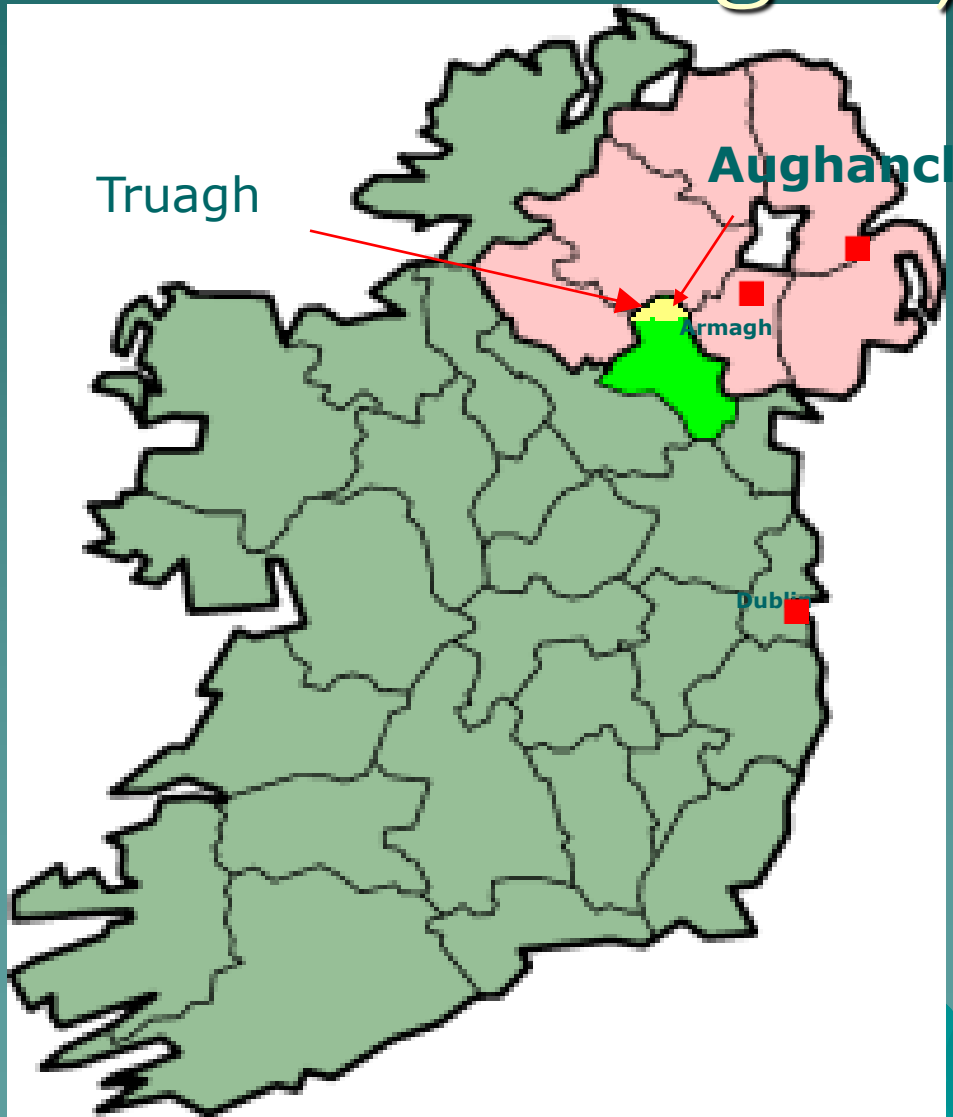
Rebuilding Communities After the Re-Opening of Roads in Rural Areas

A Community Perspective

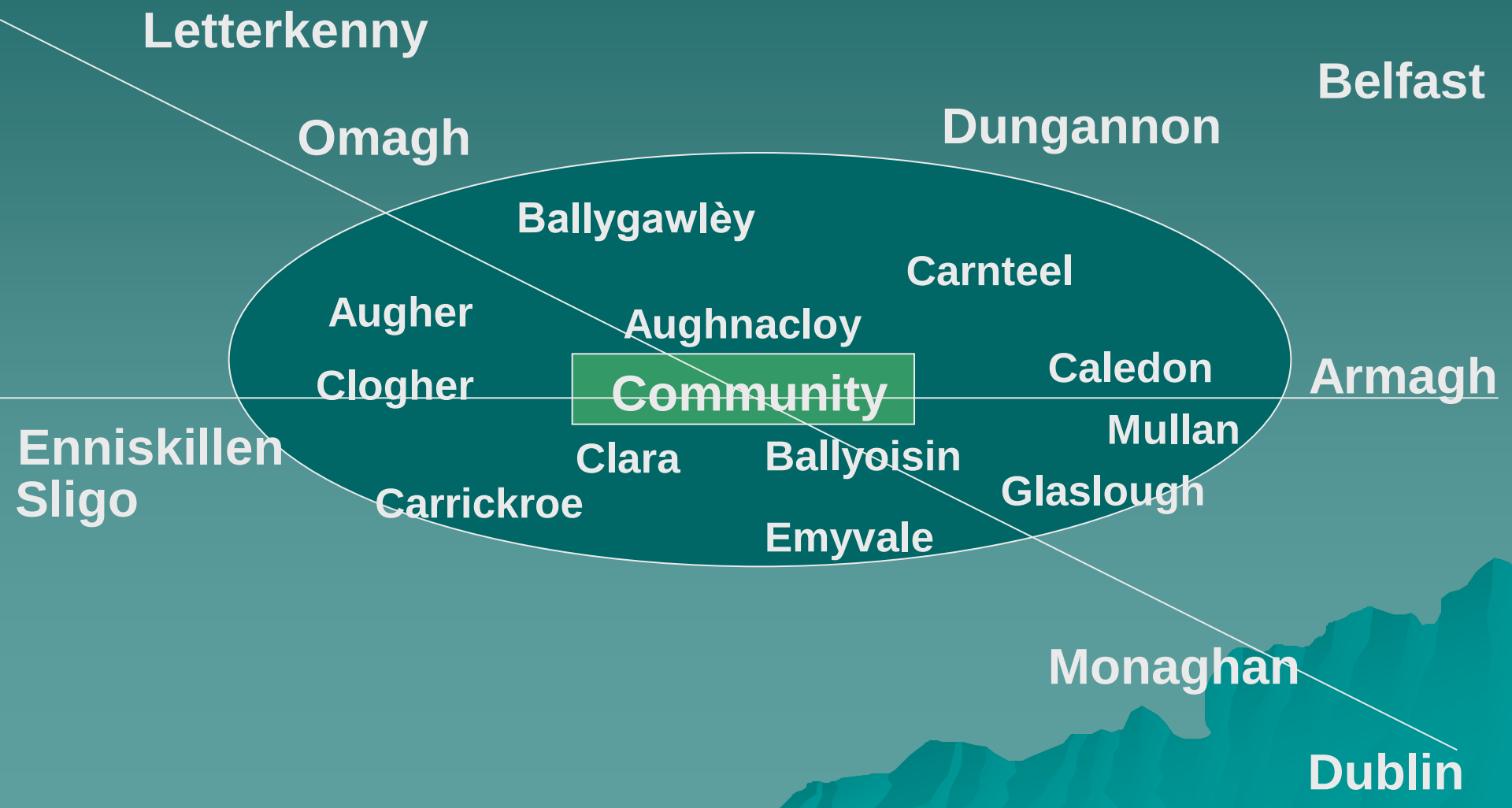
Building Bridges

Truagh and Aughnacloy (Blackwater Region)

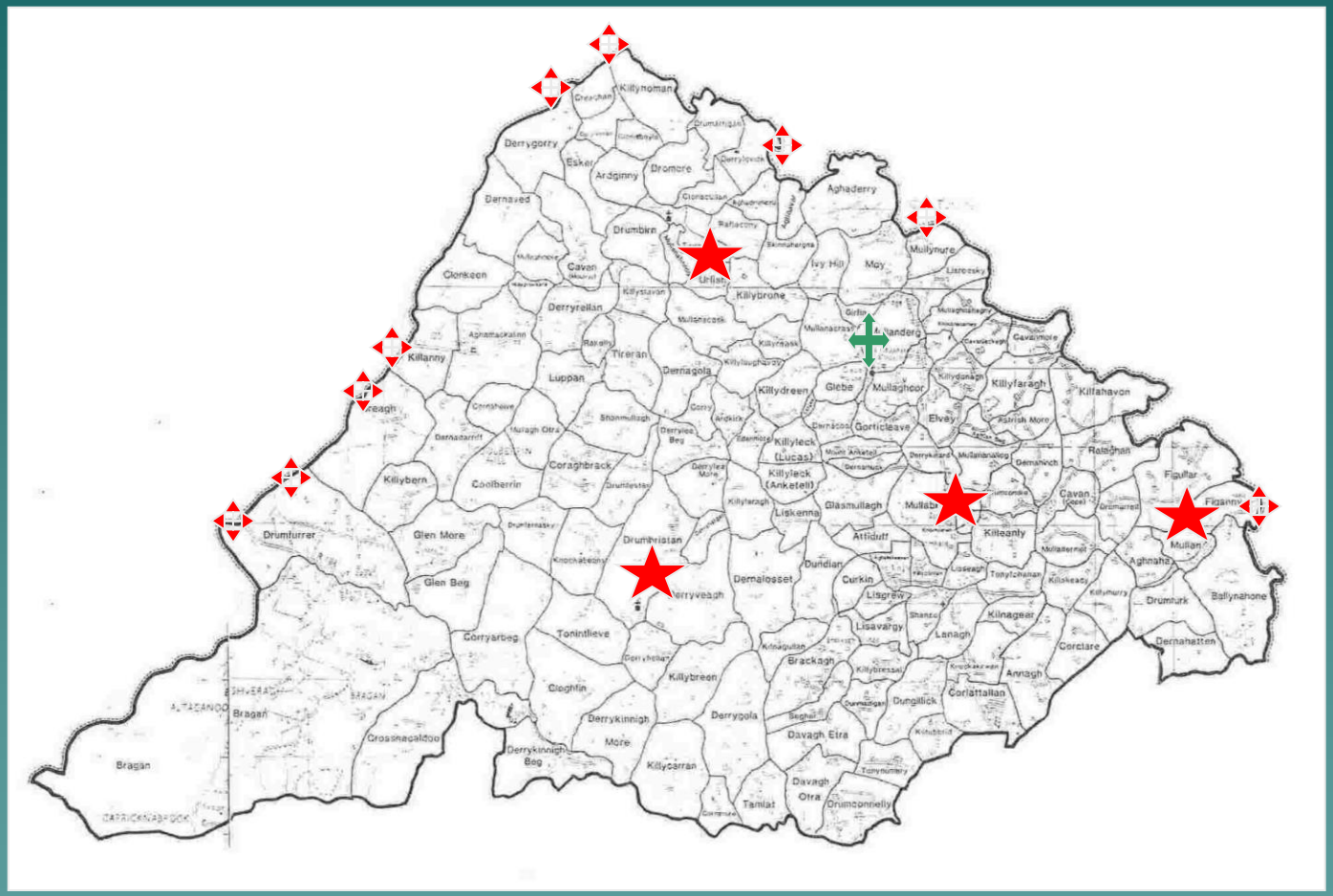


Strategic Location:

Main intersection of the North / South (Letterkenny / Dublin), East / West (Belfast / Sligo) axis.



Map of Truagh



Map of Errigal Truagh showing border crossing, the 4 village nuclei of Ballyoisin, Mullan, Carrickroe, and Clara along with the ancient ecclesiastical site at Errigal

Key Issues during conflict

Key Issues

- Very rural area, isolation and lack of services and infrastructure compounded by border closures
- Very high levels of emigration
- Poor roads, services and limited public transport
- Stagnant economy, no tourism, lack of business connections across the border
- Separate communities on both sides and across the divide with extreme local loyalties

Community Impact

- Fear
- Lack of confidence
- Isolation
- Misunderstanding
- No connections
- Risk of taking first steps

Key Priorities

- Replacing a network of violence
- Creating a voice
- Building trust
- Re building relationships
- Identifying and developing projects to overcome social and economic disadvantage and community division
- Building partnership
- Building communications, local, regional, national and international

Education / Community Learning / Training

Community Health & Wellbeing

Trade & Industry

Special Needs Provision

Information Communication Technology / Broadband

Rural Transport

Community Provision for The Elderly

Blackwater Vision for the Future

Housing / Roads Services

Childcare

Rural Tourism

Youth / Recreation Sport

Culture & Heritage

Environmental Issues

Integration of our Immigrant Workers

Future of Farming & Agriculture

Energy / Alternative Energy / Waste Disposal

Exemplar Projects

- Community travel project - Travelnet
- Cross border Youth Education Project
- Village restoration

Travelnet

- Rural Transport Service for the area
- Funding secured in June 2006 from Peace II

Services include:

- **Twice weekly door to door bus service to Monaghan town.**
- **Weekly service to Alzheimer's Day Care Centre.**
- **One off/extra curricular trips for 8 of our schools.**
- **Various services provided for youth, sports, cultural and religious groups various peace building trips throughout the life of the project – cross border/cross community social events.**
- **In excess of 25,000 passenger journeys to date.**

Trip for the Elderly to the Causeway Coast, Co. Antrim

Truagh/Aughnacloy Peace Building Trip to Derry

Truagh & Loughans Peace Building Trip to Belfast

Cross Border Youth Project

- Environmental education
- Youth visits and exchanges

Youth Trip to Launch of Blackwater Heritage Trail at Benburb, Co. Tyrone

Cross Border/Cross Community youth trip to Loughgall Country Park

Village Restoration

- Community projects
- Partnership with the private sector
- Securing new services
- Enhancing access and transportation to services

Mullan Village

The old...

and the new.

Clara

Clara Hall, the old and the new.

Old Schoolhouse

- Renovated by Truagh Development Assoc.
- Truagh Development Association meetings
- Truagh Youth Choir
- Social/Cultural Events
- Available for use by Church of Ireland parishioners

Derelict site converted to car-park

Social Housing at Clara

Gleann Clarach

The Blackwater Valley Community Learning, Cultural, I.C.T. Peace Centre and Primary School

A.I.B. Better Ireland Awards 1999
Overall Winners Level 1
A.T.E.S.S.P.

Ann Beahan Award for Sustainable Community Development

Community Leadership Awards 2007

Future Priorities

Community

- Address on-going weaknesses, there is a need for more community integration, greater understanding and work towards a common vision
- Develop greater community leadership and civic capacity
- More engagement needed between and amongst communities

Community and other Key Agencies

- Lobbying authorities, on both sides of the border, to adopt the area as a distinct cross border rural 'micro development region'.
- Further development of services – current services delivered by the community, need for authorities to pilot new approaches to delivery on a cross border basis.
- Setting up a cross border Task Force or Partnership, with communities, local authorities, other agencies and experts to facilitate