

PRESS RELEASE

**Irish Development NGOs support call for Review of
Decentralisation process**

1 July 2010

Ireland's aid agencies today welcomed the proposal made by Tom Kitt TD, to review the implications of Decentralisation for Ireland's overseas aid programme.

Earlier this week, Tom Kitt TD made headlines by referring to the decentralisation programme as a "crude and botched initiative". He went on to call for the planned Review process to include a review of the impact the relocation has had on the Irish Aid programme.

Dóchas – the network of Ireland's overseas aid agencies – today welcomed this proposal.

"When it was first announced, we expressed grave reservations about the plan to relocate the Irish Aid programme. Irish Aid is not an administrative centre, that can be removed from Government decision-making; our development cooperation programme is an integral part of our foreign policy, and has implications for many other areas of Government work" said Hans Zomer, Director of Dóchas, the network of Ireland's aid agencies.

"Ireland has a world class overseas aid programme, and Irish Aid is a very effective organisation. But the decision to move the organisation away from the capital has inhibited, rather than encouraged, further improvements in our aid programme", said Zomer.

He continued: *"We welcome the proposal to investigate, as part of the wider Review Process of the Decentralisation programme, the impact of the relocation on the quality of Ireland's overseas aid programme – We need to do our utmost to ensure that our aid to the world's poorest people is of the highest possible standard."*

In 2007, Dóchas set out its vision for the improvement of Ireland's aid programme in a [submission to the Department of Foreign Affairs](#). In that report, Dóchas pointed out that "Decentralisation" has had an enormous – and negative – effect on Irish Aid's institutional memory and capacity, and on its interaction with NGOs. The NGOs also made a number of recommendations on how to improve the management of the aid programme, some of which have been accepted by Irish Aid.

ENDS

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Notes for the editor

- In 2004, Dóchas commissioned independent research into the potential impact of the relocation to Limerick. A summary of the research is available at <http://www.dochas.ie/Pages/Resources/Viewer.aspx?id=227>
- Dóchas criticism of the move has over time been echoed by the Advisory Board of Irish Aid and by others including politicians, trade unions and academics.
- The Dóchas Management Review submission to Irish Aid is available at <http://www.dochas.ie/pages/resources/documents/dochas-aid-review.pdf>

Dóchas is the association of Irish Non-Governmental Development Organisations. Dóchas provides a forum for consultation and co-operation between its members and helps them speak with a single voice on development issues. More information about the work of Dóchas is available on its website, www.dochas.ie