



The Irish Association of Non-Governmental  
Development Organisations

**Submission to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in respect of  
Irish Aid White Paper Consultation on Ireland's New International Development Policy**

**Dóchas Development Education Working Group**

- Nature of views: **Organisational**
- Organisation (if applicable): **Dóchas - Development Education Working Group (DEG)**  
Aidlink; ChildFund Ireland; Children in Crossfire; Christian Aid; Cómhlahm; Concern Worldwide; Development Perspectives; Eco UNESCO; Trócaire; GOAL; Self Help Africa; The Hope Foundation; IDEA; Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO); National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI); Plan International Ireland; SERVE; Tearfund Ireland.
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## **1. What elements of Ireland’s international development experience should the new policy reflect?**

The Dóchas DEG submission focuses on three key areas: (a) the strategic prioritisation of Development Education in the White Paper, (b) broadening the scope and understanding of DE to embrace the principle of universality and (c) providing increased investment in DE.

### ***(a) Strategic prioritisation of Development Education in the White Paper***

DEG welcomes reference to Development Education (DE) and Public Support in Section 1 of *‘Ireland’s New International Development Policy Consultation Paper’*. It is heartening to read the overall positioning of Ireland’s development policy against the backdrop of the *‘generosity of Irish people with those in need’*, alongside the historic tradition with missionaries and volunteering. All of which have undoubtedly influenced Ireland’s commitment to engage the people of Ireland in deepening their understanding and engagement with development through high quality DE interventions. Indeed, as highlighted through the GENE review of DE in Ireland:

*‘Ireland is clearly showing itself as a leader in Europe with regard to strategic development and coordination of DE. The Irish Aid strategy 2007-11 and its extension to date, has provided the field with direction, coherence, strength and guidance; it is a good basis for the next strategy, on which to build further strategic approaches for more universal effect, towards the day when all people in Ireland will have access to quality DE’* (GENE, 2015)<sup>1</sup>.

Ireland has since developed a new DE strategy (2017-2023). This affirms Irish Aid’s *‘commitment to Development Education and its central role to both our international development programme and Irish foreign policy’*. The strategy is clearly situated within national and international development policy from One World One Future (OWOF) to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The strategy recognises the essential role that DE must play in order to realise Ireland’s vision for a just and sustainable world.

Hence, DEG believes that our new international development policy should harness Ireland’s excellent reputation in DE and its capacity to help us deliver our aid agenda. Therefore, the role of DE in mobilising citizens to engage with development policy and the SDGs should be at the forefront of this policy. The very nature of DE is anchored to the values in Ireland’s vision of *‘working towards a world that is more equal, peaceful and sustainable’*. Quality DE is a vehicle for building an equal, peaceful and sustainable world. It identifies the humanistic

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<sup>1</sup> [https://gene.eu/wp-content/uploads/Gene\\_NationalReport-Ireland.pdf](https://gene.eu/wp-content/uploads/Gene_NationalReport-Ireland.pdf)

values that inspire such principles as human rights, respect for human dignity, climate justice, gender equality, and international solidarity. DEG therefore believes the new policy should place greater emphasis on the importance of DE for achieving Ireland's vision, and promoting public support for Ireland's new policy priorities through a humanistic and values-based approach; an approach which is based upon the principle of universality, where beyond the notion of being members of Nation-States, individuals are interconnected to other human beings across the world.

In fact, the GENE review process of DE in Ireland, acknowledged *'the important visibility that Irish Aid has achieved for DE within development policy, within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with the general public, and elsewhere/with other institutions'*. It was recommended by GENE that *'ways of further strengthening this visibility should be considered'* (GENE, 2015). DEG believes that this recommendation can be implemented by strengthening the visibility of DE as a core element of Ireland's new development policy.

**DEG proposes that the new White Paper supports the strategic prioritisation of DE under an approach titled "Awareness, Engagement, and Participation"**

This approach is central to the realisation of DEG's vision of promoting sustainable development, equality and human rights through education with active involvement of local, European and programme country partners. It is essential to the success of the Irish Aid programme that the people of Ireland continue with their strong support for development cooperation. To ensure that this happens DEG advocates for policy coherence and logical communication between government departments to ensure that the National Implementation Plan for the SDG's is achieved. Climate change, tax justice, trade, agriculture, inequality, migration, conflict and security are all areas where from a values and policy perspective, incongruence can occur. This dissonance needs to be minimised if we as a nation are authentic and effective in our desires and actions for a more just, equitable, peaceful and sustainable world. Focusing solely on awareness raising will not achieve the desired result, education and active participation of the people of Ireland are necessary for the success of the SDG's.

***(b) Broadening the scope and understanding of Development Education to embrace the principle of universality.***

Due to the changing global context, especially the SDG process, a new global commitment to transform our societies and economies for sustainable development and global justice has been set. The latter is reflected in Agenda 2030: a universal, transformational, holistic and

people centred agenda that aims to 'leave no one behind'. This will have significant implications for the conceptualisation of Ireland's development interventions and the communication of such concepts to the Irish public. As mentioned, the new Irish Aid DE strategy has been set within the context of the SDGs, aiming to increase public knowledge and 'critical' engagement with the SDGs and Ireland's development policy overall. It aims to build a citizenry based upon global solidarity and interdependence. DEG believes that our member organisations are well placed to build such citizenry in a way that connects people from Ireland to people in our partner countries.

The internet and mobile technologies have changed how people engage with social causes, connect and advocate. Taking a broader definition of civil society and tailoring supports and capacity building activities to groups and individuals outside of Ireland will provide more engagement with the SDG's.

DEG therefore calls on Irish Aid to make more visible its commitment to collaborating with and strengthening civil society organisations both in Ireland and beyond. If the SDGs are to be met and if the people of Ireland are to be thoroughly engaged, then it is essential to clarify the role of civil society overall, and how Ireland's INGO sector is sufficiently represented in the new policy both in terms of its role in working in developing countries, and in its role in promoting public engagement through DE.

*DEG views 'Development Education as a fundamental part of the development cooperation programme; it highlights Ireland's many interactions with the rest of the world and enables people to become effective global citizens. The members of Dóchas are uniquely placed to play a bridging role between citizens in Ireland and people in developing countries.'* (DEG, 2012)<sup>2</sup>.

**DEG proposes that new White paper supports the universality of DE that recognizes the interdependencies between people, communities and countries.** DE should not be limited to the island of Ireland but also used as a tool to raise awareness and encourage active participation in partner countries. In response to the changing global context the promotion of mutual exchange and cooperation between people from all corners of the world will advance critical engagement by learning from multiple perspectives to create new connections and diverse understandings.

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<sup>2</sup> DEG Terms of Reference <https://dochas.ie/sites/default/files/DEG-ToR.pdf>

**(c) Providing increased investment in DE**

Ireland's high-quality DE has been driven by the devotion of civil society over decades, and the ongoing support from Irish Aid for DE must also be commended. However, the Joint Oireachtas *Review of the Irish Aid Programme* found that '*there is concern around the low levels of funding for communicating the results of Ireland's development programme and educating people throughout the country about overseas development*' (JCFATD, 2018)<sup>3</sup>.

DE has played an integral role in providing continued support for development cooperation by the people of Ireland. However, underinvestment represents a significant barrier to it reaching its full potential. The success of Irish Aids DE Strategy 2017-2023 requires a strong DE sector for the delivery of high quality and effective DE in Ireland and further afield.

The review of the Irish Aid White paper illustrated that in 2015 the Irish Aid Development Education budget was 0.5% of ODA and has not been in line with increases in the overall aid budget. This underinvestment represents a barrier to DE in Ireland reaching its full potential. Furthermore, Irish Aids current DE Strategy will not be achieved if current financial commitments are maintained.

DEG strongly advocate for an increase in the DE budget from 0.57% in 2017 to 3.0% of ODA within an agreed time frame. In 2005, a European Commission conference made up of member state ministries, including Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs, and civil society representatives concluded that:

*"National and European authorities should ensure there is adequate funding for development education and awareness-raising in their planning. It is proposed that the European Commission and Member states move towards or beyond a figure of 3% of ODA, as proposed in a UNDP Report. This increase in funding implies the necessary quality, efficiency and effectiveness of development education and awareness raising activities"* (Belgian Development Cooperation, 2005)<sup>4</sup>.

DEG also proposes that upon reaching its target of 3% that it be ring-fenced according to the ODA budget. Increasing investment in the sector can only strengthen and broaden the scope of its work that has already been highly commended by European peers.

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<sup>3</sup>[https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint\\_committee\\_on\\_foreign\\_affairs\\_and\\_trade\\_and\\_defence/reports/2018/2018-02-22\\_report-review-of-the-irish-aid-programme\\_en.pdf](https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_foreign_affairs_and_trade_and_defence/reports/2018/2018-02-22_report-review-of-the-irish-aid-programme_en.pdf)

<sup>4</sup><https://www.dochas.ie/sites/default/files/Recommendations%20to%20NGOs%20and%20Governments%20on%20Development%20Education.pdf>

In addition to the above the White Paper needs to reflect a more systemic and transformational approach to Development. A project management approach to Development is limited and outdated and has high transactional costs. The complexity and ever-changing nature of the challenges being addressed across the world by communities, NGO`s and Governments requires faster and more robust responses to the root causes of the problems presented. Ireland`s co-operation and action needs to be long term, sustainable and effective. For this to be achieved, the change in emphasis outlined above needs to be accompanied by the financial resources required. With that in mind, DEG is requesting that the Irish Government should release a roadmap for achieving its 0.7% ODA commitment by 2025 as part of its new international development policy, including Development Education as a priority sector for support.

**DEG strongly advocates that Irish Aid increase investment in Development Education from 0.57% in 2017 to 3.0% of ODA within an agreed timeframe, and this funding should be ring-fenced in line with the ODA budget.** DEG recommends a phased approach, with increases of 0.5% from 2019 would see a 3% target reached by 2023 (1% by 2019, 1.5% by 2020, 2% by 2021, 2.5% by 2022, and 3% by 2023).

DEG also advise in line with increased investment in DE that funding modalities be altered to encourage innovation, sustainability and partnership. We recommend the following modalities:

- Irish Aid DE funding modalities should allow for a mixed, balanced and longer-term DE programme through multi-annual funding, strategic partnerships and innovation funding.
- Match funding will be available to Irish DE programmes that access European or international investment
- Partnerships and networking should be viewed more positively and encouraged through funding schemes and associated scoring mechanisms. Many NGO`s have different skillsets and experiences and could bring much needed added value to activities. Encouraging a joined-up approach for activities in and outside of Ireland could improve the outcomes of our collective efforts. This partnership approach could be accompanied by the encouragement of innovation in development. An incubation scheme for partnerships could be set up to trial and prototype creative approaches. Incubation hubs work very well within the private sector so why not try it within the development sector.

- The optional status of Development Education in Irish Aid Programme Grants should be removed, and the requirement to include Development Education should be reinstated.

## **2. What are the implications of the changing global context for Ireland's international development cooperation and humanitarian action?**

Countries in the global south suffer most from conflicts and an unjust global economic structure whilst also bearing the brunt of climate injustice. Forced (refugees) and labour migration is therefore at the forefront of the global context. At the same time, there is a rise in nationalist populist movements in the global north. Such movements are fuelled through a narrative of fear and hatred of 'others', therefore promoting division and self-interest as opposed to global solidarity and interdependence. In such a fragile global context, sound information on international development and the causes of migration are needed more than ever. Furthermore, inquiry-based methods which explore the nature of identities, beliefs and values need to be at the forefront of Ireland's efforts to counter the dominant narrative of fear. DE and moreover SDG 4.7, needs to be adequately prioritised as an element of Ireland's development cooperation programme.

According to the latest estimates by UN DESA, the number of international migrants worldwide reached 258 million persons in 2017, an increase of almost 50 per cent since 2000<sup>5</sup>.

For the first time on 19 September 2016 Heads of State and Government came together to discuss, at the global level within the UN General Assembly, issues related to migration and refugees. This sent an important political message that migration and refugee matters have become major issues in the international agenda. In adopting the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants the 193 UN Member States recognised the need for a comprehensive approach to human mobility and enhanced cooperation at the global level and committed to:

- protect the safety, dignity and human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants, regardless of their migratory status, and at all times;
- support countries rescuing, receiving and hosting large numbers of refugees and migrants;

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<sup>5</sup>[http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017\\_Highlights.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017_Highlights.pdf)

- integrate migrants – addressing their needs and capacities as well as those of receiving communities – in humanitarian and development assistance frameworks and planning;
- combat xenophobia, racism and discrimination towards all migrants;
- develop, through a state-led process, non-binding principles and voluntary guidelines on the treatment of migrants in vulnerable situations; and
- strengthen global governance of migration, including by bringing IOM into the UN family and through the development of a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (New York Declaration, 2016).

In July 2018, the UN General Assembly agreed a final draft on ‘The Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration’ which is set to be formally adopted at an intergovernmental conference in Marrakesh, Morocco, on 10 and 11 December 2018

The Global Compact on Migration recognises that:

*‘Migration has been part of the human experience throughout history, and we recognise that it is a source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development in our globalised world, and that these positive impacts can be optimised by improving migration governance. The majority of migrants around the world today travel, live and work in a safe, orderly and regular manner. Nonetheless, migration undeniably affects our countries, communities, migrants and their families in very different and sometimes unpredictable ways’.*

The Global Compact is framed consistent with target 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in which Member States committed to cooperate internationally to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration. It is intended to;

- address all aspects of international migration, including the humanitarian, developmental, human rights-related and other aspects;
- make an important contribution to global governance and enhance coordination on international migration;
- present a framework for comprehensive international cooperation on migrants and human mobility;



- set out a range of actionable commitments, means of implementation and a framework for follow-up and review among Member States regarding international migration in all its dimensions;
- be guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda; and
- be informed by the Declaration of the 2013 High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (Global Compact for Migration, 2018).

Development Education has a central role to play in supporting the successful implementation of the Global Compact in Ireland and in countries who partner with Irish Aid. Points to note:

- Greater recognition for DE would see SDG4.7 fully operationalised, supporting greater understanding about migration (push and pull factors), education about human mobility, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity as well as Irish Aid and DFAT moving towards the successful achievement of SDG10.
- Specific work on xenophobia, racism and discrimination is not currently funded by Irish Aid. This is a missed opportunity for Irish Aid to support Development Educators and migrant communities in Ireland to take a leadership role in raising awareness, educating and engaging the public on key issues affecting their communities, our communities, so that we can all flourish better together
- Ireland could better support migrant organisations in Ireland where many struggle to meet the needs of their various communities and to meet the governance requirements set down for organisations in Ireland
- Ireland has a huge role to play in terms of migration across a variety of government departments but also with their political colleagues at European and global level. Increasingly, many governments (particularly in central Europe) are putting up barriers to migrants. Having a fair and just approach and being a voice and strong advocate for migrants is a role that Irish Aid and the Irish Government should take upon themselves. The 'Ten Acts for the Global Compact' – a civil society vision for a transformative agenda

for human mobility, migration and development provides a very interesting roadmap of actions that the Irish Government could lead out on (Now and How, 2017)<sup>6</sup>.

Of course, the root causes of the why of migration, why people leave their homes, communities and countries, must be core to Irish Aid policy – in Ireland and in countries where Irish Aid is found, and this must be clearly addressed in this new White Paper.

### **3. Do the proposed priorities respond to the changing context and contribute to the achievement of our vision of a more equal, peaceful, sustainable world?**

DEG supports the framing of the White Paper within the parameters of the SDG's and their call to 'Leave No One Behind'. We outline below the SDG targets that indicate the role DE must play in increasing public understanding of the SDG's and promoting active citizenship that will ensure the success of the goals.

SDG Target 4.7 states that all countries including Ireland must:

*'ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development'.*

SDG Target 12.8.1 aims to grow the extent to which global citizenship education and education for sustainable development (including climate change education) are mainstreamed in national education policies, curricula, teacher education, and student assessment. And SDG Target 16.7 aims to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

DEG firmly believe that DE and SDG 4.7 have a central role to play in Ireland and beyond in broadening support for the goals, increasing understanding of the root causes of the issues underpinning the goals and encouraging active engagement by people to ensure implementation of the goals.

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<sup>6</sup><http://www.madenetwork.org/sites/default/files/Now%20%2B%20How%20TEN%20ACTS%20for%20the%20Global%20Compact-final%20rev%203%20Nov%202017%20%28002%29.pdf>

#### **4. How can we improve delivery of Ireland's international development cooperation and humanitarian action?**

***DEG has the following recommendations to make toward a Strategic Prioritisation of DE in the White Paper:***

- DE should be identified as a 'Strategic Priority for Action: Awareness, Engagement and Participation' in the White Paper and the new Irish Aid Strategy
- The scope and understanding of DE should be utilised as a tool for active participation in Ireland and beyond in partner countries.
- Funding for DE should increase to 3% or more and be ring-fenced in line with ODA.
- Irish Aid Development Education funding modalities should allow for mixed, balanced and longer-term DE programme through multi-annual funding, strategic partnerships and innovation funding.
- SDG target 4.7 should be recognised and monitored as central in achieving the SDG's
- Policy coherence across all governmental department is essential. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Irish Aid should ensure engagement with Development Education by the Department of Education and Skills, Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and other relevant government departments, state agencies and community development structures.