

<b>Media/Source</b>	<b>: Irish Catholic</b>
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<b>Title</b>	<b>: Missionaries/charities protest aid cutbacks</b>

## **Missionaries/charities protest aid cutbacks**

Mags Gargan

Members of missionary congregations and aid agencies banded together this week to protest at the Government's cuts to overseas aid.

The 'We Don't Care Less' campaign was launched outside the Department of Finance in Dublin on Wednesday (Sept 9) when 222 people - one for every million euro cut from Ireland's official development assistance - gathered to protest against further cuts to the aid budget. Denise O'Donovan from Mísean Cara, which provides funding and support for the development work of missionaries, said the organisation was "very fearful of the devastating impact these cuts will have had and will continue to have for the world's poorest people".

**We  
Don't  
Care  
Less**  
**Keep Ireland's  
aid promise-2012**

"For the past number of months we have been learning from our members how these cuts are having a significant negative impact on those who are most vulnerable and in need of our assistance at this time of a global economic crisis," she said. "The aim of this protest was to create some awareness amongst the Irish population, as well as to petition the Minister, on the excessive cuts that have taken place already to the Official Development Assistance Budget this year.

### **Solidarity with poor**

"The message we wanted to get across from this event was that while Ireland has a lot on its plate at the moment, the current crisis is not a reason to stop our solidarity with the world's poorest people."

Hans Zomer, Director of the Dóchas network of aid agencies which organised the protest, said that targeting the "poorest and most vulnerable who have done least to cause this crisis is a terrible injustice."

"The Government needs to get back on track and keep its promise to the world's poor," he said.

In a recent survey commissioned by Trócaire, the majority (39%) of respondents said Ireland should increase the amount of money spent on aid to developing countries, despite the economic crisis.