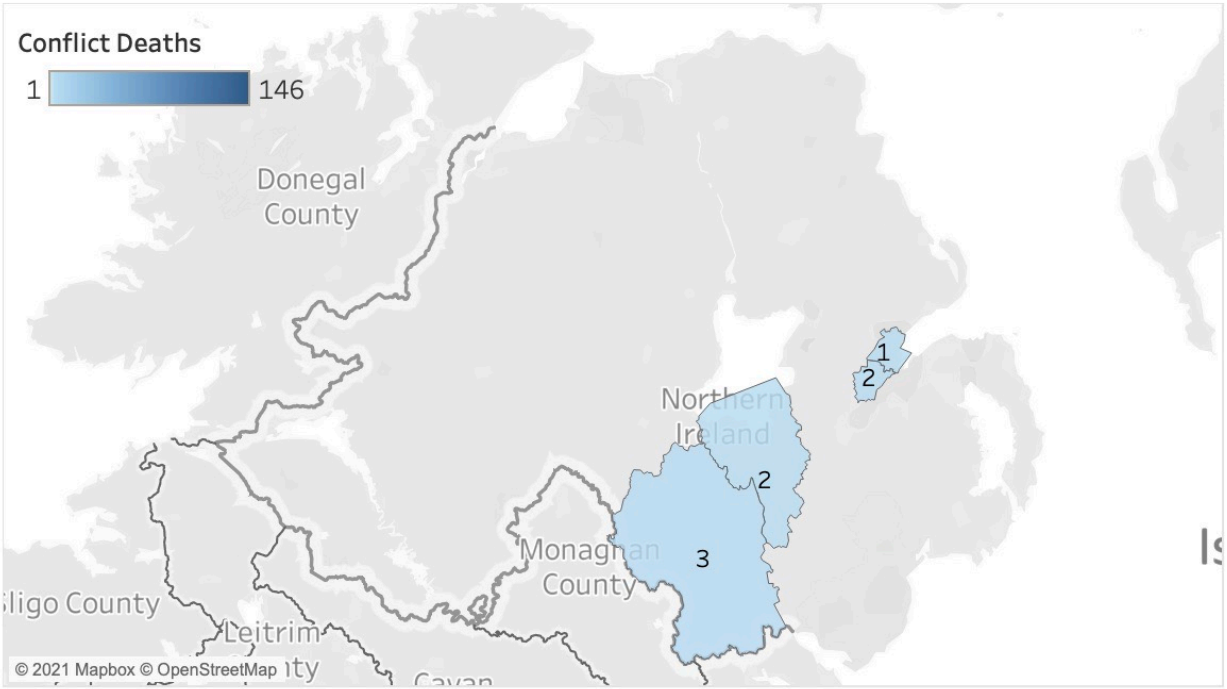

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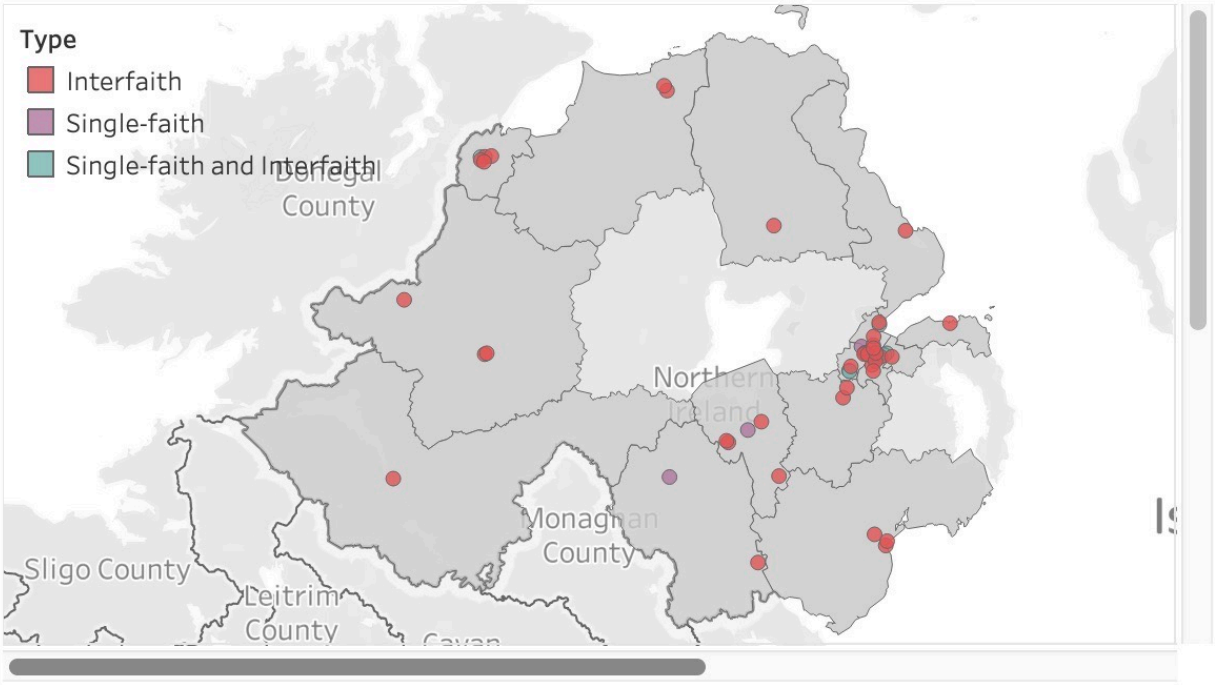

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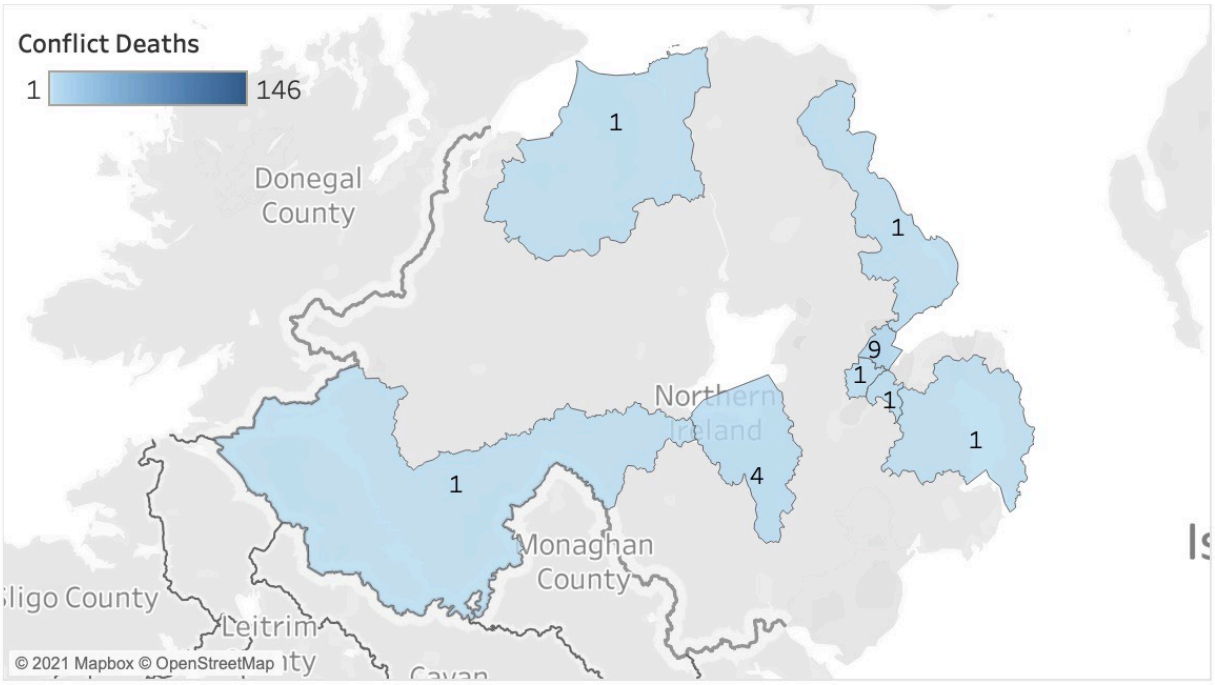

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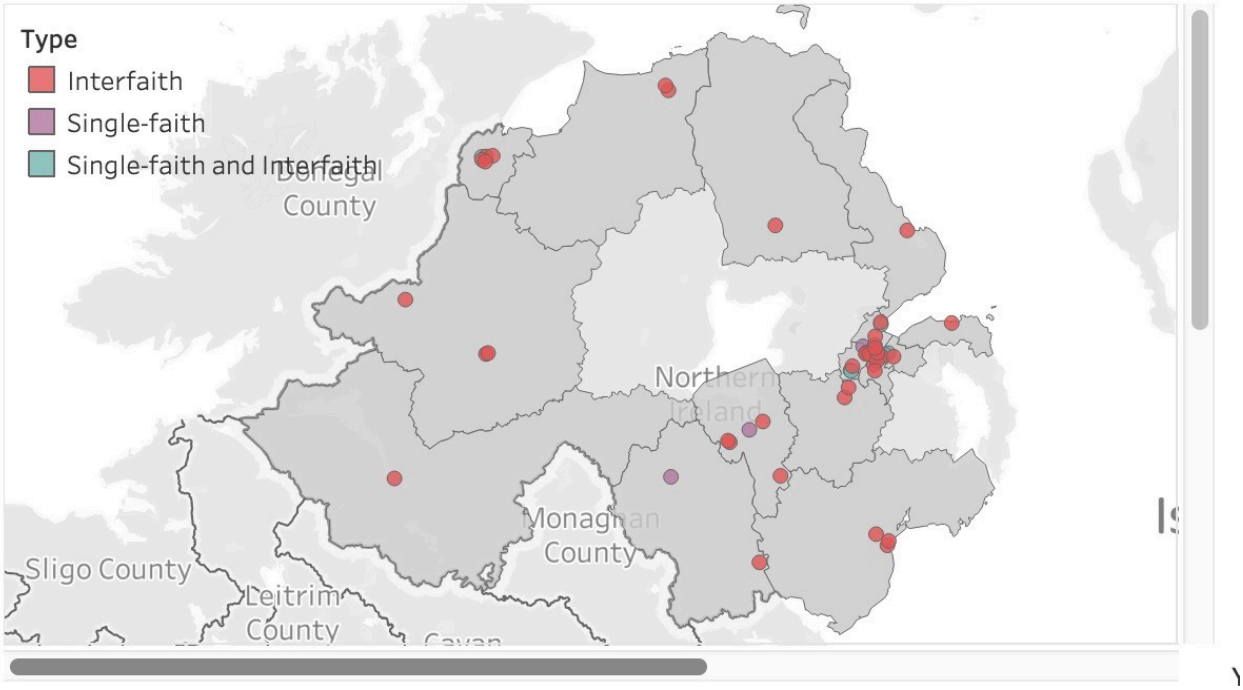

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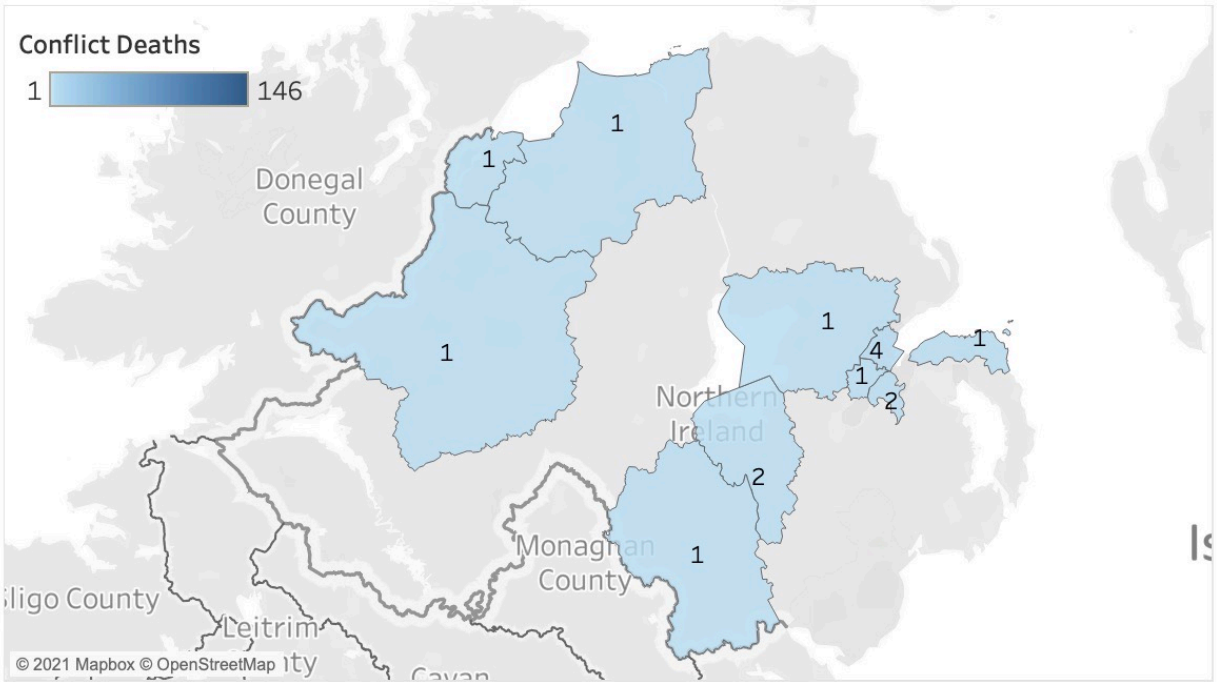

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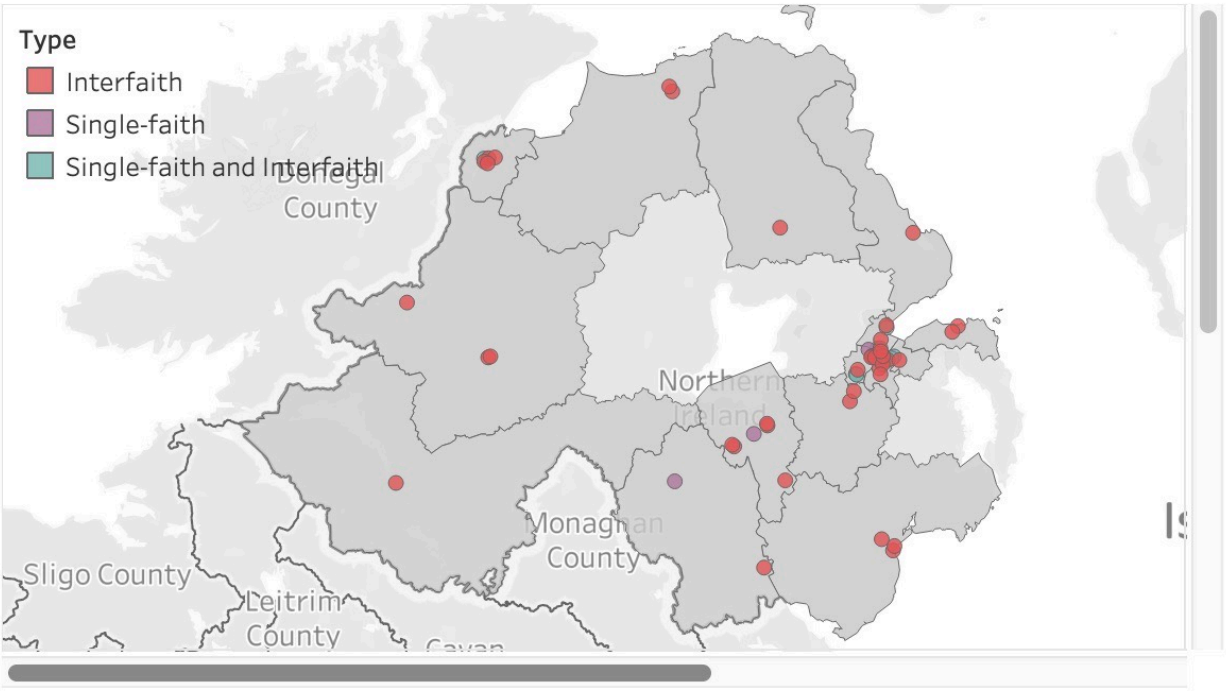

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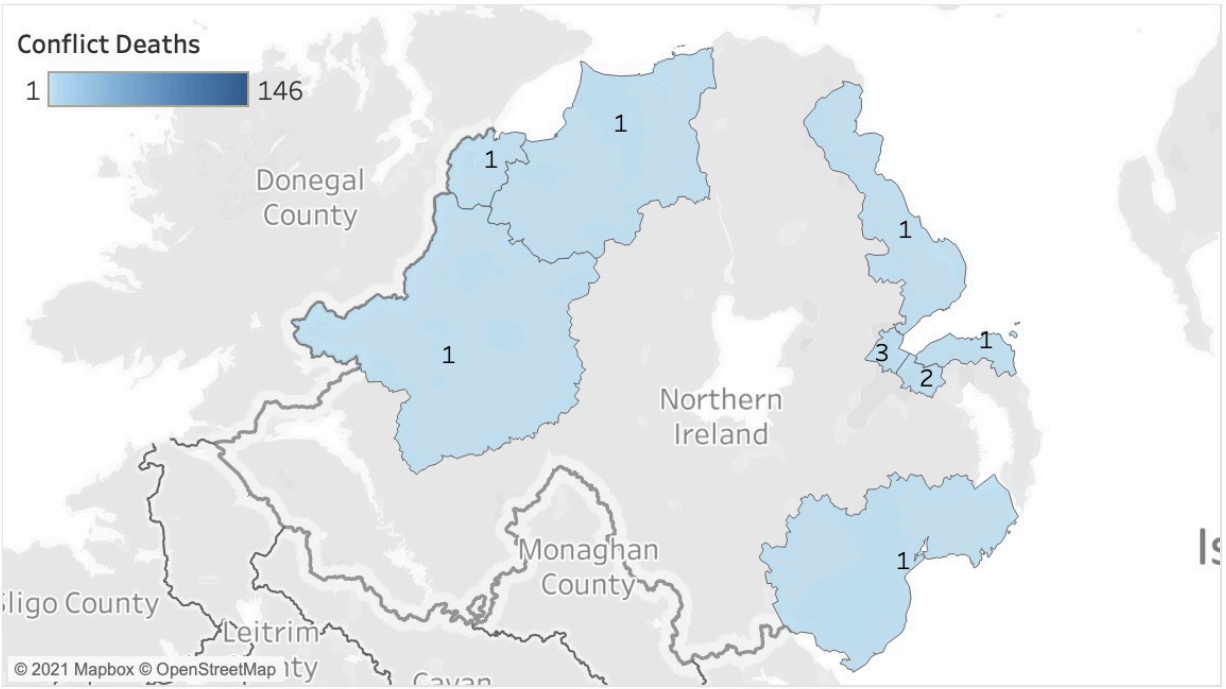

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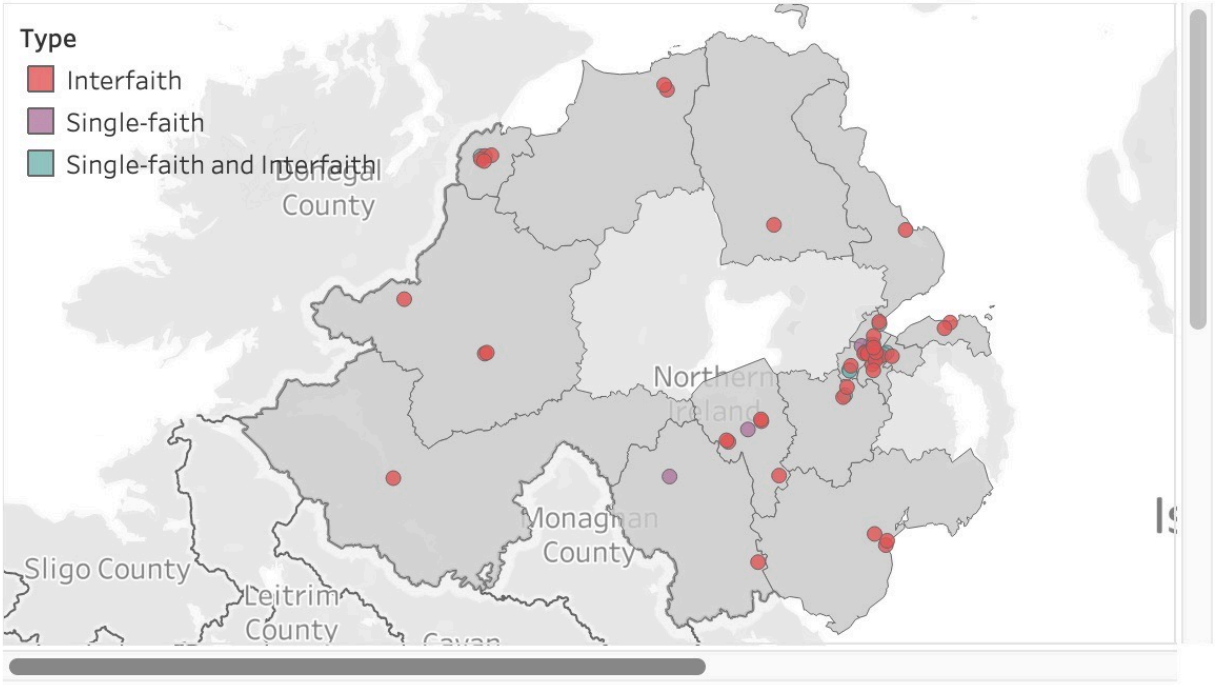

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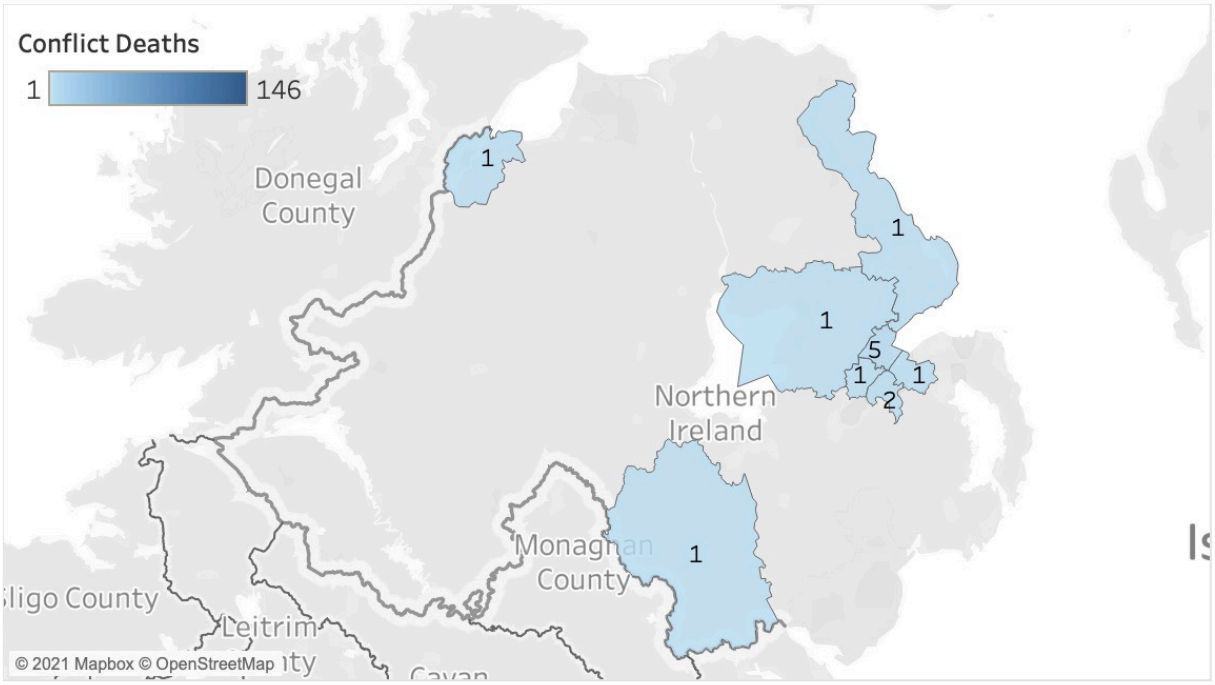

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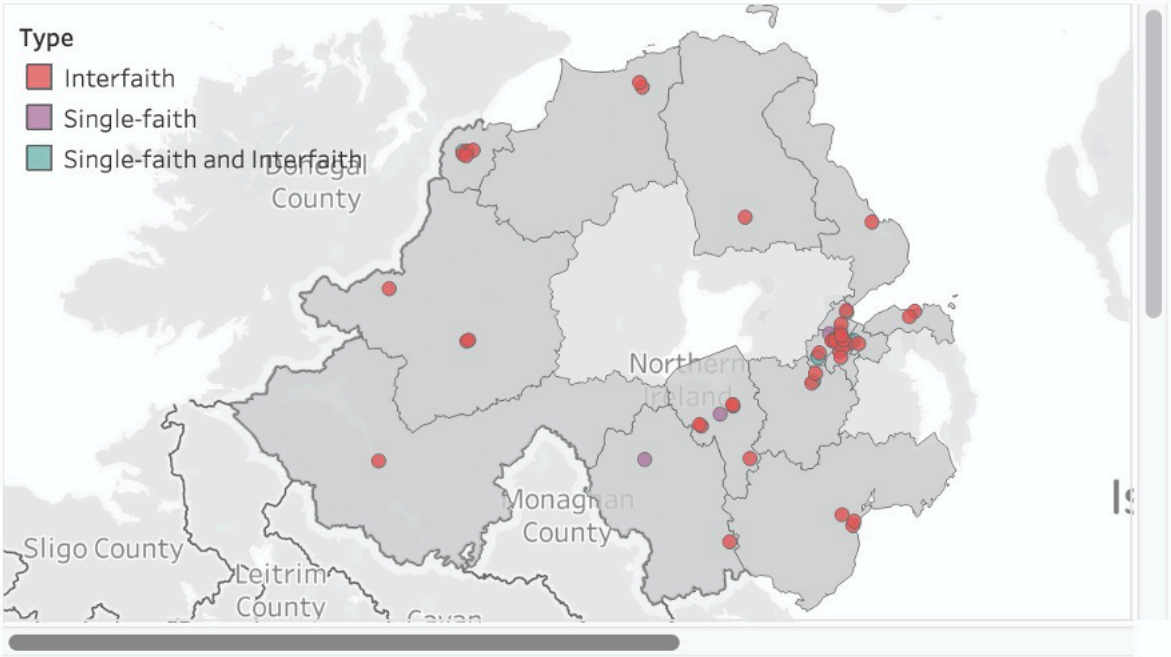

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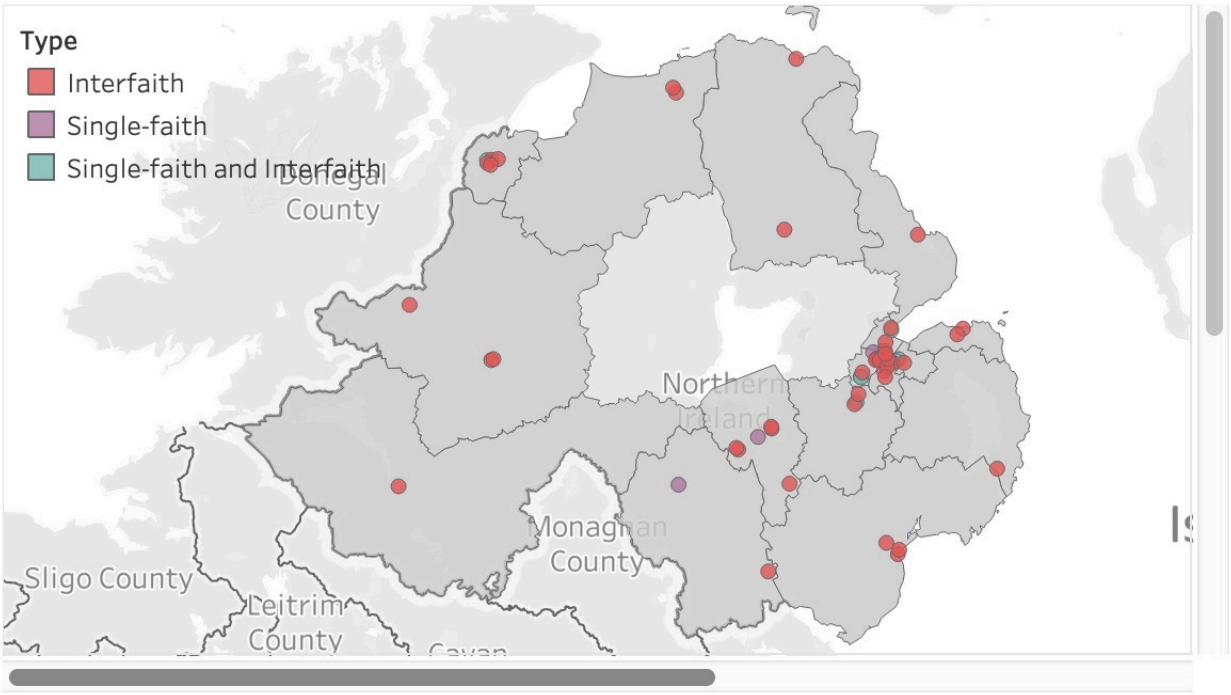

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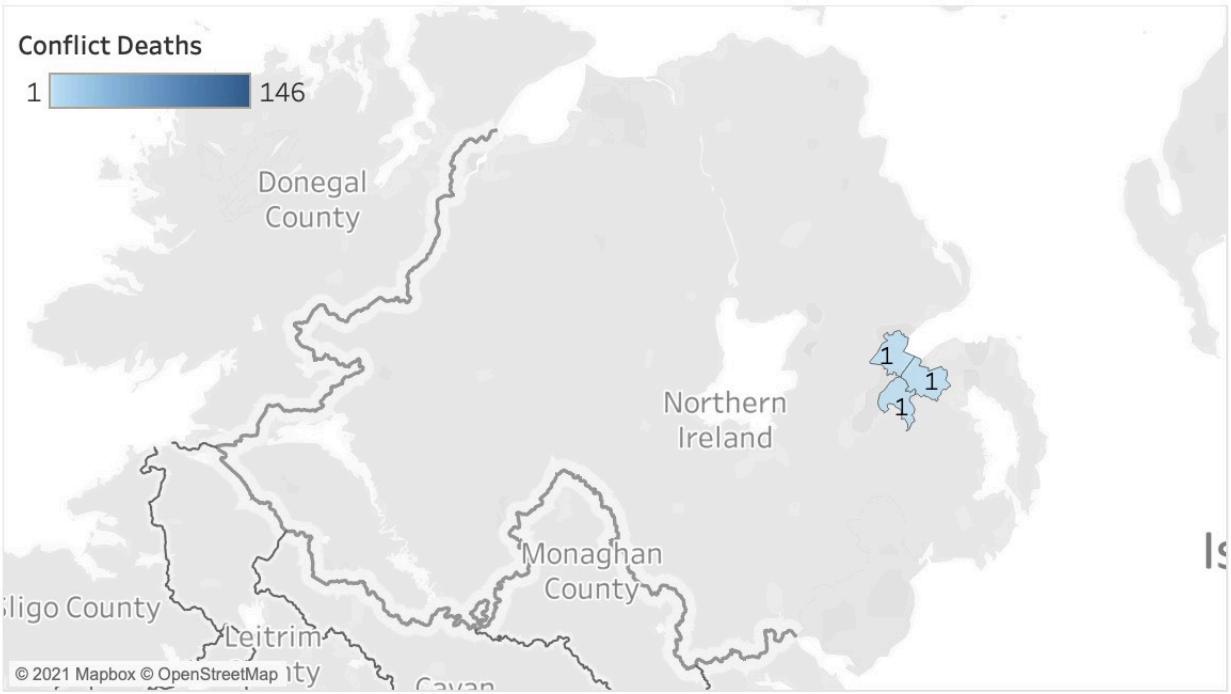

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