
OUR VISION

A sustainable and just world, where people are empowered to overcome poverty and hunger and fully realise their rights and potential



**REDUCED HUNGER,
STRONGER RESILIENCE**



**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT, INCLUSIVE
ECONOMIC GROWTH**



**BETTER GOVERNANCE,
HUMAN RIGHTS AND
ACCOUNTABILITY**

One World, One Future

Ireland's Policy for International Development



RIALTAS NA hÉIREANN
GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND

Our vision

A sustainable and just world, where people are empowered to overcome poverty and hunger and fully realise their rights and potential

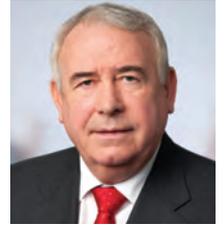
Our values

Sustainability	Ensuring that our interventions bring real benefits over the long term, are environmentally sound, and address the causes of poverty rather than just the symptoms
Effectiveness and results	Using public resources efficiently and effectively, providing Value for Money, and focusing our efforts on achieving sustainable results in the lives of those experiencing poverty
Equality	Advancing equal opportunities and equality, with no discrimination of any kind, and addressing inequalities in a systematic way
Human rights	Defending the universal and indivisible nature of human rights by promoting and protecting them in all our efforts
Accountability	Being accountable to Irish citizens and those people benefiting from our support, and being transparent in all that we do
Partnership	Strengthening partnerships built on mutual trust, and supporting development that is locally owned and led
Coherence	Striving for a coherent approach to development across all Government Departments, addressing contradictions and building synergies between policies

Foreword



Eamon Gilmore, T.D.



Joe Costello, T.D.

When the White Paper on Irish Aid was published in 2006, it brought Ireland's contribution to the fight against global poverty and hunger to the centre of our foreign policy - where it rightly belongs. The White Paper enabled us to consolidate our work, and today we have an aid programme that is amongst the best in the world – one that we can all be very proud of. But we cannot rest on our laurels.

The world is changing fast. In a few short years we find ourselves in a context that is altered considerably. There are new opportunities that must be seized. And there are new challenges that must be met. What remains, however, is the fact that we live in a world of plenty and of scarcity, of unacceptable hunger, where despite good progress there are still too many who are unable to escape from the crushing weight of poverty.

We are only too aware that many families in Ireland are feeling the impact of our current economic difficulties. Our priority right now is to restore jobs and growth at home. But in doing so, we cannot forget those who are facing extreme poverty elsewhere. Like in Mozambique, where the average person lives to the age of 50. Or in Sierra Leone, where one in five children dies before they reach the age of five.

And so we undertook in the Programme for Government to review the White Paper on Irish Aid and to use this opportunity to hear the views of Irish people and organisations, and of those with whom we work. We wanted to inform our future policy direction with the rich experience of ourselves and others, and with the present realities of where we are and what we can do.

The Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group played an important role in providing strong independent oversight for the review and ensuring that it was comprehensive. Our thanks go to the Chairperson and members for their valuable role.

This new policy – One World, One Future: Ireland's Policy for International Development – sets out in very clear terms what our goals and areas of focus are, and what we want to achieve by using our aid, our voice, and our capacity. This policy will now guide the Government's engagement on international development.

The result will be a more focused approach that draws on the roles and strengths of all Government Departments, not just the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and that draws too on the richness of skills and innovation for which the Irish people are most admired.

This new policy affirms Ireland's commitment to international development and the centrality of international development cooperation to Irish foreign policy, not only in terms of our values, but also in terms of our economic and trading interest.

We are putting forward a credible plan for financing and resourcing our development efforts and the work of our partners. We will use this to prioritise in a sharper way where we will concentrate our resources, and where we will not. Hard decisions will be made, where deemed appropriate.

Amongst the key changes that we will make will be the reorientation of our efforts towards developing countries that are experiencing greater degrees of hunger, fragility and instability, because of conflict, disaster or the harmful effects of climate change. These are the areas where the needs are greatest, and where human life and human rights are most at risk. These are also the areas where we can have the most impact.

In our other partner countries, we will work towards the elimination of poverty and inequality and towards the promotion of trade and economic development. We will be guided by our recently developed Africa Strategy which sets out a comprehensive framework for Ireland's political, development, business and economic relations with Africa over the coming years.

Our aim is to support the countries with which we work to graduate from a dependence on aid. The opportunity is now there. Developing countries are raising more of their own taxes, trading more, attracting more inward investment, growing their economies. We will support them in this and engage at the international level to remove any obstacles to making this happen.

This will be good for developing countries. And it will be good for us: contributing to stability and security; reducing the impact of climate change which is affecting us all; building a stronger world economy; and enabling more mutually beneficial partnerships.

As a nation we have much to offer. Our memory of famine informs our values and our solidarity with developing countries.

And our particular strengths – being a small open economy with high levels of inward investment, a vibrant knowledge economy, and a history of resolving deep-rooted conflict – are all vital ingredients in what we can offer the world, including through our aid programme.

Ireland's election to the United Nations Human Rights Council is testimony to our international standing and will enable us to play an even stronger role in the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide. We are conscious of the strong imperative to achieve maximum value for money and full transparency and accountability in the investments we are making, and in the results we are achieving. This policy recommitments us to the highest standards of openness, transparency and accountability to the Irish people and to our development partners. There will be no tolerance for corruption – systems will continue to be strengthened to prevent it, and swift action will be taken if Irish taxpayers' money is jeopardised in any way.

Where used well, aid addresses poverty, inequality and hunger. Taken together with other efforts, aid can help tackle the root causes of poverty and act as a catalyst for change. Our vision is of a sustainable and just world, where people are empowered to overcome poverty and hunger and fully realise their rights and potential.

We ask you to join us in working towards a future in which that vision will become a reality.



Eamon Gilmore, T.D.
An Tánaiste and Minister
for Foreign Affairs and Trade



Joe Costello, T.D.
Minister of State for Trade and Development

May 2013

Statement by the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group



The Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group was established in 2010 to provide independent advice to the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Minister of State for Trade and Development on the direction of the aid programme. When the Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid was announced in June 2011, our role took on an added significance. We took on the responsibility of providing independent oversight for the Review.

In this role, we held a number of things to be important. The Review process needed to be transparently and efficiently undertaken. The public consultation needed to be open and truly participatory. And the end product needed to accurately reflect the available learning and evidence, the changed context, and the views and inputs of those who were consulted.

We are happy to convey our satisfaction that these criteria have been fulfilled. The evidence can be found in this policy, where the Government sets out a bold and yet realistic agenda for its contribution to international development.

Travelling around the country, in my role as chair of the public meetings that took place, I was struck by the levels of energy and by the deep wells of experience we have here in Ireland when it comes to development issues. We met former volunteers, community activists, returned missionaries and NGOs. We met members of the Diaspora from Africa and elsewhere who have made Ireland their home, but who have not forgotten where they came from. We met businessmen and women who have been busy exploring opportunities in Africa and elsewhere, teachers and students who are researching issues of development, entrepreneurs who have ideas, campaigners who have strong causes.

I was also struck by the steadfast levels of cross-party support that we found for the aid programme in the Oireachtas, building on a strong public support which we hope can be maintained and nurtured over the coming period. These are difficult times, of that there is no doubt. But the fact that we are maintaining our solidarity with the poorest nations in the world at a time of economic hardship at home will hold as a long-standing testament to our beliefs and ideals. This policy focuses on demonstrating impact and value for money. This is critical in maintaining the public support that exists.

I want to take this opportunity to thank those who participated in the Review, whether through turning up at a meeting, sending in a submission, taking part in online discussions (of which there were many), or simply discussing with your families and friends, or pausing for a moment to consider the issues. The core features of this policy – the continuing commitment to tackling poverty and hunger, the increased focus on fragile and conflict-affected states, and the alignment of aid with the fostering of sustainable economic growth – have been informed by the consultation that took place and will guide the Government's direction in the years ahead.

Nora Owen
Chairperson

Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group members:
Naomi Ngwira
Prof. Jane Harrigan
Prof. Patrick Fitzpatrick
Prof. Tom Lodge
Ronan Murphy
Donal McNally

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Summary

Irish Aid is the Government's official aid programme administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, working on behalf of the Irish people to address poverty and hunger in some of the poorest countries in the world.

The Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid

The 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid was a statement of Government policy, placing the fight against world poverty at the heart of Ireland's foreign policy. The White Paper laid the foundation for our work over the last six years, and today we are recognised globally as a leader in the delivery of quality aid, where it is needed most.

However, the world has seen significant changes since the White Paper was published and our engagement on international development needs to respond accordingly. At home, we must adapt to the economic and financial constraints we are facing. This means setting out a credible and realistic agenda, and striving to maintain strong public support for the aid programme.

A Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid was undertaken in 2012. It took stock of progress made since 2006, examined the changing context, and considered the evidence of what works best. Through a comprehensive and lively public consultation process, in Ireland and in our partner countries, we listened to people's views and drew on the experience of those organisations working at the forefront of development.

The lessons we learned from this period of reflection have informed Ireland's evolving policy for international development – One World, One Future. This policy refreshes our approach and sets out clear priorities for the future. We are committed to reviewing progress again in 2016.

The world has seen significant changes since the White Paper was published and our engagement on international development needs to respond accordingly

GOALS 3



Our plan for the future

Aid and beyond: It is clear that aid alone will not solve the problems of poverty and hunger. Lasting solutions must be underpinned by developing countries' own leadership, their ability to raise revenue and boost foreign direct investment, to integrate into world markets and to address inequality. We need to recognise what aid can do, but to also think and act beyond aid.

In this, our contribution is not just financial. We have a strong voice on the international stage, which we will use. And we have in Ireland a clear capacity, in our people and in our institutions, which we will harness.

A Whole-of-Government approach to international development: It is not just our aid programme that impacts on international development, but also our policies and actions more widely. So while the 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid primarily guided our aid programme, this new policy will guide all of our development efforts - across Government.

Greater prioritisation: We will play to the strengths that we have built up over many years, including our strong poverty focus, the delivery of a quality aid programme and our solid record of partnership.

We recognise, however, that there is a need to prioritise further and to focus even more intently on the results we and our partners are achieving. This is always important and our present economic circumstances make it imperative. We need to achieve maximum value for money from the more limited resources we have available.

This policy will be used as the basis for making decisions on where the focus of our attention, and our resources, will be placed. Some of these decisions will be difficult to make – there are so many needs. However, we will take these decisions on the basis of a clear policy position.

Central to our decision-making and the way that we manage our resources will be our performance and the performance of our partners in achieving results.

Three Goals: Our policy for international development – an intrinsic part of our foreign policy – will seek to achieve three goals:

- > Reduced hunger, stronger resilience
- > Sustainable development, inclusive economic growth
- > Better governance, human rights and accountability

Six priority areas for action: Our goals will be the reference points around which Ireland's international development programmes and engagement will be planned. Six priority areas for action are identified, namely:

- > Global hunger
- > Fragile states
- > Climate change and development
- > Trade and economic growth
- > Essential services
- > Human rights and accountability

Key Decisions

Stronger focus on stability in countries that are fragile:

We will focus within our programme on countries experiencing greater fragility – such as countries recovering after periods of conflict. This is where the needs are greater, and where human rights are most at risk. This is also where we can have the most impact. And while such work presents more risks, the risk of inaction is greater.

A new Key Partner Country: To demonstrate our commitment to staying the course with countries emerging from conflict, we will deepen our engagement in Sierra Leone and Liberia. This will include Sierra Leone becoming one of our nine Key Partner Countries, the others being Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam and Zambia.

Changing relations: We will now term our Programme Countries as Key Partner Countries, reflecting the more rounded partnerships that we will pursue. In each Key Partner Country we will have different types of engagement, depending on the needs and opportunities that exist.

The Africa Strategy: We will build towards stronger economic partnerships in Africa and work towards an exit from aid where possible. The Government's Africa Strategy (available at www.dfat.ie) - designed to bring the different strands of the Government's foreign policy engagement with Africa together – will guide our approach.

We will strengthen our presence on the ground in East Africa as part of implementing the Africa Strategy, tapping into economic integration and trade in the region. This will also enable us to engage more strategically with humanitarian work in the region.

Maintaining aid expenditure: The Government remains committed to achieving the target of 0.7% of Gross National Income allocated to international development cooperation, as stated in the Programme for Government. Recognising the present economic difficulties, the Government will endeavour to maintain aid expenditure at current levels, while moving towards the 0.7% target when our economy improves.

Putting climate change at the centre: The effect of climate change is perhaps the most pressing issue facing poor countries today. We will work hard to ensure that our efforts are more firmly geared towards addressing this challenge, including by promoting a balance between the social, economic and environmental aspects of development.

Reinvigorating our approach to human rights: We will ensure that human rights principles and standards are promoted, protected and integrated across our development efforts. In particular, we will devote more of our resources to gender equality and disability, and ensure that they are taken into account in our development interventions.

Commitment to accountability and transparency: We are committed to openness, transparency and accountability to the Irish people and our development partners in what we do, how we work, and what we are achieving. We will implement fully our international commitments on aid transparency, and will publish our aid data under the recent internationally agreed format and standard by 2015.

We will also work with our partners – governments, NGOs, multilateral organisations, and others - to ensure that they adhere to similar standards of accountability and transparency. In this way, Irish people will be better able to see where and how their money is being spent, and what results are being achieved.

The importance of engagement internationally: Our engagement at the UN and international level is an essential part of our foreign policy. It gives us a stronger voice. It enables us to tackle the global dimensions of poverty and inequality. It amplifies the effectiveness of what we do. We are committed to playing a leading role, particularly through the European Union, in our collective effort to accelerate international development and advance peace, security and human rights.

Engagement at home: We will strive for a deep public understanding and engagement with our aid programme and our development policy, harnessing the contribution of Irish people and institutions. Through a new Volunteering Initiative, we will modernise the way in which we support volunteering, enabling experienced professionals to have an opportunity to contribute to development.

Review of the 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid

Review of the 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid

Our aid programme is internationally recognised as one of the best in the world

The White Paper

Irish Aid is the Government's official aid programme administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, working on behalf of the Irish people to address poverty and hunger in some of the poorest countries in the world. The White Paper on Irish Aid was published in 2006, setting out the basis for our aid programme and outlining how that would be implemented. This helped us to develop our aid programme into what is internationally recognised – including by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in their 2009 review of Ireland - as one of the best in the world.

The White Paper set out over one hundred key decisions that have informed our direction in the last six years. We reviewed these commitments and accounted for them in the *Consultation Paper for the Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid* (available at www.irishaid.gov.ie).

Achievements so far

Globally, the number of people living in poverty is decreasing. By 2015, 50% fewer people will suffer extreme poverty than at the turn of the Millennium – consequently the first Millennium Development Goal is likely to be achieved. It is recognised that international development assistance has played a very important role in contributing to this progress.

Irish Aid has played its part in this. For example, at the country level, since the 2006 White Paper was published Irish Aid has contributed to the achievement of the following results:

Globally, 50% fewer people will suffer extreme poverty by 2015 than at the turn of the millennium

In Tanzania, infant mortality fell from 96 deaths per 1000 births in 2006 to 65 deaths per 1000 in 2012.

In Uganda, primary school completion rates have gone up by 10% in the last two years.

In Mozambique, the number of people receiving antiretroviral treatment for HIV went from 10,000 in 2004 to 218,000 in 2010.

The number of households in Malawi with insufficient food fell by 20%.

Poverty rates amongst ethnic minorities in Vietnam fell by 17%.

In Ethiopia, the proportion of underweight children fell by 10%.

The Review

Changes in the global economic and development landscape, as well as our own financial difficulties, have presented us with new challenges in meeting the commitments in the 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid.

This is why the Programme for Government committed to a Review of the White Paper, which aimed to take stock of progress made since 2006, to examine the changing context and to set out our priorities for the coming period.

The Review was conducted through an extensive process of internal learning, independent assessment and analysis, and public consultation.

The Review Consultation Paper

The *Consultation Paper on the Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid* accounts for Ireland's progress in meeting the commitments of the 2006 White Paper. The Consultation Paper also summarises what we have learned from recent evaluations and reviews of our aid programme. Key issues are presented, and this informed the public consultation that took place.

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people in Ireland,
and received 165
written submissions**
.....

The public consultation

The public consultation, which was overseen by the independent Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group, was held between February and April 2012. During this period we:

- > Met over 1,000 people in Ireland, and received 165 written submissions (available at www.irishaid.ie).
- > Held four public meetings (in Limerick, Cork, Dublin and Sligo).
- > Met with Oireachtas committees, the non-governmental organisation community, the private sector, migrant communities in Ireland, and others.
- > Used social media tools to reach a wider audience.
- > Conducted local consultations in our Key Partner Countries through our embassies there, and undertook a regional consultation in Malawi.
- > Held discussions in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (including through our UN missions) and across Government, for example through the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development.

This has been an important process: of accountability, of learning, of reaching out, and of policy-making. The feedback we received has been important not only in shaping this policy, but in providing the basis for greater collaboration and engagement in the years ahead.



Stakeholders at the launch the public consultation process. From left to right: Linh Thuy Hoang (Irish Aid study fellow), Ms. Paula Galvin (Teacher at Our Lady Queen of the Apostles Clonburris National School), Minister of State for Trade and Development, Mr. Joe Costello, T.D., Ms. Nora Owen, Chairperson of the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group, Mr. Fyawupi Mwafongo (Irish Aid Study fellow), Mr. Jim Clarken (CEO of Oxfam) H.E. Mrs. Lela-alem Gebreyohannes Tedla (Ethiopian Ambassador to Ireland). *Photo: Naoise Culhane, Maxwells Photography*

What we've learned

During the consultation process, we put forward a number of questions to guide our deliberations. This is what we have learned:

- > There is **strong public support** – including across political parties – for the aid programme. People want Irish Aid to maintain the high quality of its work, for which it has been internationally recognised, and they want us to keep them informed of progress.
- > People agree with the aid programme's **focus on poverty and addressing global hunger**; the emphasis on partnership, including with voluntary and community organisations, international institutions and developing countries; and the commitment to provide untied aid (aid that is not conditional on the procurement of goods and services from Ireland).
- > The public recognise that **the role of aid is changing** as the global and Irish context changes, and that our approach needs to adapt accordingly.
- > They stressed the need for a **Whole-of-Government approach to international development**, to ensure that our efforts are part of a cohesive, overarching policy.
- > There was strong agreement that we need to **prioritise where our resources are used**, so that we achieve maximum impact and value for money.
- > The public placed a strong emphasis on the need **to promote human rights** in all our development efforts. Disability issues were frequently raised.
- > People see in our aid programme **a positive effect for Ireland**, contributing as it does to stability and security, enhancing our reputation, and deepening our social and economic ties elsewhere.

A changing world

The world has experienced significant changes since the 2006 White Paper was published. For Ireland's development efforts to be successful, it is critical that we recognise and continually respond to these new challenges.

Changes in Ireland

In Ireland, we are in the midst of a challenging economic and financial crisis, which has been felt across the European Union, and beyond. The reductions in public expenditure have seen our aid budget being reduced by a third since 2008.

Now there is an even greater need to achieve maximum value for money and to account for every cent we spend, in line with the Government efforts to reform our public services.

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The global outlook

Overall, worldwide poverty is reducing, and the Millennium Development Goal of halving world poverty by 2015 will be met. Aid has played an important role in this. Progress is uneven however and many daunting challenges remain. The geography and nature of poverty is changing. While sub-Saharan Africa continues to bear the brunt of the world's poverty, there are a number of factors which are transforming the development landscape.

Changing global economy: The world's economy is changing. Developing economies are now among the key drivers of global economic growth. This dynamism and growth can be seen most notably in Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (collectively known as the BRICS). These countries are also becoming important players in development cooperation. High rates of economic growth are being achieved across Africa. Expectations among citizens are also rising however, and issues such as the continuing high levels of youth unemployment present significant challenges.

Changing role of aid: Many developing countries are becoming less reliant on aid, with growing levels of trade, inward investment and domestic revenue. These countries are gaining the resources they need to tackle issues of underdevelopment themselves and aid is increasingly seen as a catalyst for development rather than its main driver.

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Hunger and malnutrition: Almost one billion people, or one in seven of the world's population, are hungry today. And undernutrition is one of the world's most serious but least addressed health problems. The human and economic costs are enormous, falling hardest on the very poor and on women and children. In developing countries, 3.5 million mothers and children die needlessly each year because undernutrition leaves them more vulnerable to infectious disease. In Malawi, despite significant progress in reducing malnutrition, stunting amongst children remains high at around 47%.

Fragility: More than 1.5 billion people live in countries that are experiencing fragility due to conflict or natural disaster, and the aftermath of these. These countries are unable to maintain security and rule of law, or to provide basic services and economic opportunities for their citizens, including the poor. Few of these countries will achieve a single Millennium Development Goal by 2015.

Humanitarian crises: Around the world, humanitarian disasters are becoming larger and more frequent, affecting more people and proving increasingly difficult to manage. The incidence of natural disasters has increased fivefold since the 1970s.

Environment and climate change: In all countries, economic and social progress is dependent more than ever before on the health of the environment. Environmental hazards such as pollution, severe weather events and climate change threaten livelihoods and development, and could drive millions more into extreme poverty. Climate change is projected to reduce crop yields for subsistence farmers in many African countries making them more vulnerable to food shortages.

Inequality: Inequality remains a big challenge. Even where economic growth rates are high, inequalities are widening. In 2010, six out of the 10 most unequal countries worldwide were in sub-Saharan Africa. Evidence clearly shows that high levels of inequality, including gender inequality, can not only harm economic growth, but can also lead to people being trapped in poverty across generations, and in some cases social and political unrest.

Gender gap: Across the world, women's rights are being violated and women still have less access than men to productive resources and opportunities. For example, women own only about one fifth of the titled land in Tanzania. Closing this gender gap – in land, livestock, labour, education, financial services, and technology – would support women's rights and generate significant gains for the agriculture sector and for society as a whole.

Population growth: The UN foresees a global population of 9.3 billion people in 2050, and more than 10 billion by the end of this century. Much of this increase is expected to come from countries in Africa. By 2030, the demand for food, water and energy is expected to rise by 30 – 40%. Population growth, together with a growing middle class and expanding urban areas in emerging and developing economies will further strain environmental resources and put food production and security under extreme pressure. Low-income countries and those which are most fragile are at risk of falling into an on-going cycle of poverty. Ageing populations present another population challenge, with health care, dependency and other implications.

Progress, stability and innovation: While facing enormous challenges, the world is better equipped than ever to address and overcome them. Trends are emerging showing an increase in democratic elections in sub-Saharan Africa and a marked decrease in the outbreak of new armed conflicts. Medical advances on the treatment of killer diseases, such as malaria, have led to dramatic reductions in child mortality. Information technology is enabling poor people in developing countries to access essential health information, to move towards formal banking and to hold governments to account, in ways unforeseen only a few years ago.

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Our Policy for International Development



This new policy builds on the solid foundation of the White Paper on Irish Aid, refreshes our approach, and sets out the Government's priorities for the future. We have a clear direction, and a strong mandate from the Irish public to continue our role as a leader in the international development community.

Aid and beyond

It is clear that aid alone will not solve the problems of poverty and hunger. Lasting solutions must be underpinned by developing countries' own leadership, their ability to raise revenue and boost foreign direct investment, to integrate into world markets and to address inequality. We need to recognise what aid can do, but to also think and act beyond aid. Our contribution is not just financial. We have a strong voice within the European Union and on the international stage, which we will use. And we have in Ireland a clear capacity, which we will harness. We can continue to make a real difference.

Whole-of-Government approach to international development

It is not just our aid programme that impacts on international development, but also our policies more widely. So while the 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid primarily guided our aid programme, this new policy will guide all of our development efforts - across Government.

Our vision is a sustainable and just world, where people are empowered to overcome poverty and hunger and fully realise their rights and potential

Targeting our effort

We will play to the strengths that we have built up over many years, including our strong poverty focus, the delivery of a quality aid programme, and our strong record of partnership.

Continuing our work, however, does not mean business as usual. We need to adapt to our changing circumstances as well as responding to the different global environment in which we work. There is a need to prioritise more and to focus even more intently on the results we and our partners are achieving. Getting maximum value for money from limited resources is essential.

This policy will be used as the basis for making decisions in the coming period on where the focus of our attention, and our resources, will be placed. This means doing fewer things, but doing them better. Some of these decisions will be difficult to make – but we will be doing so on the basis of a clear policy direction. We will determine in each context the area of particular focus, and concentrate on where we can make the most difference.

Setting our goals

The goals outlined here will form an integral part of our foreign policy.

In striving to achieve our goals we will tackle not just the effects of poverty, hunger and insecurity in developing countries - we will work to address root causes, so that we can help people to lift themselves out of poverty.

Our values – sustainability, effectiveness and results, equality, human rights, accountability, partnership, and coherence - underpin our goals and all of the work we undertake in achieving them.

GOALS



REDUCED HUNGER, STRONGER RESILIENCE

Our top priority continues to be reducing hunger and vulnerability, and building people's resilience to natural and other disasters.

We will further our efforts to ensure that the links between hunger and other development challenges, such as environmental protection and gender inequality, are better understood and acted upon with the urgency that they require.

We will focus more on countries that are facing humanitarian crises and those in situations of fragility and recovering from conflict.

We will also help to build the resilience of people, communities and states to plan for and cope with the increased vulnerability, risks and uncertainties associated with present day stresses and shocks such as crop failure, climate change, natural disasters and conflict. Being resilient means being better prepared, better able to cope, and better placed to recover.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH

This means working more strategically to advance economic growth which benefits poor people and is environmentally sustainable while supporting efforts that respond effectively to climate change.

Healthy economies mean that businesses and farms have markets, households have adequate incomes, and individuals enjoy their right to a decent living for themselves and their families. If growth is to reduce poverty, however, it must address inequality, including gender inequality.

We will therefore promote economic growth that supports employment and incomes, especially for those that need it most – and that means supporting inclusive growth, with countries using their own human and natural resources to best effect.

In line with our own policy commitments at home, we will work to ensure that economic growth is also environmentally sustainable in terms of carbon intensity, resource efficiency and climate resilience.



BETTER GOVERNANCE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

We are convinced that stronger governance, the pursuit of human rights – including gender equality – and better accountability are powerful drivers to ensuring the reduction of hunger, the building of resilience, and the promotion of sustainable development.

We will support the building of better governance and accountability, and the protection and promotion of human rights, throughout all of our work.

What do we mean by resilience?

Resilience is the ability of people and communities, as well as countries, to withstand setbacks such as extreme weather events like flooding, an outbreak of violence, or an unexpected dip in income. Being resilient means you are better prepared, better able to cope, and better placed to recover.

Focusing our efforts

These goals will be the reference points around which Ireland's international development programmes will be planned in the years ahead.

By focusing our efforts on where they will make the most difference, we will maximise the effect our contribution will have on people's lives. In all our work, we remain committed to ensuring that issues of gender, the environment, HIV and AIDS, and governance are at the centre of our planning, implementation and evaluation.

Six **priority areas for action** will guide our aid and our policy engagement. Focussing on these areas, *and working on the important linkages between them*, will enable us to achieve our three goals.

Priority areas for action

GLOBAL HUNGER

Our history will not allow us to ignore the reality that hunger is a daily fact of life for many people in developing countries today. In order to succeed in the fight against global hunger and undernutrition, we must all work together: developing country governments providing leadership, banks providing affordable credit, the private sector supporting markets and providing jobs, and development partners – including Ireland – funding innovation, technical expertise, and hunger reduction efforts that impact on root causes.

What we will do

- > Building further on the 2008 Hunger Task Force Report (available at www.irishaid.ie), we will continue to prioritise the fight against hunger and undernutrition. Ireland has now met the target of investing 20% of the Irish Aid budget specifically on hunger. We are committed to maintaining this in the coming years.
- > We will also work in a way that is more focused and interconnected. We will orientate our engagement in the five other priority areas for action towards addressing the many aspects of hunger and undernutrition.
- > We will continue to take a global leadership role and advocate in the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU) and elsewhere for a comprehensive approach to the complex problem of hunger and undernutrition, building resilience and recognising women as key drivers for positive change. Hunger has been a major agenda item for Ireland's Presidency of the EU in 2013, and we will build on that in the period ahead.
- > In our partnerships we will step up efforts to maximise agricultural productivity, so as to sustain economic growth at the household and country levels and to tackle food insecurity. We will continue to support smallholder farmers to sustainably increase their yields, to diversify to more nutritious crops, and to use climate-resilient agricultural techniques. Diversified livelihoods in rural areas will also be encouraged so as to enable poor people to become less vulnerable to the dangers of relying on one economic activity.
- > In all our programmes, we will place a particular focus on advancing gender equality and empowering smallholder women farmers. We will seek to put agricultural research to use in farmers' fields to help them to grow more nutritious food for their families and communities. We will support smallholder farmers to organise themselves so that they can improve their access to markets.
- > Recognising that Africa's coastal cities are growing rapidly we will explore opportunities to support marine and coastal development with regard especially to food security, the environment and port activity.
- > We will also work for fairer access to assets and services, including land, water, technology, innovation and credit, banking and financial services, and agricultural extension services. This will strengthen rights, particularly for women, increase agricultural productivity, reduce hunger and promote economic growth.
- > Ireland will continue to champion nutrition through the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement – a growing partnership for collective action, and a framework for scaling up actions to address undernutrition and the funding needed to support them. Supporters include developing countries and donor agencies, the UN and other international organisations, civil society and the private sector. Our priority will be addressing maternal, infant and child undernutrition so as to prevent stunting; focussing on the first 1,000 days between a woman's pregnancy and her child's 2nd birthday.
- > We will ensure that our humanitarian relief work is strongly linked with longer term efforts to tackle hunger and undernutrition, and we will continue to work hard to build sustainable food systems in famine-prone parts of Africa.

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We will work in a way
that is more focussed
and interconnected
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Ms. Etrida Luhanga, a small holder farmer from Malawi and Mr. Dyborn Chibonga, CEO National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM), address the Dublin Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Climate Justice, in April 2013. The conference highlighted the inter-linkages between these issues and brought the experience of those effected by poverty to the attention of international policy-makers. *Mac Innes Photography*

FRAGILE STATES

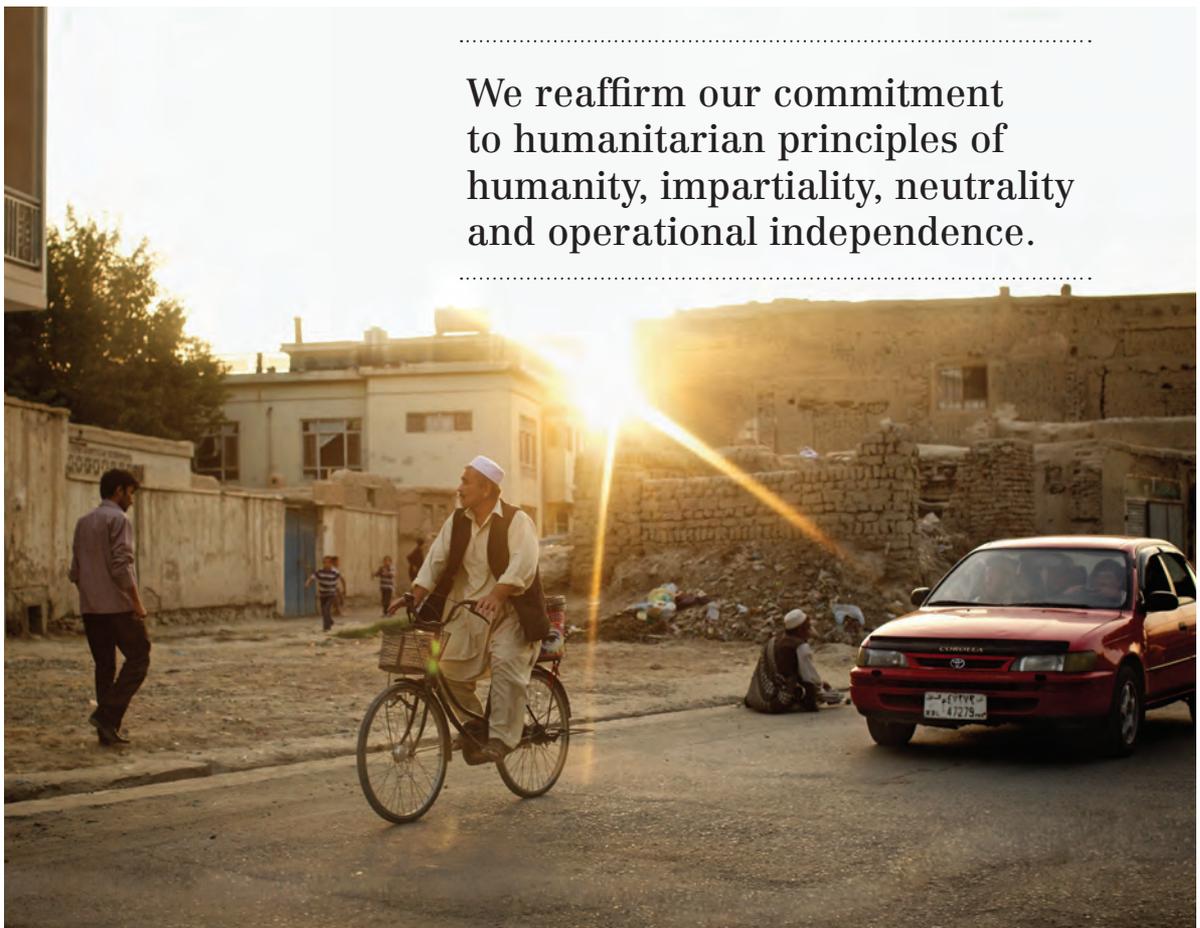
Countries experiencing instability and fragility are home to a growing proportion of the world's poor. In these environments many men, women and children face the prospect of never escaping poverty. Change, while it happens, can be slow and faltering. Without improvements in incomes and livelihoods, and positive changes in security and governance, countries often fail to make progress - causing stagnation or a return to crises and conflict.

Ireland recently co-signed, with a group of 19 fragile and conflict-affected countries, development partners, and international organisations, the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States. This calls for a greater focus on the promotion of legitimate politics, justice, security, strong economic foundations and increased revenues and services to support countries as they evolve from fragility to stability.

Fragility in Afghanistan *Photo: Panos*

To demonstrate our commitment to staying the course with countries emerging from conflict, we will deepen our engagement in Sierra Leone and Liberia

We reaffirm our commitment to humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and operational independence.



What we will do

- > We will focus our efforts on those countries where the needs are greatest and where human rights are most at risk, where there is a higher degree of fragility and weak government, and where recovery is taking place in the aftermath of conflict. Working in these environments presents more risks to our programme, but the risk of doing nothing is greater.
- > We will strive to understand and work with the national and local contexts, staying the course and coordinating with our partners in the EU and others to develop and strengthen the systems and institutions, including the private sector, that are critical for peace, stability and development.
- > To demonstrate our commitment to staying the course with countries emerging from conflict, we will deepen our engagement in Sierra Leone and Liberia. This will include Sierra Leone becoming one of our nine Key Partner Countries.
- > We will explore the opportunities for establishing a presence in other fragile settings and regions where we have a significant engagement. Our relationship with Zimbabwe will be strengthened subject to an improvement in stability and the democratic environment there. The increased resources needed to work in such countries will be offset by planned and phased reductions in other parts of the aid programme.
- > By using a whole-of-Government approach, we will ensure that our political and diplomatic engagement with these countries, as well as our engagement within the EU and at the international level, particularly the UN, goes hand-in-hand with our development and humanitarian support.
- > We will continue to support efforts to implement the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which recognises the close links between the issues of peace, security and development, and the promotion of gender equality and women's rights. Ireland's recently launched National Action Plan for Implementation of UNSCR 1325 will guide our efforts in this area. The Conflict Resolution Unit in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade will play a lead role for the Government in this area.
- > We will work to improve the impact of our humanitarian response ensuring that more lives are saved in sudden onset disasters and that the impact and intensity of recurrent crises is reduced. Our aim will be to use our humanitarian and development assistance in a coordinated way to build the resilience of individuals, communities and governments.
- > Our support will promote a more systematic and coordinated approach to reducing disasters. In this effort, the importance of supporting national partner governments' institutional capacity and processes, rather than creating new and parallel structures, is our preferred approach.
- > We reaffirm our commitment to the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and operational independence. We will continue to advocate for these principles at all levels, and follow through on the EU's European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.
- > By maintaining our support to UN efforts and advocating for greater effectiveness, we recognise the central role of the UN in coordinating and responding to humanitarian crises. We will continue to provide flexible and timely funding to NGOs who can deliver humanitarian assistance on the basis of need.
- > By further consolidating the Rapid Response Initiative, Ireland will continue to deploy highly-skilled personnel and emergency supplies to a disaster zone within hours of a crisis. Our pre-positioned funding with a number of significant humanitarian NGOs can be immediately released to support a crisis response.
- > Ireland has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to international peace and security through participation in peacekeeping operations, and we will continue to build on that proud tradition. Disarmament and mine action will remain a key issue for Ireland in accordance with international humanitarian law and the protection of human rights.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

The majority of the world's poor are directly reliant on the environment for their survival. They are the worst affected by the global deterioration in environmental conditions caused by climate change and other factors. The UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 secured renewed political commitment to sustainable development. We aim to follow through on that commitment – at home and in our partnerships with others – by putting the issue of climate change at the heart of what we do.

Achieving a balance between the economic, social and environmental aspects of development is critical. Our approach follows on from Our Sustainable Future, a Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland, the Government's policy framework for green and sustainable national prosperity.

Our efforts will be aimed at ensuring that developing countries, especially our Key Partner Countries, can develop in a way that is resource-efficient, climate-resilient (protecting themselves from the risks of climate change) and low in carbon emissions.

What we will do

- > We will support developing countries and vulnerable communities to formulate national responses to environmental degradation and climate change as a matter of priority. In this, we will continue to focus primarily on improving people's resilience to climate change.
- > We will build on the synergy between our priority areas for action and will appraise our programmes against the economic, social and environmental aspects of development, recognising their interlinkages and ensuring that these remain balanced at all times.
- > Our efforts to support sustainable natural resource management (for example, maintaining land and soil fertility) will be continued. We will support developing countries to conserve and sustainably use their biodiversity, securing local ecosystems that are vital in all development efforts.
- > We know that climate change impacts disproportionately on women, and we are committed to working to address this by supporting efforts to promote gender equality.
- > We will support developing countries to maximise the potential of green development, including approaches to carbon sequestration (the storage of carbon that would otherwise be released into the atmosphere) for the reduction of poverty. Opportunities for engaging Irish expertise in the area of green technology and in off-setting emissions will be explored.
- > We will support developing countries in their transition from the inefficient use of traditional energy supplies towards the use of modern energy sources such as solar energy and energy-efficient cook stoves.
- > We will increase our focus on disaster risk reduction in development programmes - bridging the gap between our emergency interventions and our development efforts and supporting efforts to increase resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change.
- > The international community has committed to provide \$100 billion per annum by 2020 for climate action in developing countries within the ongoing climate change negotiations. Ireland will maintain its engagement with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and Kyoto Protocol global processes, and strive to meet the obligations arising from these.



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Achieving the balance
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is critical

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A cyclist passes a pool of water originating from the melting ice sheets on Mount Kilimanjaro (back, right). *Photo: Petterik Wiggers, Panos*

TRADE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

To achieve a sustainable solution to poverty, countries need to generate their own revenues. This can be achieved through sustained and equitable economic growth leading to employment, trade, investment, and enhanced human wellbeing. Business and innovation must be encouraged and people must be able to secure decent work. We now have an opportunity to better link our development cooperation with the other elements of our engagement in Africa, through the Africa Strategy (available at www.dfat.ie) which was published in September 2011. This sets out a comprehensive framework for Ireland's economic, political and development relations with Africa over the coming years.



Pictured at the launch of the Africa Agri-Food Development Fund in March 2012, from right to left: H.E. Catherine Muigai Mwangi, Ambassador of Kenya, Joe Costello, T.D., Minister of State for Trade and Development, Simon Coveney, T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Eamon Gilmore, T.D., Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Peter Allan Kallaghe, Ambassador of Tanzania.
Photo: Shane O'Neill, Fennells Photography

We will implement the Africa Strategy and expand our ties with African countries, developing relationships that include strengthened trade, investment, and people-to-people links

With our partner, the Apparel Lesotho Alliance to Fight Aids (ALAFA), Irish Aid helped provide services to garment workers affected by HIV. *Photo: ALAFA/Esposito*



What we will do

- > We will implement the Africa Strategy and expand our ties with African countries, developing relationships that include strengthened trade, investment, and people-to-people links.
- > We will build on our engagement with South Africa and Vietnam and use the lessons from these countries to inform our approach to other developing countries approaching Middle Income Country status.
- > We will strengthen our presence on the ground in East Africa as part of implementing the Africa Strategy, tapping into economic integration and trade in that region. This will also help us to engage more strategically with humanitarian work in the region.
- > We remain firmly committed to the principle that Ireland's official aid should remain untied - that is, not conditional on acquiring goods and services from Ireland. We will at the same time explore synergies between our aid programme and sectors where Irish companies have particular expertise or comparative advantage. In this, we will seek to identify areas where cooperation between Irish Aid and Irish industry can yield benefits for our development partners.
- > We will assess our programmes to see how they are helping countries to become independent from aid. We will undertake efforts to help developing countries to improve their business and investment environment, including labour market governance, and to raise their own domestic revenue in ways that are more efficient, fairer and better promote good governance and equitable and inclusive development. We will work at the global level in advancing efforts to combat illicit financial flows and capital flight.
- > We have seen that the effective management of natural resources can promote sustainable and inclusive growth. We will support this by continuing to focus on strong and accountable systems of governance and public financial management. We will also work at the global level to address the international drivers of corruption.
- > In our engagement on economic growth, we will have a particular focus on those who are being left behind. That means that efforts must target those most excluded, deliberately addressing the inequalities these people face. This demands a greater focus on the dynamics of power and exclusion that underlie poverty and inequality.
- > We will promote the inclusion of job creation objectives into the national plans, poverty reduction frameworks and budgets of our Key Partner Countries. Youth unemployment is a particular issue which needs to be addressed. We will also redouble efforts to ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace and in economic activity in developing countries.
- > International trade can play a major role in the promotion of economic development and the alleviation of poverty. We will continue to support trade in a number of focused ways, and review existing trade initiatives to pool our experience and identify areas where improvements can be made. This includes 'aid for trade' and fair trade initiatives.
- > We will, as a member of the EU, continue to advocate strongly for the World Trade Organisation rules-based system to underpin economic, environmental and social development in developing countries including through the conclusion of the Doha round of trade negotiations. In the meantime, in our engagement within the EU we will seek to ensure that Economic Partnership Agreements entered into will clearly support sustainable and inclusive economic development, regional integration and the integration of Africa into the global economy.
- > We will support the development of new partnerships between the agri-food sectors in Ireland and Africa. The innovative Africa Agri-Food Development Fund, a joint initiative between the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, was recently launched and will develop partnerships in Tanzania and Kenya to begin with.
- > We will strive to ensure that economic development, including engagement by Irish companies, is compatible with our commitment to human rights, such as in relation to gender equality, decent work, and the rights of marginalised groups. We will be guided by the UN policy framework for better managing business and human rights challenges. This is based on the duty of states to protect against human rights abuses by third parties, the corporate responsibility to respect human rights, and the improved ability of victims to access an appropriate remedy when violations take place.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Improving access to quality essential social services such as health, education, services related to HIV and AIDS, and social protection is key to the realisation of human rights, the reduction of poverty, hunger and inequality and the promotion of inclusive economic growth.

What we will do

- > We will continue to invest in improving access by vulnerable people to essential social services, and support local efforts to monitor service delivery. To improve service delivery, we will support institutional changes so as to strengthen relationships of accountability - between policymakers, service providers, and citizens.
- > We will work towards the provision of more and better education in developing countries. This means improving access to education, particularly for those who are marginalised. The quality of education, so that all children attending school achieve basic numeracy and literacy skills, will also be addressed.
- > We will continue to focus on girls' education beyond primary school level in the knowledge that girls' education leads to improved health and nutrition in society.
- > We will work to ensure that education systems are developed to meet the demands of emerging labour markets. Whilst maintaining a focus on quality primary schooling, we will also support secondary and, where feasible, tertiary education programmes, seeking to link in with economic growth opportunities.
- > We will support the development of vocational skills through support for youth training, vital in tackling youth unemployment.
- > In health, we will concentrate on the strengthening of systems including a trained health workforce to oversee and deliver quality, basic health services, reaching those most in need. This requires understanding and addressing the barriers that exist to achieving equal access to health services.
- > Consistent with the 'Cairo Programme of Action', we will support efforts that reduce maternal and infant mortality, and promote universal access to reproductive healthcare, including ante-natal care and family planning services. Access to quality maternal and reproductive healthcare, supporting safe motherhood and allowing women to control their fertility, within the context of national legislative frameworks, is central to women's empowerment and the health of nations.
- > Building on the international respect Ireland has earned through our work on HIV and AIDS, we will continue to invest globally, regionally and at country levels to overcome this pandemic. In particular, future priorities will draw more attention to effective prevention, including by addressing inequality and gender-based violence.
- > We will support the implementation of appropriate and sustainable social protection programmes that address inequality by focussing on the very poorest households, women and children in particular, and improve access to basic services. This will include social assistance, cash transfers, and safety net programmes.
- > Across our programme we will work to ensure that people with disabilities can fulfil their full potential, by accessing services and through empowerment, including in fragile settings and in humanitarian responses in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- > Access to services needs to be complemented with access by the poor to information and essential products. We will support efforts to increase both information flows, including through the use of appropriate media and the availability of essential commodities through the private sector (such as bed nets to prevent malaria, contraceptives, water purifying tablets and soap).

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A girl's education is a
human right and leads
to improved health and
nutrition in society
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Regina Pakome attends secondary school at Mkono Wa Mara, Tanzania.
Photo: Pieterella Pieterse

HUMAN RIGHTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Ireland's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights is a fundamental feature of our foreign policy and aid programme. Sustainable development can only be achieved by ensuring that human rights underpin all areas of development.

Good governance and accountability are vital components for the realisation of human rights and are key to addressing the inequality, discrimination and exclusion that lie at the core of poverty.

We will ensure that human rights principles and standards are promoted, protected and integrated in all of our development efforts

Women march against Gender-based Violence in Sudan. Photo: Albert Gonzalez Farran UN Photos



What we will do

- > We are committed to reinvigorating our approach to human rights by ensuring that the human rights principles of non-discrimination, equality, empowerment, participation, transparency and accountability are integrated across our development efforts. In doing so we will contribute to the fulfilment of our international human rights commitments including in the areas of promoting decent work, gender equality, child rights, and disability.
- > Ireland's membership of the United Nations Human Rights Council from 2013-15 provides a further opportunity to play a vibrant and strong role in the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide.
- > We will ensure that there are strong links between our policy engagement at the UN, EU and other international fora and our programmes on the ground.
- > Within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Human Rights Unit and Irish Aid will ensure coherence in all aspects of our foreign policy where the promotion and protection of human rights are concerned. We will work to strengthen the institutions of democracy, rule of law and accountability in the countries where we work, so that they work for the good of citizens, especially those who are marginalised or excluded. In instances where the commitment to human rights reduces, or where accountability weakens, we will review our engagement and make any necessary adjustments, as we have done in the past.

What we will do

- > We will continue to strengthen the ability of national and local governments and their partners to tackle hunger, build resilience and drive economic growth. Our efforts will continue to focus on building effective institutions and policies, as well as encouraging popular participation in the democratic process.
- > Evidence shows that local solutions, anchored in local realities and supported by strong leadership, work best. We aim to better understand and promote local development and the reduction of poverty at local levels. As part of this, we will support the capacity of key actors (such as local governments, civil society, the private sector, and communities) to respond to local needs and realities – and use this experience to inform our wider policy engagement.
- > We will, in our Key Partner Countries and through our partnership with the Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa (AWEPA), further our support for the critical role national parliaments play in overseeing and holding governments to account for their human rights obligations, and for the achievement of clear development results. And we will work to ensure that the aid provided by Ireland is included in national budgets, so that parliaments can ensure these resources are used effectively.
- > Corruption plagues all societies and undermines development by diverting resources, weakening institutions and contributing to conflict and fragility. We will continue to engage with all the institutions we work with in the fight against corruption, and will promote a culture of zero tolerance for all corrupt practices. We will strengthen our procedures to help developing countries to recover the proceeds of corruption and will combat bribery, in line with our obligations under international agreements. We will continue to support independent audit institutions in developing countries so that spending can be tracked and reported to parliament. The involvement of beneficiary communities in overseeing aid programmes and local service delivery will be promoted. In relation to the funding we provide, we will proactively manage all risks – and where corruption occurs we will act decisively.
- > We are acutely aware of the discrimination and inequalities faced by certain vulnerable groups. We will devote more of our resources to gender equality and disability, supporting specific initiatives as well as ensuring that these issues are effectively integrated into our ongoing work.
- > Ireland is committed to ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and steps are currently being taken to put the necessary domestic legislation in place.
- > Gender equality is a key element of democratic accountability. Women are important agents of change, and supporting and strengthening their voice in decision-making at all levels will continue to be prioritised in our development efforts, as outlined in Ireland's National Women's Strategy 2007-16.
- > Gender-based violence is a major abuse of human rights, and can have serious impacts on women's health, well-being and livelihoods. We will continue to play an active role in the Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence – a unique collaboration between Irish humanitarian, development and human rights agencies, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Irish Defence Forces – working together to share learning and build our capacities to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in developing countries.
- > We will work to protect the rights of children including by finalising the Irish Aid Child Protection Guidelines in 2013 and increasing our engagement on the issue of child soldiers and children in armed conflict. We will advocate and provide funding for the rights and welfare of children in fragile situations.
- > We believe that a strong civil society voice is at the centre of accountability and development. We recognise that in many countries civil society organisations have come under pressure in recent years as they play their legitimate role in development. We will continue to use our voice, influence and partnerships to protect and promote the ability of civil society organisations to operate and to encourage an enabling environment for human rights defenders – and we will monitor this where we work.
- > We recognise the powerful role a diverse, pluralistic and professional media environment can have in providing access to information and debate, and in ensuring the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression as recognised in international human rights law. Media can also act as an important tool to enable citizens to hold their governments to account. We will, where appropriate, support initiatives in this area in the countries where we work.

Maximising our impact

The current economic environment in Ireland means that now, more than ever before, we must maximise the impact of our efforts on international development. We will do this in a number of important ways.

Greater rationalisation and focus

We need a sharper focus in all that we do, and a rationalisation of our engagement, programmes and activities. To achieve maximum value for money and impact, we need to concentrate our effort on where we can make the most difference.

That is why we are committed to:

- > Using this policy as the basis for making the tough decisions on where the focus of our attention and our resources will be placed in the coming years. Where necessary, we will withdraw support from programmes that are not prioritised.
- > Increasing impact in Key Partner Countries by focusing our engagement on a smaller number of sectors.
- > Reviewing our support to multilateral organisations to ensure it is fully aligned with our goals.
- > Continuing to refocus and sharpen our support for NGOs, based on shared priorities and the achievement of results.

Financing our aid budget

The Government remains committed to achieving the target of 0.7% of Gross National Income allocated to international development cooperation, as stated in the Programme for Government. Recognising the present economic difficulties, the Government will endeavour to maintain aid expenditure at current levels, while moving towards the 0.7% target when our economy improves.

Ensuring our own accountability and transparency remain strong

In line with the Government's commitments to Public Service Reform, we are committed to openness, transparency and accountability to the Irish people and our partners in what we do, how we work, and what we are achieving.

Led by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, Ireland will become a member of the Open Government Partnership, a new global initiative bringing developed and developing country governments and civil society together in the drive towards greater openness and transparency in government. We will encourage our partner countries to do likewise.

We will implement fully our international commitments on aid transparency. Therefore, we will invest in and work towards publishing our aid data under the internationally agreed format and standard by 2015 at the latest.

We will work with our partners – governments, NGOs, multilateral organisations, and others - to ensure that they will adhere to similar standards of accountability and transparency. In this way, Irish people will be better able to see where and how their money is being spent, and what results are being achieved.

Through the continued constructive engagement by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade with the Oireachtas and its committees, including through the Public Accounts Committee, the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Joint

Committee on European Union Affairs, we will provide transparency, oversight and accountability to the Irish people in delivering on our commitments.

We will ensure the Irish Aid Annual Report clearly sets out how and where the annual aid programme allocation was spent, and the results we and our partners are achieving. The Comptroller and Auditor General and the Audit Committee of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade provide a vital oversight function in ensuring the effectiveness, efficiency and value for money of the aid programme. We will ensure that these are fully facilitated in visiting and reviewing our programmes on the ground.

Every effort will be made to ensure that our aid funding is not exposed to corruption of any kind. Decisions on funding government systems or other partners will be based on a thorough analysis of systems, and any risks will be proactively managed.

We are also accountable to the partners with whom we work. In our Key Partner Countries, we will continue our strong commitment to mutual accountability, such as annual reviews of donor performance.

Furthermore, we are held accountable by the OECD Development Assistance Committee and others who rightly challenge us to continue improving the quality and impact of our aid by implementing international agreements which aim to deliver better results - such as the new Global Partnership agreed in Busan, Republic of Korea in December 2011.

We are accountable to the international community for our obligations under the UN Charter and the International Human Rights framework. We report on a regular basis on our efforts to meet these obligations, including our obligation to assist and cooperate internationally. Annex 1 illustrates how we will account for our performance.

A Whole-of-Government approach

We know that development results can best be achieved when Government policies and actions complement each other.

In the coming period, we will identify specific policy areas where coherence can be enhanced, as well as indicators to track performance. We will strengthen the oversight role of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development. This Committee will be responsible for producing a biennial report on Ireland's progress on policy coherence for development, which will be submitted by the Minister of State for Trade and Development to Government, and to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade.

We will also promote greater coherence of EU policies, as reported on annually in the EU Report on Policy Coherence for Development.

We will continue to ensure effective collaboration across Government in achieving our policy goals, including through joint programming across Departments in areas such as agri-food industry development, climate change mitigation, human resources for health, tax and development, and peace and security.

Implementing the Africa Strategy will also strengthen our coherence. Collaboration will be advanced with national initiatives and state agencies in Ireland with a view to enabling investment in developing countries. Through the Africa Strategy, we will advance our political, economic and development partnerships in a consistent manner – with each element supporting the other.

Strong international engagement

Ireland is a strong supporter of multilateral efforts, recognising that global challenges need global solutions.

Our engagement at the international level is an essential part of our foreign policy. It gives us a stronger voice. It enables us to tackle the global dimensions of poverty and inequality, and to advance the goals outlined in this Policy. It amplifies the effect that we can have by combining our efforts with the efforts of others. And it enables better coordination, including at the country level.

By actively engaging in policy and programme discussions with our main multilateral partners – the UN, the EU, World Bank and other international institutions, such as the African and Asian Development Banks and the OECD – we strive to ensure better effectiveness and better results for people living in poverty.

We look to the UN to uphold and defend the universal values of peace, security, human rights and development which are set out in the UN charter. The UN is uniquely placed to deal with international challenges. No other organisation has the same global impact or the political, moral and legal authority to act. We will continue to champion our policy goals at the UN, and we will work to ensure that the UN system itself is more efficient and effective.

Development results can best be achieved when Government policies and actions complement each other

For every euro spent on aid worldwide, over 50 cents comes from the EU and its Member States. This is a big commitment. And we are proud to be part of that effort. Our voice in the world and the pursuit of our foreign policy is greatly enhanced through our participation in the development and implementation of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy. As a community of shared values, the EU is uniquely placed to play a role in support of international peace and stability.

Our membership of the EU also enables our collective development efforts to have greater impact and reach. Given the EU's central role in international development, we recognise the value of influencing EU policy. We will play our part in ensuring that the EU continues to deliver aid that is effective and assists those most in need. This will involve working at EU level at Council and with our partners in the European Parliament, European Commission and the European External Action Service, and coordinating with our EU partners at the partner country level.

For every euro spent on aid worldwide, over 50 cent comes from the EU and its member states

Increased coordination and progress on joint programming are part of the new vision of EU development policy, 'An Agenda for Change' (available at www.ec.europa.eu/europeaid). This policy commits the EU and its Member States to the goal of eradicating poverty, and places human rights, good governance, democracy and inclusive and sustainable growth at the heart of EU development efforts. Our goals are very much aligned to this collective effort.

We are committed to deepening our engagement with the World Bank Group, recognising its role as one of the leading development partners globally. We will support the World Bank to contribute to our policy goals and will continue to promote the ongoing reform and modernisation of the World Bank to improve its effectiveness, efficiency and governance.

We will review the range of our funding for multilateral organisations to ensure that it is as effective as possible and that it is fully aligned with our goals. We will participate actively in the governing bodies of

the multilateral organisations we support. We will continue to work with the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network to carry out joint assessments of the effectiveness of multilateral partners. These assessments will guide our funding decisions towards those which are performing well. The results of these assessments will be published online.

We will continue to channel 30% of our resources through multilateral organisations. 70% of the budget will be provided bilaterally through partnerships with Governments, Non-Governmental Organisations, and global funds and programmes. This will be reviewed on an ongoing basis so as to maintain maximum impact for our expenditure.

We are committed to greater engagement with African and regional institutions. We will give strong support for African regional integration as an engine of political stability and economic growth, and will examine ways in which we can engage more effectively with the African Union and Africa's Regional Economic Communities.

We will explore the potential benefits of membership of the African Development Bank, particularly in the context of our African Strategy.

We will continue to support global funds and programmes. These funds can offer a unique platform for the public and private sector to work together to respond to specific issues, such as the control of malaria, HIV and AIDS, climate change and to achieve education goals. We will also build our linkages with private philanthropy organisations, many of which have significantly increased their commitments to international development in recent years. We will encourage these funds and programmes to strengthen their engagement in coordination and accountability efforts, particularly at the country level.

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We are committed to greater engagement with African and regional institutions

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The Millennium Development Goals

Our goals will directly contribute to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the eight international development goals that represent the world's commitment to dealing with global poverty. The MDGs include eradicating hunger, halting the spread of HIV and AIDS, providing universal primary education, and promoting gender equality.

A UN Review Summit on the MDGs will take place in 2013 and plans will be developed for a global compact on development beyond the target date of 2015. We will work closely with the UN and with other partners, and play a leading role in the EU, on these important processes. Our goals will inform our engagement.

IRELAND¹

Human Development Index: 7th of 187 countries

Population: 4.58 million

Average annual income (GNI) per capita: \$28,671

Life expectancy: 80.7 years

SIERRA LEONE

Human Development Index: 177th

Population: 6.13 million

Average annual income (GNI) per capita: \$881

Life expectancy: 48.1 years

LESOTHO

Human Development Index: 158th

Population: 2.21 million

Average annual income (GNI) per capita: \$1,879

Life expectancy: 48.7 years

MOZAMBIQUE

Human Development Index: 185th

Population: 24.47 million

Average annual income (GNI) per capita: \$906

Life expectancy: 50.7 years

MALAWI

Human Development Index: 170th

Population: 15.88 million

Average annual income (GNI) per capita: \$774

Life expectancy: 54.8 years

ZAMBIA

Human Development Index: 163rd

Population: 13.8 million

Average annual income (GNI) per capita: \$1,358

Life expectancy: 49.4 years

TANZANIA

Human Development Index: 152nd

Population: 47.66 million

Average annual income (GNI) per capita: \$1,383

Life expectancy: 58.9 years

UGANDA

Human Development Index: 161st

Population: 35.62 million

Average annual income (GNI) per capita: \$1,168

Life expectancy: 54.5 years

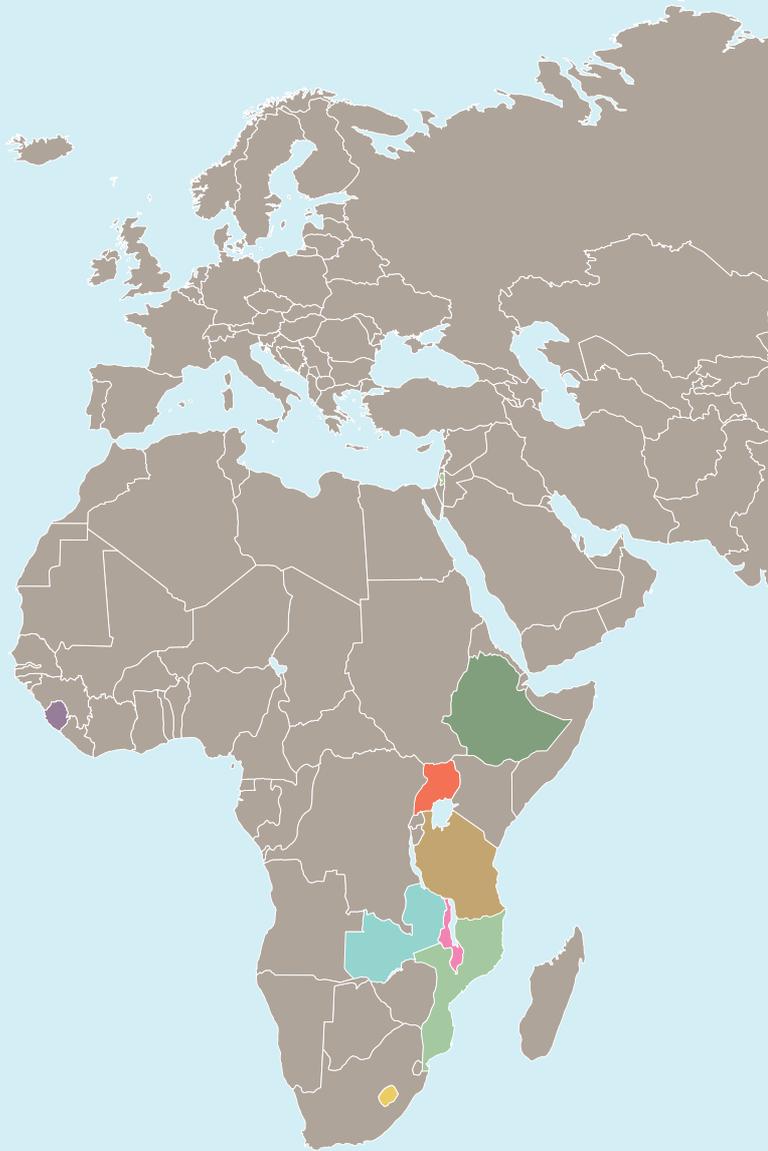
ETHIOPIA

Human Development Index: 173rd

Population: 86.54 million

Average annual income (GNI) per capita: \$1,017

Life expectancy: 59.7 years





Making a difference at the country level

A strong country focus ensures that our development efforts are more targeted and have greater impact.

We will maintain a primary focus on developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa – the region of the world where poverty remains most persistent. Our aid programme has had a strong focus on nine Key Partner Countries, eight of which are in Africa. Our office in Timor Leste is being phased out in line with an earlier Government decision. Our engagement in Vietnam is aimed at tackling issues of poverty and inequality there, developing strong ties, and fostering trade partnerships.

We will have different development relationships in each of our Key Partner Countries, according to needs and opportunities – addressing the causes of acute hunger where needed, and building stronger economic relations where possible. We will use the Africa Strategy to develop a more comprehensive relationship with our Key Partner Countries in Africa.

The mechanisms through which we deliver aid (through national and local governments, civil society, multilateral organisations) will also vary according to need and suitability. Our ability to do this has been identified as a particular strength in our approach.

We will ensure as far as possible that our support is predictable, so that countries can plan effectively, and does not displace other forms of development funding available to developing countries (such as investment and own revenue). And we will work to ensure that these resources can be used to help our Key Partner Countries emerge from their dependence on aid.

Our decisions on the nature and scope of our engagement with these Key Partner Countries and our other country partners will be shaped by the overarching Africa Strategy and by the following factors:

- > The level of poverty, fragility and inequality in the country
- > Commitment to human rights, accountability and the prevention of corruption
- > Our history of partnership and the added value our presence would bring
- > The likelihood of achieving sustainable results for people living in poverty
- > Commitment to exiting from dependence on aid

There will be a rebalancing of our engagement in those countries that have reached, or are on the road to reaching Middle Income Country status. This will require dynamic partnerships, a refinement of activities, and preparation for an exit from dependence on aid.

VIETNAM

Human Development Index: 127th

Population: 89.7 million

Average annual income (GNI) per capita: \$2,970

Life expectancy: 75.4 years

FIND OUT MORE:

Details of Ireland's partnerships with these nine countries are available on our website at www.irishaid.ie.

Enhanced partnerships in Ireland

With NGOs and missionary organisations

We have a deep well of experience, knowledge and capacity in Ireland which we aim to utilise in the pursuit of the goals outlined here.

Irish NGOs play a pivotal role in responding to humanitarian emergencies, providing services where they are needed most, and supporting vulnerable people in developing countries to come together and participate in the development of their communities. In addition, NGOs also raise awareness in Ireland of global development challenges and involve the Irish public in efforts to address them.

Irish Aid's partnership with the NGO sector will support improvements in programme quality and performance. We are strengthening the emphasis on accountability and development results with our NGO partners. A new performance focussed and results-orientated system has been put in place to guide funding allocation decisions. We will encourage the collective efforts by the NGO sector to ensure that they achieve high standards of performance and transparency in

their corporate governance. Working in partnership with Irish and international NGOs, we are placing an increased emphasis on partnership with local civil society organisations in developing countries, and the level of funding allocated by these NGOs to local civil society organisations is expected to increase over time.

We will continue to provide strategic support to Irish missionary organisations that are engaged in important frontline poverty reduction work in developing countries.

With other institutions

Irish institutions have built up relevant skills and experience that our aid programme can use. We will explore where Ireland's experiences can further be brought to bear to strengthen institutions in developing countries in delivering results.

We will broaden and deepen the engagement of Government Departments and institutions with the Irish Aid programme. We are also committed to deepening our engagement with the private sector, including through engagement as part of implementing the Africa Strategy.

We will work closely with Higher Education Institutions in Ireland and in developing countries through the Programme of Strategic Cooperation, which aims to promote collaborative partnerships for innovative research and educational activities in support of our goals.

The Irish Aid Fellowships Programme will be substantially expanded, and will continue to strengthen institutions by helping students from developing countries to undertake postgraduate studies at colleges and universities in Ireland, as well as in their own region. A new stream of fellowships focussed on more vocational and labour market skills will be developed.

A new Volunteering Initiative is being launched to modernise the way in which we support volunteering. A database of volunteers will be compiled to provide better quality information on potential placements, including with NGOs and the UN. We will facilitate improved matching of volunteers to the demand for their skills, and we will work with volunteer and host organisations to promote adherence to good practice standards. Through this initiative experienced professionals, including many recently retired public servants with skills which are in short supply in the developing world, will have



Minister of State, Mr. Joe Costello, T.D. with Sheila Power, Director of Irish Council of International Students and students from the Irish Aid Fellowship Training Programme Fellows, Vietnam IDEAS programme and the Programme for Strategic Co-operation. *Photo: Liam Burke/Press 22*

an opportunity to contribute to sustainable development. The Irish Aid Volunteering and Information Centre will be the focal point for volunteering-related activities and information.

We will work within the EU to advance the new EU Aid Volunteers Initiative which should present further opportunities for skilled Irish citizens to receive professional support in order to contribute to international humanitarian work.

We recognise the valuable role local authorities in Ireland can have in sharing skills, strengthening capacity and supporting programmes with their counterparts in developing countries and will support efforts in that regard.

We will continue to work with African and other Diaspora organisations in Ireland to enable them to use their experience and skills to benefit their countries of origin.

Putting learning and evidence into use

It is important that we understand and use approaches that are most effective in reducing poverty. We need to continually update our knowledge to ensure that our decisions, policies and programmes, and those of our partners, are based on sound evidence of what works and what does not.

We will do this by learning from our own experience and practice, from evaluations and reviews, and from the best available research. We will share our knowledge and experience internally, across Government and with our partners, to promote good practice, scale-up innovations and influence policies in areas where we can make the most difference.

We will also support countries and partners in generating reliable and timely data to assess progress in achieving their goals.

We will develop a new research strategy in 2013. This will focus on supporting cutting-edge research across a range of themes - based on our core priorities - to deliver new ideas, innovation and results.

These themes will reflect our priorities and have the potential to contribute significantly to international development and poverty reduction. We will support research within each of these themes and also research that addresses the linkages between them. We will work with partners to ensure research is well communicated and shared with those that are best placed to use it so that it can make a difference to the lives of people living in poverty and the communities in which they live.

We will play a stronger role in promoting mutual learning between governments, organisations and individuals in developing countries.

Achieving results

Effective management will continue to be essential to make sure that our aid programme is aligned with our goals and the delivery of our commitments. We will be judged not just on what we spend but on what we achieve.

In line with the Government's commitment to improving the effectiveness of the Irish public service, the achievement of real and lasting results will be central in the way that we plan, make decisions, implement, monitor, evaluate and provide accountability for our actions and programmes.

This will equally be important in the partnerships that we enter into. We know however that long term change can take time and that measuring change is complex. We are committed to working with partners to develop strong systems which can demonstrate change over time.

Irish Aid is based in Dublin and Limerick. We will continue to manage these two locations effectively and efficiently.

We will look at the way we work, our systems and structures, and examine how best these can respond to the direction set out in this policy.

Our management support systems and risk management will continue to facilitate efficient programming and reporting. Strong external oversight of the management of the Irish Aid programme will continue to be provided by the Oireachtas, the Audit Committee of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and external bodies such as the OECD. Our own internal audit and evaluation function also plays an important role.

The Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group will continue to provide external advisory input to the programme as an independent, non-executive expert body.

We will use this policy to set out our implementation plans for the coming years, and we will review progress in 2016.

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We will be judged not just on what we spend but on what we achieve

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Development education aims to deepen understanding, and encourage people towards action for a more just and equal world.

Children from the Sacred Heart National School in Aughrim, one of 11 finalists, at the 2011 One World Irish Aid Awards. Photo: Irish Aid

Effective communication

We will continually engage with the Irish public about the work and impact of our aid programme and our development efforts and about the important difference the work is making in the lives of people and communities living in poverty. This is of particular importance at a time of economic difficulty in Ireland, when the strong levels of public support for development cooperation might easily be eroded.

A new Communications Strategy, to be developed in 2013, will have a focus on social media and a stronger online presence, including through a new Irish Aid website (www.irishaid.ie), as well as on an enhanced role for the Irish Aid Information and Volunteering Centre. A new consolidated Schools Programme will be a key component in our overall approach to raising public awareness of the programme.

We will also work closely with partners in Ireland, including NGOs and Diaspora organisations now living in Ireland, to promote increased awareness and public engagement through initiatives such as Africa Day (celebrated around the world on May 25th each year). We collectively need to communicate on global development in ways that convey the complexity surrounding poverty and inequality.

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We will continually inform the Irish public about the work and impact of our development efforts and about the important difference that work is making

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Increasing development awareness and engagement

We have an excellent reputation for the high quality development education we support in Ireland. This development education aims to deepen understanding, and encourage people towards taking action for a more just and equal world. It provides a unique opportunity for people in Ireland to reflect on their roles and responsibilities as global citizens.

We are committed to undertaking a more strategic approach to development education with support more closely targeted at a number of areas. This will include teacher education at primary and post primary level, the improvement and broader dissemination of appropriate teaching resources, and more focussed work with the community and youth sector. We will pursue opportunities with the Department of Education and Skills, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, the Curriculum Development Unit and other partners to ensure that opportunities for the integration of development education into new curricula are maximised.

We will strengthen our support for the important work of the Irish Development Education Association, a network of organisations and individuals involved in development education across the island of Ireland. We will appoint a new member with development education expertise to the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group who will be responsible for advising the Government on development education and other areas. This appointment will assume the role heretofore carried out by the Development Education Advisory Committee which will be phased out in the coming period.

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We are committed to undertaking a more strategic approach to development education with support more closely targeted at a number of areas

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Annex 1: Accounting for our performance

Accountability	Mechanism	Frequency
Accountability for expenditure and results	Oireachtas hearings of the Public Accounts Committee, Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, Joint Committee on EU Affairs Annual Report of Irish Aid EU Results Reporting Framework	Annually, or more frequently when requested Annually Being developed
Accountability for Whole-of-Government approach	Report on Whole-of-Government Approach to Development	Biennial presentation to Cabinet and the Oireachtas
Assessment of international aid quality (Busan) commitments	OECD Evaluation EU Survey on Development Financing Mutual accountability assessments at Key Partner Country level	Every 2 – 3 years Annually Periodic
Assessment of policies, programmes and systems of Irish Aid	OECD Peer Review of Ireland's Development Programme Annual Report of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Audit Committee Public Service Reform Plan implementation reviews/value for money reviews Evaluations of programmes	Every 4 – 5 years. Next review due in September 2014 Annually Periodic Periodic

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