

Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

The Management Review of Irish Aid, recommended in the *White Paper on Irish Aid*, was completed in July 2008. On 27th July 2009, the Government endorsed the findings of the Review.

The Review was carried out by an independent external consultancy and overseen by a Steering Committee composed of senior officials representing the Departments of Foreign Affairs and Finance. The Review is the most comprehensive examination to date of the Government's overseas aid programme structures and systems.

The Review recommends that external advisory input to the programme should be provided through an independent, non-executive expert body.

In line with the recommendation and the Government's endorsement of the Review, a new Expert Advisory Group will be established.

Role

The core function of the Group will be to offer independent advice to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of State for Overseas Development on the aid programme.

Composition

The Group, which will be independent and non-executive, will consist of five Ordinary Members and a Chairperson.

The Members and the Chairperson will have broad knowledge of the development and international affairs agendas. It will be made up of a mix of national and international experts and one senior official from the Department of Finance will be invited to be part of the Group in an *ex officio* capacity.

Appointment

The Members and the Chairperson will be appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Appointments will be for a period of three years with the possibility of this term being extended up to a maximum of a total of 5 years.

Reporting

The Group will provide advice to the Minister on the overall orientation and strategic direction of the aid programme. The Group will provide this advice through a concise annual statement/report to the Minister.

In addition, at the request of the Minister or Minister of State, the Group may analyse, review, report and make recommendations on specific, discrete areas of the aid programme

The Group will submit its work directly to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of State for Overseas Development.

Work Programme / Resources

The Group will set its own calendar of meetings, but will meet at least three times per year.

The Group will cost its programme of work, including any external support envisaged. Resources will be earmarked to it for the preparation and delivery of its annual statement / report and to respond to any other specific tasks assigned to it.

Members will receive an allowance of the order of €3,000 per year for the Chairman and €2,000 for members (other than the Department of Finance representative) for their work (up to a maximum number of allowable days per year) which will be fixed by reference to and in accordance with the Department of Finance Code of Practice for the payment of fees to the chairpersons and directors/members of State Bodies. The members will also be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the course of their work.