

DÓCHAS
The Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations

PRESS RELEASE

05 June 2008

Disability Takes Centre Stage in International Development

Launch of first Disability & International Development Week

5-11 June

Today Irish development NGOs called on Irish aid agencies to work towards ensuring that the 650 million people in the world living with disability will not be left behind in its work.

This call was made today by aid Agencies working together in the Dóchas Disability and Development Group at the launch of a **Disability and International Development (DID) week**. The week aims to raise awareness of the world's largest minority and how important disability issues are, and should be, to international development work.

“Around 10 per cent of the world's population, or over 650 million people, live with a disability and 80 per cent of those with a disability live in developing countries. People with disabilities and their families continue to be some of the most excluded people in the world” said Hans Zomer, Director of Dóchas - the Irish Association of Development NGOs.

Of the 72 million children around the world who are still missing out on school, one-third have a disability. Such exclusion doesn't just affect the children of today, but has far-reaching effects for the communities of tomorrow. The global literacy rate for adults with disabilities is as low as 3 per cent, 1 per cent for women with disabilities. Education is only one of the areas in which people with disabilities face exclusion.

‘With the recent adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, now is the time to ensure that Irish international development work embraces the particular needs and potentials of people with disabilities’ said Ruth Coleman, Chair of the Dóchas Disability and Development Working Group.

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NOTE FOR EDITORS

- The **Disability and International Development Week** runs from 5 until 11 June and the photo exhibition will run until 14 June at the Irish Aid Volunteering and Information Centre, 27–31 Upper O'Connell St, Dublin 1.
- The **DID Week** is organised by the Dóchas Disability and International Development Group. It features a series of events ranging from Seminars, photo exhibition and documentary screening.

For a full programme of events, log on to
<http://www.dochas.ie/documents/didprogramme.pdf>

- The World Bank estimates that 10% of the world population have a disability, and 20% of the world's poorest people have a disability.
- The **Dóchas Disability and Development Working Group** members: Sightsavers International, International Service Ireland, The Centre for Global Health (CGH-TCD), cbm Ireland, Health Action Overseas, Comber Romanian Orphanage Appeal, the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI), Center for International Rehabilitation (CIR), John Grooms, Irish Missionary Resource Service (IMRS), The Kimmage Development Studies Centre, Dtalk.
- **Dóchas** is the association of Irish Non-Governmental Development organisations. It provides a forum for consultation and co-operation between its 39 members and helps them speak with a single voice on development issues.

For more information, visit: www.dochas.ie