



Development Education: From Awareness to Action

Development Education is about increasing people's awareness and understanding of global issues. It encourages citizens to understand and influence the social, cultural, political and economic structures which affect their lives.

Irish NGOs undertake Development Education work to build the public's understanding of the factors that keep people in poverty. In doing so, they aim to stimulate and support people's appetite and capacity for change.

Irish NGOs working in Development Education provide people with a range of **information and skills** to draw on to become informed and active global citizens, able to analyse the type of changes that poor people are powerless to effect. This includes building awareness of the structures, rules and institutions that impact on poor communities, and of the differing cultures and norms around the world.



Development education is a fundamental part of our development cooperation programme; it highlights Ireland's many interactions with the rest of the world, and enables people to become effective global citizens.

Of the people, for the people

The members of Dóchas are uniquely placed to play a bridging role between citizens in Ireland and people in developing countries:

- ★ NGO project work overseas closely **links Irish NGOs with development organisations, community and women's groups, trade unions and human rights organisations in the developing world**. They help address real issues in real life – illustrating how poverty and inequality affect people across the globe, and they are taking action to transform their lives and the lives of others.
- ★ NGOs involved in Development Education at home reach out to teachers and students, trade unions, youth organisations and the media, to help them **discover the linkages between their own lives and those of people in developing countries**.

- ★ NGOs develop **educational materials** for the formal and non-formal education sectors, deliver **training and provide support** to those who wish to know more. They **organise events** for themed learning and provide opportunities to take action.
- ★ NGOs lobby political parties, government departments and ministers on development issues, to try **to stimulate a broad debate** on Ireland's role and responsibilities regarding global injustice and poverty.

Development Education is an active learning process based on **principles of inclusion and co-operation**, enabling people to move from basic awareness of global issues to personal and collective action. It is helping Irish people work towards **global literacy**: an awareness and understanding of global issues, how these issues affect society as a whole, and how attitudes and actions impact upon the wider world.

As such, Development Education is a fundamental part of our development cooperation programme.

