



## Durrow peace plan driving force honoured at national awards

AN Offaly woman's mission to promote friendship among children of the nations of the earth in her home county has been rewarded with a prestigious national award.

Offaly woman Elizabeth Garrahy was honoured this week at the Social Entrepreneurs Ireland Awards Ceremony which took place in Dublin.

Elizabeth, from Durrow, received an award in recognition of her outstanding work in the community with the establishment of the Arts for Peace Foundation.

The Arts for Peace Foundation's central mission is to develop a residential facility in Durrow Abbey, to which children of diverse cultures worldwide could come and partake of residencies of one month or more to promote friendship and understanding.

Specific rehabilitation programmes for children who have been seriously affected by conflict will also run at the facility.

In the aftermath of 9/11 Elizabeth Garrahy felt compelled to create something to assist children affected by conflict and to create an organisation which as its template promotes understanding between children of different cultures, not just conflict areas, who under normal circumstances would not have an opportunity to live and play and learn with each other.

"I believe Ireland has something singular and special to offer the world in

peace relations and peace education in terms of her history, political experiences and her recovery. Ireland's neutrality makes her uniquely stable and suitable for the hosting of international peace programmes," she said.

"I feel that Ireland has received a lot of support and help on her journey of recovery and now it is time for her to give something back to the world," Elizabeth said.

For more information on Arts for Peace check [www.artsforpeace.ie](http://www.artsforpeace.ie).

Elizabeth was among 36 individuals honoured by Social Entrepreneurs Ireland (SEI) at its annual awards.

Denis O'Brien who was part of the interviewing panel selecting the award nominees also spoke at the event adding:

"Social entrepreneurs are the mavericks and free thinkers who tackle some of the biggest issues facing Ireland today. In doing so, they benefit not just the community and voluntary sector but society as a whole. Their work needs to be encouraged by both the Government and funding communities to ensure they advance to the next level and their unique programmes of innovation and entrepreneurship are sustained.

"These awards have recognised some outstanding innovators; people that have made a real difference to their community," he concluded.