

Consultation paper for the review of the White Paper on Irish Aid

<http://www.irishaid.ie/whitepaper>

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1. The Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid

- 1.1 Irish Aid is the Government's programme of assistance to the poorest people in the world. It is Ireland's contribution to the fight against global poverty and a practical expression of its values as a nation. The aid programme is managed by the Development Cooperation Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
- 1.2 The aid programme belongs to the Irish people. It is delivering €639 million for poverty reduction in 2012. This equates to a little over 5 cents for every €10 produced by Ireland. And it helps build better futures for some of the world's poorest people, the vast majority of whom live on less than €1.25 a day.

 To learn more about Irish Aid, and to download the 2010 Annual Report, go to <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie>
- 1.3 Ireland's first White Paper on Irish Aid was published by the Government in September 2006. A statement of Government policy, the White Paper places the fight against world poverty at the heart of Ireland's foreign policy and articulates the guiding principles of the aid programme.

 The White Paper on Irish Aid can be downloaded at <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/whitepaper/>
- 1.4 A Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid, one of the commitments contained in the Programme for Government, was announced in June 2011. The Review is being led by the Minister of State for Trade and Development, Ms Jan O'Sullivan, T.D. at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
- 1.5 Strong independent oversight of the Review is being provided by the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group, set up in 2010 to advise on the aid programme. The Expert Advisory Group reports directly to the Minister of State.

 Information on the Expert Advisory Group is available at <http://www.iaeag.ie>
- 1.6 This Consultation Paper provides accountability for progress made since the White Paper was published, as well as an overview of some key issues, together with a number of questions to assist in shaping the discussion and feedback.
- 1.7 The public consultation exercise will take place between **February 1st and April 25th 2012** and this will provide opportunities for the general public, the development community in Ireland, and partners and stakeholders in developing countries to participate in the Review. There will also be consultation across Government Departments and with the Oireachtas.

What is the Public Consultation About?

The public consultation will centre on four main areas:

1. The progress in meeting the 2006 White Paper commitments.
2. The changing context at home and internationally.
3. Ireland's aid policy and programme priorities for the future.
4. Ways of working.

2. The Consultation Process

2.1 People and organisations can participate in the consultation in any of the following ways:

- By participating in one of the public consultation meetings in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Sligo (details at <http://www.irishaid.ie/whitepaper>)
- By responding in writing (see **Annex B – Format for Submitting a Response**). Written responses should be submitted by 5pm on April 25th 2012.
- By organising a discussion on any matter of interest and sending responses in writing.
- By following the Review on Facebook, Twitter and online (details at <http://www.irishaid.ie/whitepaper>). *Please note that comments on social media will not be considered as a formal response to the consultation, and those wishing to engage with the consultation are advised to submit their response in writing by post/email.*
- The Irish Embassy in each Irish Aid partner country will undertake consultation locally, and regional consultations will also take place for eastern Africa in Ethiopia in January 2012 and for southern Africa in Malawi in February 2012.

2.2 The end product will be a Review Report which will be published by the Government in autumn 2012, setting out the way ahead for the aid programme.

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3. Report on Progress Made

- 3.1 The following section presents an overview of progress made since the publication of the White Paper on Irish Aid in 2006. The question to consider is:

Question

Has the Government been successful in implementing the commitments contained in the White Paper on Irish Aid?

- 3.2 The White Paper on Irish Aid describes Ireland's vision for development. Development cooperation was presented as a core part of Ireland's foreign policy. Poverty reduction through the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals is set out as the main objective of Irish Aid.
- 3.3 The principles of partnership, public ownership and transparency, effectiveness, coherence, and long-term sustainability were seen as forming the bedrock of the Irish Aid programme (and are more recently reflected in the 2011 Busan High Level Forum agreement on effective aid). This vision, and these principles, have served Ireland's aid programme and its partners well – and, it is proposed, will continue to inform Government policy in the coming period.

White Paper Commitments

- 3.4 **Annex A** outlines the progress in meeting the White Paper on Irish Aid (2006) commitments. Much progress has been made since 2006. Irish Aid has been described by the OECD and other international agencies as a champion in making aid more effective. A 2011 Centre for Global Development survey shows that Ireland is only one of three donors to score in the top ten across four areas of effective aid.
- 3.5 The White Paper has guided decisions over the last five years and has resulted in:
- ✓ A continued focus on Africa.
 - ✓ A leadership role in the fight against global hunger and food and nutrition insecurity.
 - ✓ Greater attention to fragility (due to conflict, climate change, and so on).
 - ✓ Improved ways of preventing and responding to humanitarian emergencies.
 - ✓ Continued attention to governance, gender, the environment and HIV and AIDS.
 - ✓ Enhanced focus on climate change, in collaboration with other Government departments.
 - ✓ Better focus on results.
 - ✓ Stronger policy coherence across Government departments in Ireland.
 - ✓ Streamlined and consistent support for the valuable work of civil society organisations.

- ✓ A renewed focus on trade and development – and the links between the two.
- ✓ A continued focus on programmes in health, HIV and AIDS, and education in particular.
- ✓ Strong oversight mechanisms, including through the Oireachtas and robust systems of accountability.
- ✓ Increased public engagement.

3.5 Many challenges remain. The 2006 White Paper was developed at a time of rising levels of economic growth, and it set out a broad and ambitious agenda. However, the reductions in public expenditure as a result of the difficult economic situation have resulted in a decline of some 30% in Ireland’s aid budget between 2008 and 2011 (see Chart 1 below).

3.7 Whilst Government has reaffirmed its commitment to the UN target for Official Development Assistance of 0.7% of GNP, the Review of the White Paper needs to reposition planning within a context of the current budget and human resource challenges. The Review presents an opportunity to review, prioritise and focus - and to consult the public on this.

3.8 There were also some commitments made in the White Paper where progress was less than expected, largely because of human and financial resource constraints:

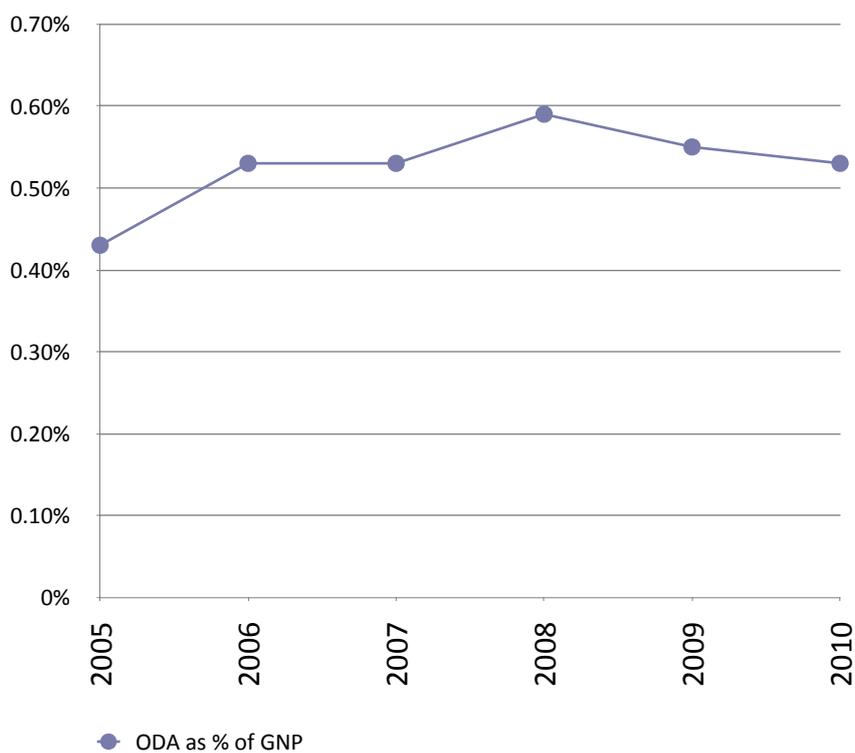
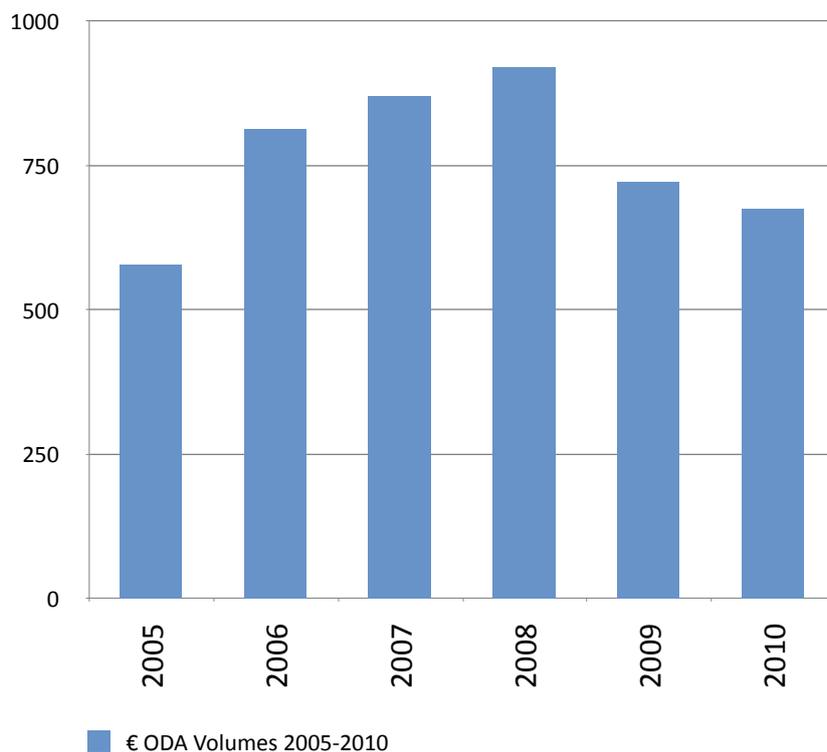
- The number of partner countries was increased by one (Malawi) and not by two.
- The White Paper committed to an increasing engagement with and support for the African Union which was not as deep as anticipated.
- The idea of establishing an Irish Development Bank was not pursued.
- The development of a regional approach in Southern Africa and South East Asia was not as envisaged, although some sector-specific efforts were made in that regard.
- More recently the decision has been made by the Government to close the representative office in Timor Leste following a review of overseas missions. However, the aid programme there will continue, and the Irish Ambassador in Singapore will continue to be accredited to Timor Leste.
- The knowledge and understanding of development issues, and the Government’s aid programme, amongst the Irish public is somewhat low - although there are high levels of goodwill and public support.

Independent Reviews and Evaluations

3.9 A number of independent reviews and evaluations have guided Irish Aid over recent years, and these also provide accountability for the progress made and challenges remaining in delivering on the commitments in the White Paper on Irish Aid. These include:

- The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee Peer Review of Ireland (2009), available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/50/1/42704390.pdf>
- The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee Mid Term Review of Irish Aid (2011)
- The Joint Evaluation of the Paris Declaration - Study on Irish Aid (2010), available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/61/51/47083236.pdf>

Chart 1 Official Development Assistance (ODA) from Ireland, 2005-10



- Irish Aid Country Strategy Paper independent evaluation reports, available at http://www.irishaid.ie/publications_audit.asp
- The Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Accounts of the Public Services 2010), available at <http://www.audgen.gov.ie>
- The Irish Aid Management Review (2009), available at <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/article.asp?article=1492>
- The Organisational Review Programme (ORP) of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2011), forthcoming at <http://www.orp.ie/eng/Publications/>

3.10 These independent reviews and evaluations have generally been positive, including in the following areas:

- ✓ Irish Aid is a development programme of quality, which is well-focused on the world's poorest people. It is delivering real and tangible results.
- ✓ Irish Aid has a strong commitment to working in partnership with other donor countries, and is widely seen as a champion in making aid more effective.
- ✓ Irish Aid has developed strong partnerships and relationships in Ireland with Non Governmental Organisations, universities and others.
- ✓ There is good cross party political support and high levels of public support for overseas aid expenditure.
- ✓ There are good links on the ground between the political and the development functions of Embassies in Programme Countries. This has been assisted by the designation of heads of missions in Programme Countries as full ambassadors.
- ✓ There are effective systems of oversight and accountability in place and risks are being actively managed.
- ✓ The aid programme has embraced the disciplines of results and performance management and measurement – and systems have been put in place to ensure that lessons are learned and improvements made.

3.11 Among the challenges are the needs to:

- Reduce fragmentation of aid (Irish Aid, whilst it prioritises nine Programme Countries, currently directs funds to more than 80 countries).
- Enhance efforts to measure and communicate the development results achieved.
- Build an overall coherent approach across Government.
- Take account of the human resources constraints faced.
- Increase internal public financial management expertise.
- Match country programme ambition with existing capacity and staffing.
- Ensure that the decentralisation of Irish Aid is well managed.

4. The Changing Context

- 4.1 The world is changing, and with it the context for international development is also changing. The next decade is likely to see Ireland's aid programme influenced by situations quite different to those that have shaped it thus far, both at home and internationally. This section discusses the changed context, and asks:

Question

What are the implications of the changes in the global and domestic context for the Government's aid programme in the future and how will these affect current priorities?

Changing Context Globally

- 4.2 Overall, global poverty is reducing. The last decade has seen some of the fastest progress in poverty reduction in history, in large part because of rapid growth in China, India and parts of East Asia. At a global level we are on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of halving world poverty by 2015.
- 4.3 As the overall picture improves, it is becoming clear that poverty is more persistent and concentrated in particular regions and localities - with Sub Saharan Africa continuing to bear the greatest burden. It is estimated that Sub Saharan Africa will be home to approximately half of the world's poor by 2030.
- 4.4 Progress is being made however, and aid is playing a key role in that. Human Poverty Indicators show about 40% of Africa's population was living in poverty in 1995 while by 2007 this was down to 33% (African Development Bank, 2011). Africa is healthier and better educated now. In Sub Saharan Africa, there has been a 28% reduction in child mortality between 1990 and 2009 and, significantly, progress has accelerated in recent years. Between 1999 and 2009 there was an increase of 18% in school net enrolment in the region.
- 4.5 The recent global financial crisis had some detrimental effects, but affected different countries and regions in different ways, not always as predicted. For example, the poorest countries were not the hardest hit, because they were not as integrated into the global financial system as other countries. The current set of financial and economic crises however gives rise to a degree of unpredictability in terms of future financial flows and knock-on effects.
- 4.6 Developing countries are facing new and emerging challenges. In addition to the global financial crisis, rising food and energy prices and climate change are having negative effects. Low-income countries, and in particular those in situations of fragility (more vulnerable to internal and external shocks), are at risk of falling into an ongoing cycle of poverty.

- 4.7 Despite some gains, issues of governance and corruption, lack of transparency, weak respect for human rights, persistent gender inequality, contracting civil society space, and weak enforcement of laws which protect the citizen persist in many countries and create obstacles to economic and social advancement.
- 4.8 The situation in the Irish Aid Programme Countries (Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Zambia, Malawi, Lesotho, Mozambique, Vietnam and Timor Leste) is also constantly changing. Africa is experiencing an increased economic momentum, and economic growth rates in many Programme Countries are between 5% and 8% per annum. The telecommunications, banking and retail sectors in these countries are developing, construction is doing well, and inward investment is increasing.
- 4.9 Many Programme Countries are reducing their reliance on donors, with greater resources being raised domestically, from remittances and from foreign direct investment. Uganda for example relied on donors for half of the national budget in 2003, and this has been reduced to a third. In many Programme Countries, however, the gap between the rich and the poor is stagnant, or growing.
- 4.10 The Irish Aid Programme Countries are also struggling to increase outward trade, necessary to drive on their development. For example, *Value Added in Africa* in a recent report (see at <http://www.valueaddedinafrica.org>) estimates that the Irish Aid Programme Countries receive €70 in government and NGO aid from Ireland per capita, whilst Irish consumers are purchasing less than €0.50 of goods per capita from these countries.
- 4.11 The global poverty landscape is changing in other ways. Increasing numbers of the world's poor people are actually living in cities in middle-income countries. Again, a growing number of these countries are demonstrating high levels of inequality and social exclusion.
- 4.12 Population dynamics (including growth rates, age structure, fertility and mortality, migration and so on) influence every aspect of human, social and economic development. The year 2011 will be remembered as the one in which the world's population exceeded 7 billion, with a further increase of 2.3 billion projected by 2050. The projected doubling of the African population between 2005 and 2050 will pose huge developmental challenges. As the UNFPA State of Population 2011 Report explains, in the poorest countries, extreme poverty, food insecurity, inequality, high death rates and high birth rates are all linked in a vicious cycle. The challenge is to break this cycle.
- 4.13 Poverty and vulnerability will be further exacerbated by the ongoing impacts of climate change which will in turn worsen the growing problems of global hunger, and food, water and energy insecurity. Ethiopia for example is constantly ranked as one of the world's most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation. Climate change there is projected to reduce yields of the wheat staple crop by 33%. A global climate change response demands a move to low carbon and climate resilient development. The upcoming Rio + 20 conference for sustainable development will contribute further to the global momentum towards 'green' development pathways, ensuring a better balance between the economic, social and environmental pillars of development.
- 4.14 Meanwhile, political, economic, social and trading relationships worldwide are changing very rapidly. The emergence of new economies, a noticeable trend over the past 10 years, is set to continue. The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), the largest growing

economic powers, are seeking stronger global relationships and economic influence, including in Africa, and are increasingly in a position to offer additional financing and potentially alternative models of development.

- 4.15 The recent events in a number of countries in North Africa and the Middle East, collectively known as the 'Arab Spring', reflect a different type of global trend that has seen widespread civil upheaval in response to stunted economic and social development and systematic human rights violations.
- 4.16 With the 2015 target date for the Millennium Development Goals fast approaching there is much analysis and planning for a post-2015 development agenda. African countries, through the African Union, have presented their own vision for the future of development on the continent. Key priorities highlighted are: meeting outstanding aid commitments; building internal capacity; promoting regional economic communities, investments and cooperation; sharing knowledge and developing solidarity with other developing countries and emerging economies, and; reducing aid reliance and stimulating a strong development finance base (AU/NEPAD *African Consensus and Position on Development Effectiveness*, September 2011).

Changing Context in Ireland

- 4.17 With the current global economic downturn and the consequent budgetary constraints, governments everywhere are being forced to focus on the key priorities they need to deliver on. Similarly, scrutiny by the public of how public funds are spent has never been greater. As noted above in Section 3, both of these factors impact upon the Irish Government's aid programme.
- 4.18 The future direction of Irish Aid will need to take account of the financial and human resources that are likely to be available for the foreseeable future. This will require a greater focus on key priorities, and the achievement of maximum value for money for every cent spent – with clear accountability and measurable results.
- 4.19 The Government's programme for Public Sector Reform is aimed at ensuring that the public sector is more efficient, better integrated, more flexible, more responsive and more focused on the citizen. This too will be central to the work of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and within that Irish Aid, over the coming period.

5. Key Issues

- 5.1 There follows a short discussion on some key issues in development that the Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid could usefully consider. This is not an exhaustive list, but an attempt to stimulate discussion. The questions to consider are:

Question

How should the Government respond to the key issues of hunger, fragility, climate change, basic needs, governance and human rights, and gender equality? Are there other issues?

Given the limited resources *and the need to focus these*, which issues should the Government *prioritise* in its future aid programming?

Hunger

- 5.2 Almost one billion people, or one in seven of the world's population, are hungry today. And one in three people are estimated to be suffering today from 'hidden hunger' - a chronic lack of vitamins and minerals resulting in impaired mental development, disease and death. As a result, the hunger Millennium Development Goal remains very much off-track.
- 5.3 The problem of chronic under-nutrition is prevalent across all of Ireland's Programme Countries. In Tanzania, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Zambia and Uganda up to 50 % of all children under five are stunted. The current crisis in the Horn of Africa is affecting an estimated 13 million people with a death toll in excess of 80,000 to date. The immediate cause of this crisis is drought, but its severity is the result of a combination of factors, including conflict, insecurity, disease, weak institutions and governance, and persistent underdevelopment.
- 5.4 The Government-commissioned Hunger Task Force Report, published in September 2008, is the framework which guides Ireland's efforts to tackle global hunger and food and nutrition insecurity. This Report identified three priority areas where Ireland can best contribute to combating global hunger, namely: increasing smallholder agricultural productivity; targeting under-nutrition; and promoting governance and leadership action on tackling global hunger.

 The Report on the Hunger Task Force is available at <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/article.asp?article=1404>

- 5.5 Ireland, over the past three years, has significantly scaled up funding to hunger and Irish Aid is on track to spend approximately 20% of its budget in this area. The 'hunger agenda' has taken centre stage in the aid programme and Ireland's foreign policy. A Special Envoy for Hunger was appointed in 2009 to advise Ireland on measures to bring forward the recommendations of the Hunger Task Force and to advise on how to enhance Ireland's policies and activities to reduce

hunger. The Special Envoy published a report on Ireland's response to the HTF recommendations so far and this emphasised the strong progress being made.

 The Hunger Envoy's Report (2011) is available at <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/article.asp?article=1722>

- 5.6 The vulnerability felt by people to food insecurity, and to other threats to their lives and livelihoods, has a multi-dimensional nature which can only be addressed in a multi-dimensional way. Efforts to address fragility and climate change, improve basic services and social protection, enhance good governance and address gender inequalities are critical in tackling hunger.

Situations of Fragility

- 5.7 More than 1.5 billion people continue to live in countries affected by violent conflict. By 2015 it is expected that the majority of the world's poor will be living in situations of fragility, with combined traps of conflict and insecurity, misuse of resources and poor governance. Regional instability also results – fragility does not stop at borders.
- 5.8 No fragile or conflict-affected state is currently on track to meet any of the Millennium Development Goals. This fact alone argues for a very particular focus by donor countries on situations of fragility and on the most appropriate humanitarian, security and longer-term development approaches. And it is recognised that donors need to be more coherent and coordinated in their response to such situations.
- 5.9 Humanitarian assistance is vital in helping vulnerable groups survive the impact of conflict and natural disasters. Linking relief and development is key: better development can reduce the need for emergency relief; better relief can contribute to development; and better rehabilitation can ease the transition between the two.
- 5.10 As the World Development Report 2011 states, strengthening legitimate institutions and governance to provide citizen security, justice, and jobs is crucial to break cycles of violence. Disaster risk management is also important in light of the increasing impact of climate change and growing frequency and severity of adverse weather events.

Climate Change

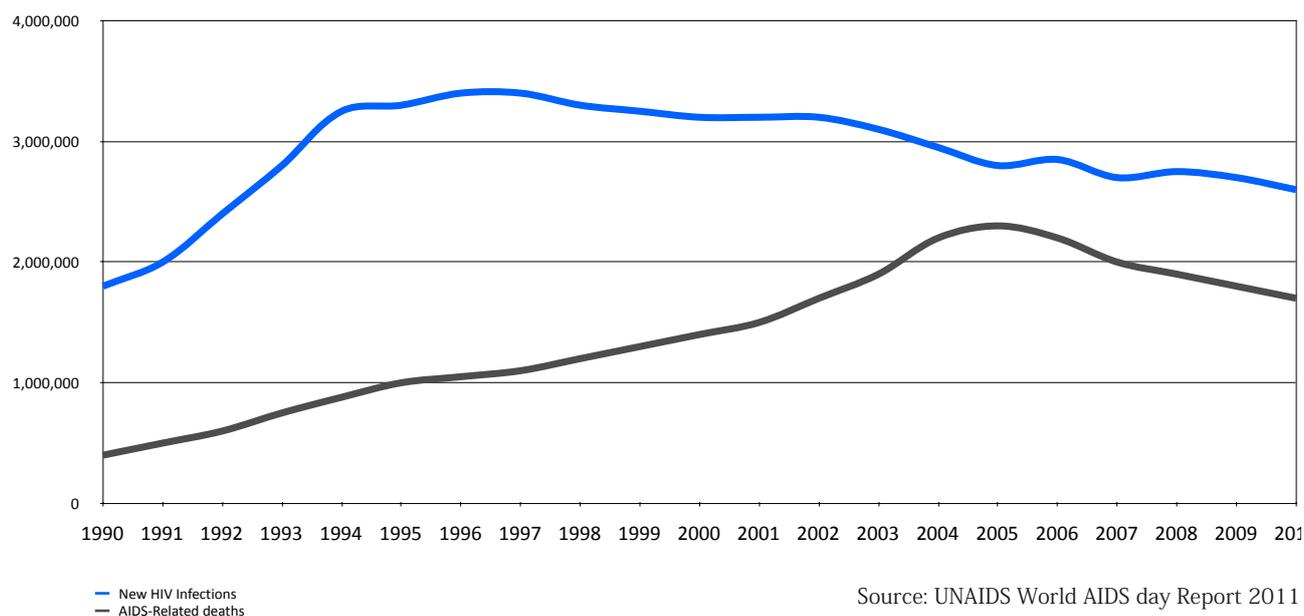
- 5.11 In all countries, economic and social progress is dependent upon the health of the environment. Environmental assets (such as fertile soils, clean water, trees and bio-diversity) yield income, offer livelihoods and safety nets for the poor, maintain public health and drive economic growth.
- 5.12 On the other hand, environmental hazards (e.g. pollution, environmental damage, and climate change) all threaten livelihoods and development. Poor countries and people tend to be most dependent on, and vulnerable to environmental hazards. The World Bank estimates that environmental assets provide 26% of the national wealth in Least Developed Countries, in comparison to around 2% in OECD countries.

- 5.13 Climate change in particular threatens the lives and livelihoods of people around the world. The Least Developed Countries and the poor are being affected most. Previous gains in development are being reversed – leading to an estimated loss of 5-20% of the world’s Gross Product by 2050, with 55-90 million more people likely to live in extreme poverty and 100 million more suffering hunger.
- 5.14 Real ‘tipping points’ are looming in relation to the world’s social and environmental systems, and questions arise as to whether the world’s governance, economic and financial systems are adequately responding to these changes. Achieving a balance between the economic, social and environmental pillars of development (a ‘greening of development’) is becoming of increasing importance.

Responding to Basic Needs (HIV and AIDS, Health and Education)

- 5.15 Aid has had a major impact in enabling people to meet their basic needs. Over the past five years, more than 35% of Ireland’s bilateral ODA has been spent on health, education and HIV and AIDS. Ireland has contributed to some very positive development results: deaths from AIDS and malaria are declining, as are childhood and maternal mortality rates. Health systems at national levels have been improving. Life expectancy in Zambia increased from 37 years in 2003 to over 44 years in 2010. In education much progress in getting children into primary school has been made. There are now 8.3 million pupils in primary school in Uganda, compared with 2.5 million in 1997.
- 5.16 Since its first description in 1981, HIV and AIDS has spread around the world, with its epicentre in Sub Saharan Africa. HIV and AIDS, malaria and TB are the main threats to socio-economic growth in many countries in this region. AIDS is now the leading cause of death among women of reproductive age globally. Girls and women are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection due to a combination of biological factors and gender-based inequalities, in particular gender-based violence.
- 5.17 However, progress has been made in reducing HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths worldwide, including in Africa (see Chart 2). 6.6 million people are now receiving treatment in low- and middle-income countries: nearly half those eligible. Achieving sustainable progress remains a challenge however, especially in Sub Saharan Africa which accounted for 70% of new HIV infections in 2010.
- 5.18 Promoting and protecting health is essential to human welfare and sustained economic and social development. A 2005 World Health Assembly resolution states that everyone should be able to access health and HIV services and not be subject to financial hardship in doing so. However, the proportion of births attended by a skilled health worker can be as low as 10% in some countries, while it is close to 100% for countries with the lowest rates of maternal mortality. Access to safe and affordable family planning methods remain beyond the reach of many.
- 5.19 Just like health, education is necessary to sustain life. It provides people with more economic opportunities, empowers them to make informed decisions and equips them with the skills to live secure and healthy lives. 1.3 billion of the world’s 12-24 year olds are living in developing countries. Here, one extra year of schooling increases an individual’s earning by up to 10%. An extra year of female schooling reduces fertility rates by 10%. A child born to a mother who can read is 50% more likely to survive past age 5, and maternal death could be reduced if more women stayed in school (women with a secondary education are twice as likely to give birth in a health facility).

Chart 2: New HIV Infections and AIDS-related Deaths



5.20 Yet in 2009, 67 million children are still out of school (53% female), and are termed the 'hard to reach' – those isolated by ethnicity, gender and conflict. In fact 42% of the world's out-of-school children are in conflict affected states where according to UNESCO, education continues to be assigned a low priority despite its potential as a force for peace-building. Apart from the challenges that surround equity of access, the quality of education continues to be a major challenge. Recent estimates put the number of children in school but unable to read a full sentence at 200 million. If the life enhancing benefits of education are to be realised, the quality of education must improve.

Governance and Human Rights

5.21 The 2010 Mo Ibrahim Index shows recent gains in many African countries in human and economic development but declines in political rights, personal safety and the rule of law. While many African citizens are becoming healthier and have greater access to economic opportunities than five years ago, many of them are less physically secure and less politically enfranchised – democracy is still at the stage of taking hold, and in many cases remains very fragile.

5.22 Good governance is about helping to create the conditions in which women and men are empowered to participate freely in their political, social and economic development and, in so doing, to achieve their potential.

5.23 Fighting corruption is an essential element of the pursuit of good governance – and efforts are continuing to ensure that national budgets and aid funds are spent effectively and benefit the most vulnerable people. The OECD concluded in their recent review that Irish Aid follows a rigorous process of internal checks and controls. This has helped to ensure that the resources channelled through the aid programme have been protected, and targeted where they are needed

most. Developing countries often have governance challenges however, including in the capacity to prevent corruption. Irish Aid is working to build that capacity, and engages with partner governments on the basis of a strong commitment to accountability, democratic governance and respect for human rights and the rule of law.

- 5.24 A core challenge for many developing countries is to improve their domestic revenue mobilisation - to raise more, in ways that are more efficient, fairer and better promote good governance. Tax avoidance and evasion is a major issue for developing countries - reported estimates of revenue losses suffered by developing countries range between approximately US \$35 billion and US \$160 billion per year. Irish Aid works closely with the Department of Finance and the Irish Revenue Commissioners on these important issues.
- 5.25 Human rights are at the centre of development. Analysing and addressing the inequalities, discriminatory practices and imbalanced power relations, which are often at the heart of development problems, can lead to better and more sustainable outcomes. Even where international human rights standards are generally accepted, implementation at the national level often remains slow. Women still face enormous difficulties. The last decade has not seen enough progress on protecting and promoting the rights of children. Considerable challenges remain to ensure the full implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Gender Equality

- 5.26 Some progress has been made on gender equality and women's empowerment in developing countries over the last number of years. Significant improvements have been made in increasing the numbers of girls accessing primary schools, although retention and completion rates are still poor. The gender gap also continues to be very significant in relation to secondary and third-level education. Another area of progress has been on women's political participation with the global share of women in parliament increasing slowly from 11% in 1995 to 19% in 2010.
- 5.27 Gender inequality continues however to be a key dimension of poverty and vulnerability and a major violation of human rights. Climate change, the HIV and AIDS pandemic, conflict and natural disasters and food insecurity all affect men and women differently. For example, in the developing world, women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate change. This is because they are the main managers of household resources, such as water, food and fuel; they are the majority of smallholder farmers; when disaster strikes, they have fewer resources to cope; and more women and girls die in natural disasters such as floods and hurricanes.
- 5.28 Gender-based violence in all its forms, during conflict, post-conflict and in more stable developing countries is a violation of human rights, an impediment to sustainable economic growth and limits progress across all of the Millennium Development Goals.
- 5.29 There is a growing recognition and understanding of the critical role of women small-holder farmers in efforts to combat food and nutrition insecurity and sustainably boost agricultural productivity. For example, closing the gender gap in access to agricultural inputs alone could lift an estimated 100-150 million people out of hunger. This issue is central to Ireland's work on combating hunger.

5.30 The establishment of UN-Women in 2010 was a landmark event which has offered a unique opportunity to accelerate progress towards women's empowerment and gender equality. The challenges will be to ensure that UN-Women has a clear role as well as sufficient resources and power to hold other agencies to account.

Private Sector

5.31 Governments and donors increasingly recognise the central role of the private sector in advancing innovation, creating wealth, income and jobs, mobilising domestic resources and in turn contributing to poverty reduction.

5.32 Efforts are being made to improve the environment for the development of the private sector in developing countries. It is important to ensure a sound policy and regulatory environment for private sector development, including increased foreign direct investment and public-private partnerships, the strengthening of value chains in an equitable manner, and the protection of human rights and the environment. Particular consideration needs to be given to national and regional dimensions.

5.33 Effective development co-operation needs to recognise the potential contributions, as well as the limitations, of the private sector as a development actor.

5.34 African partners have increasingly expressed their desire for Ireland to increase trade as an important step in decreasing aid dependency. The Millennium Development Goals cannot be achieved through aid alone; business and trade will play an increasingly important role. An Africa Strategy has been developed (see 6.14) and Ireland also supports a portfolio of programmes under 'Aid for Trade' which directly support partner countries to trade both at a regional and international level.

6. Ways of Working

6.1 This final section explores the ways of working of Irish Aid, and asks:

Question

How can the Government further strengthen its ways of working in delivering an effective aid programme, with a view to delivering real results in poverty reduction?

Aid Effectiveness

- 6.2 Over the last five years there have been many changes in how aid is delivered. Making aid more effective is vital – this will better support poverty reduction, lead to more tangible and sustainable results for poor people on the ground, and deliver better value for money.
- 6.3 There is now a greater focus on delivering sustainable results for the poor, and strengthened accountability between governments and their citizens for these results.
- 6.4 The recent independent evaluation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness confirms that the Paris Principles, set out to guide how aid should be used, *do* matter for development results.
- 6.5 However, global progress in implementing aid reforms has been slow. Ireland has played a leading role and is a recognised champion in making aid more effective. The quality of aid from Ireland, as measured by the OECD, is ranked among the best globally. It is untied, supports developing countries' own systems and policies, effectively coordinated, and focused on results.
- 6.6 The High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, South Korea (November 30th-December 2nd 2011) saw donors (both traditional and new), recipient countries, Non Governmental Organisations, parliamentarians, private sector actors, and others gather to review progress and to agree a global framework for effective development.
- 6.7 The Busan Outcome Document establishes a new and inclusive Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation which will work to ensure implementation of the aid commitments made. The focus will be on implementing these commitments *at the country level*, deepening accountability and transparency between citizen and governments, strengthening efforts to achieve results, furthering efforts amongst developing countries themselves, and using aid as a catalyst alongside other tools and resources to make development happen.

 The Busan Outcome Document and other information is available at <http://www.aideffectiveness.org/busanhlf4/>.

Towards Better Policy Coherence

- 6.8 Aid is only part of the solution to underdevelopment. There is now a renewed effort to enable developing countries to make full use of the opportunities brought by an increasingly globalised world, for example in trade and investment. This is of benefit to them. Closer economic ties and increased trade is also of benefit to Ireland.
- 6.9 The Government recognises also that its policies *across the board* can have an impact on developing countries. Policy coherence for development (PCD) across Government is achieved when policies support, or at the very least do not undermine, the attainment of development objectives.
- 6.10 An Inter-Departmental Committee on Development was established in 2007 following the publication of the White Paper on Irish Aid. The Committee has established itself as a key forum within Government for sharing information and discussing issues relevant to development objectives across the civil service, including, for example, the Government's prioritisation of reducing hunger and food insecurity, the Government's position on climate change, and engagement with the World Bank.
- 6.11 Engagement on policy coherence for development has also focused on trade, health and agriculture. More recently there has been increasing attention to the issue of international taxation, and to the development of the Africa Strategy outlined below. Policy coherence is also important for international organisations of which Ireland is a member, such as the European Union.
- 6.12 Policy coherence is also important for ensuring that all development efforts work together. For example, there is a recognised need for synergies between development and climate finance: in the past two years the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government has provided €33 million for climate actions in the Irish Aid Programme Countries as part of Ireland's ongoing commitment to international climate finance.
- 6.13 A systematic assessment of policy coherence for development across Irish Government departments has been undertaken and efforts are continuing through the Inter Departmental Committee on Development to ensure further progress in the period ahead.

 *Policy Coherence for Development: the State of Play in Ireland* (2009) is available at http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/uploads/pcd_the_state_of_play_in_ireland.pdf.

- 6.14 The Tánaiste launched a new Africa Strategy for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade at the Africa-Ireland Economic Forum in September 2011.

 The Africa Strategy is available at <http://www.dfat.ie>.

- 6.15 As Africa develops and changes, Ireland needs to recognise a maturing of its relations with Africa and with individual African countries. The leaders of many African countries and businesses are keen to foster opportunities for expanded trade and investment ties in the future.

- 6.16 The Africa Strategy aims to provide a framework for a coherent approach to Ireland's political, development, and business relations with African countries. It articulates the priorities of Ireland in Africa and explores how these can better fit together and reinforce each other.
- 6.17 The African continent has 20% of the world's population but only a 2% share of its trade. Irish Aid will continue to provide development aid to Africa to fight poverty and hunger and promote inclusive economic growth. The long term aim is to end dependency on aid and to build a new relationship with Africa based on politics, democracy and trade.

Working with Programme Countries

- 6.18 In 2010, €181.6m, around a quarter of the total aid budget, was allocated from Irish Aid for nine Programme Countries. A further €18.6m was provided for programmes in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Liberia and elsewhere.
- 6.19 In designating partners as Programme Countries, Irish Aid is committed to providing significant, predictable resources over extended periods to assist their development. These partnerships also place obligations on the recipient governments, including commitment to democratic principles, respect for human rights and the rule of law and a willingness to combat corruption.
- 6.20 Working with and through government systems in partner countries is essential if the improvements put in place are to be sustainable and the Millennium Development Goals are to be realised. This can present difficulties in terms of weak administrative capacity, so a key element of the cooperation is helping to strengthen that capacity (for example by supporting public accounts committees and supreme audit institutions).
- 6.21 The programmes of support at the country level comprise the most important partnerships between Ireland and developing countries. It is where the rubber hits the ground in much of Ireland's development efforts.
- 6.22 These partnerships are with the Governments, civil society organisations and other actors in these countries. Strong country ownership is an essential ingredient in these development efforts, and for lasting results.
- 6.23 Irish Aid has been careful to use a mix of aid modalities in Programme Countries – budget support, sector support, projects, partnerships with NGOs - based on what is feasible in each case, with each complementing the other. This mix has received favourable assessments in reviews and evaluations of Irish Aid. It ensures increased flexibility, the spreading of risk, an ability to respond to emerging issues effectively, and more effective feeding from practice on the ground into policy discussions.
- 6.24 Increasing tax revenues, combined with sustainable economic growth and enhanced capacity, form the eventual 'exit strategy' from aid dependency. Irish Aid has been in partnership with Programme Countries in some cases for over 30 years, and it is important to consider approaches to, and the conditions for, an appropriate exit in cases where support may no longer be required.
- 6.25 It will also be important, in the Review of the White Paper, to consider the relative merits of channelling funding through Programme Countries and through multilateral organisations.

Working with Multilateral Organisations

- 6.26 Ireland is a strong supporter of multilateral efforts, for example at the United Nations and the European Union, recognising that global challenges need global solutions. Ireland's upcoming Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2013 will seek to build on the strong focus within our aid programme on hunger and nutrition, and the need to address challenges such as climate change.
- 6.27 The multilateral organisations supported by Irish Aid play a significant role in international development -promoting human rights, leading coordination at country level, and advancing thematic issues such as gender equality, good governance, and sustainable development.
- 6.28 Multilateral organisations also play an essential role in leading and coordinating humanitarian responses and reconstruction activities.
- 6.29 By engaging with the main multilateral partner groups – the United Nations, World Bank and other international finance institutions, OECD, and the European Union – Ireland is striving to ensure better effectiveness and better results. Multilateral support is managed by a number of Government Departments and therefore requires continuing efforts towards coherence across the board.
- 6.30 There has been some progress in reforming the multilateral system, for example in promoting the UN's 'System Wide Coherence' agenda (which Ireland is playing a lead role in) - but reform has been slow and other structures for global political and economic decision making, such as the G20, are gaining prominence.

Working with Civil Society Organisations

- 6.31 Ireland has a long tradition of supporting civil society organisations in the fight against poverty, hunger and inequality. The many forms of civil society organisations enable citizens to organise, act collectively and participate in the development processes that affect their lives.
- 6.32 In Ireland, civil society organisations, especially Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) play a key role in building public awareness and understanding of international development, human rights and Ireland's role in development cooperation.
- 6.33 Ireland has a very professional and well resourced international development sector with a significant capacity to engage in humanitarian and long-term development programming. These organisations enjoy widespread public support for their work, apparent in the level of voluntary funds they raise annually (as evidenced, for example, in the public response to the Horn of Africa famine with Irish NGOs raising over €7m in July and August 2011).
- 6.34 Ireland continues to allocate a higher proportion of its aid than most other international aid donors to funding for development NGOs and other civil society organisations, in particular through Irish NGO partners. Given this, Irish Aid places strong emphasis on partners' abilities to measure and communicate the results of Irish Aid investment in terms of long term social change and real

improvements in the lives of poor people and communities. Consolidation, focus and coherence across development NGOs based in Ireland is also important, as well as clear accountability for the funding received.

- 6.35 Civil society organisations in developing countries also play a pivotal role in their countries' development. Irish Aid, and Irish NGOs, need to continue supporting this. The deterioration of the enabling environment for civil society in some Programme Countries (for example through more restrictive legislation) is of concern and needs to be addressed.

Results and Accountability

- 6.36 Achieving development results - and openly accounting for them - must be at the heart of the provision of aid. The focus should be on sustainable positive change for poor people and accountability for the efforts made to the Irish public and to partners and citizens in recipient countries.
- 6.37 Accountability also includes the fulfilment of international obligations by all on gender, governance and human rights, and environment as well as donor commitments on aid volumes.
- 6.38 If recipient governments, donors, NGOs and other partners wish to contribute to lasting change, they need to have the systems in place to ensure a greater focus on results, and greater accountability.
- 6.39 The Government of Ireland has strived to attain high standards of transparency and accountability, and strong public awareness and ownership of the aid programme. The oversight provided by the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Public Accounts Committee, is important in that regard.

Public Engagement and Ownership

- 6.40 Surveys carried out over the past number of years indicate that Irish people remain committed to overseas development and that Ireland has an obligation to continue to support overseas aid in spite of the current difficult financial circumstances.
- 6.41 The high levels of support for overseas aid in general is due, in no small part, to the long tradition of engagement and action including missionary work, volunteering, campaigning and advocacy, fundraising and education by organisations in Ireland. Irish Aid has played its part, and has supported these efforts. Partnerships have also been developed between third level institutions in Ireland and Africa, through the Health Service Executive Global Health Initiative, and other twinning arrangements.
- 6.42 However the current level of public support for aid cannot be taken for granted. Given the current pressures on the public finances, all expenditure (including on aid) is justifiably coming under close public scrutiny. There are increased demands for greater transparency and accountability to both taxpayers in Ireland as well as to citizens of recipient countries.

- 6.43 Also, there is a low knowledge and understanding of development issues and the Government's aid programme amongst the Irish public. For example, a recent survey found that almost 75% of Irish people surveyed had never heard of Millennium Development Goals (Eurobarometer).
- 6.44 There is a need therefore to examine how the Government of Ireland is responding to these challenges, and to build on and protect the level of public support for aid. Important in that will be efforts aimed at deepening engagement and understanding of development (including but not limited to the role of aid) amongst the Irish public.
- 6.45 The Irish education system, and development education more generally, plays a crucial role in that regard. An analysis of development education was undertaken in 2011 and the role of the Development Education Advisory Committee (DEAC) will be reviewed as part of the Review of the White Paper.

 *Mapping the Past, Charting the Future: A Review of the Irish Government's Engagement with Development Education and a Meta-Analysis of Development Education Research in Ireland* (2011) available at http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/development_deveducation.asp

Financing Aid

- 6.46 There has been a growing recognition of both the need for developing countries to take increasing responsibility for their own poverty reduction, and the necessity for donors to support this endeavour with more open trade and increased financial aid.
- 6.47 As noted above, whilst Government has reaffirmed its commitment to the UN target for Official Development Assistance of 0.7% of GNP, the Review of the White Paper is taking place at a time of difficult economic circumstances.
- 6.48 A number of approaches to placing aid on a more predictable footing have been suggested in the past, including through legislation to achieve the 0.7% aid target (Belgium is currently the only country which has enacted such legislation), prioritising the aid programme by making it a charge on the central fund, providing a multi-annual funding programme or budget framework, or earmarking certain taxes to help fund the aid programme.

7. Summary of Questions for the Consultation

Progress Made

Has the Government been successful in implementing the commitments contained in the White Paper on Irish Aid?

Changing Context

What are the implications of the changes in the global and domestic context for the Government's aid programme in the future and how will these affect current priorities?

Key Issues

How should the Government respond to the key issues of hunger, fragility, climate change, basic needs, governance & human rights, and gender equality? Are there other issues?

Given the limited resources and the need to focus these, which issues should the Government prioritise in its future aid programming?

Ways of Working

How can the Government further strengthen its ways of working in delivering an effective aid programme, with a view to delivering real results in poverty reduction?

Annex A

Progress in Meeting the White Paper on Irish Aid (2006) Commitments

Our Focus	
White Paper Commitment	Progress
Africa will remain the principal geographic focus for Irish Aid (p.88)	Since the White Paper between 70 and 80% of the aid programme has been directed at Sub Saharan Africa, one of the highest proportions amongst OECD donors. The new Africa Strategy aims for a broader and deeper engagement with the continent.
We will increase the number of key partner countries in which we work (p.73)	In 2007 Malawi was designated Irish Aid's ninth programme country.
We will deepen our focus on working in fragile states (p.73)	Programmes have been developed in Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Timor Leste is a Programme Country. A decision has been recently taken to close the representative office there; however, the programme will continue.
We will build a regional programme in South East Asia (p.90)	The regional approach in South East Asia has supported the Vietnam programme primarily, and also munitions deactivation programmes in Cambodia and Lao PDR, and private sector economic development in those countries through the Mekong Private Sector Development Facility.
We will develop regional programmes in Southern Africa and in West Africa (p.89)	A Southern & Eastern African Regional AIDS programme has been implemented. In West Africa, programmes in Sierra Leone and Liberia are contributing to regional efforts to promote security, health, food security and regional integration.
We will provide assistance to the African Union and other regional organisations in Africa, to support efforts to tackle the challenges facing the continent (p.88)	Some efforts have been ongoing in that regard, for example through support of the African Union's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).
The promotion of human rights, directly and indirectly, will continue to be central to Ireland's foreign policy and all the work of Irish Aid (p.59)	Irish Aid supports human rights work in a number of important ways. Expenditure on governance and civil society amounts to around 15% of the total budget, much higher than the OECD average. The United Nations Independent Expert on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty, in her report on Ireland in May 2011, welcomed the strong focus of Irish Aid programmes on social infrastructure and social protection initiatives, and recommended the further incorporation of human rights principles into guidelines and strategies.

Our Focus

White Paper Commitment	Progress
<p>We have simplified the funding mechanisms for non-governmental organisations (NGOs). This will make the funding mechanisms at once more user-friendly to the wide-ranging needs of these diverse organisations and rigorous and robust enough to ensure accountability for the taxpayer (p.75)</p>	<p>Irish Aid has strengthened the focus on quality standards, transparency and accountability in its funding mechanisms for civil society partners. Funding approaches from Headquarters have been streamlined and strengthened with clearer eligibility and appraisal criteria. Engagement with the sector, via the NGO umbrella agency Dóchas, and regular dialogue with partners has led to agreement around a set of appraisal criteria that places results based management and stronger accountability at the centre.</p>
<p>We will intensify our cooperation with United Nations funds and programmes to ensure accountability and value for money, as well as consistency with our approach to development assistance and with our support for UN reform (p.79)</p>	<p>As members and observers on the Executive Boards of the main UN Funds and Programmes - 2010 UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), and 2011 UN Development Programme (UNDP), World Food Programme, and UN Population Fund (UNFPA) - Ireland has consistently focused on improved accountability, value for money and results-based management. Irish Aid has worked to ensure a rigorous focus on evidence-based programming at country level. Support has also been provided to take forward the UN "Delivering as One" approach aimed at greater UN coherence.</p>
<p>We will work to improve the quality of European Union (EU) aid and the effectiveness of its delivery (p.81)</p>	<p>Ireland has been playing a leading role in bringing the aid effectiveness agenda to the fore at the EU level. Ireland supported the adoption of EU Council Conclusions during 2009 and 2010 on putting aid effectiveness commitments into operation in order to improve the effectiveness, accountability and transparency with which the European Commission and Member States provide development aid.</p>
<p>Irish Aid and the Department of Finance will work closely together to integrate a strong development perspective into the positions taken by Ireland in the international financial institutions (p.84)</p>	<p>Both Departments and the Irish Embassies in developing countries have closely coordinated positions for key meetings at the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank. The Irish Embassies in the Irish Aid Programme Countries also engage locally with these institutions to promote a sustainable and equitable development approach.</p>
<p>In our partner countries, we will maintain a mix of aid delivery methods: we will work at local, regional and national levels, taking into account the particular circumstances of each country (p.72)</p>	<p>In all of the Irish Aid Programme Countries, strategies of support are tailored to respond to the local contexts and the priority needs of the recipient country. In all cases the strategies employ a mix of aid delivery methods, firstly to ensure that no particular component of a programme has an overwhelming influence and prominence, and secondly to ensure the whole programme has the maximum impact.</p>
<p>Where possible, we will move towards five-year funding cycles with our key partners, including governments, non-governmental organisations and multilateral organisations (p.12)</p>	<p>Irish Aid planning guidelines for Country Strategy Papers extended the funding cycle to up to five years, in order to align with national governments developing planning processes. Funding to major civil society partners under the Multi Annual Programme Scheme was also extended to three years.</p>

Preventing and Responding to Humanitarian Emergencies

White Paper Commitment	Progress
<p>In order to respond more effectively to sudden-onset emergencies, we will develop a Rapid Response Initiative (p.35)</p>	<p>The Rapid Response Initiative (RRI) has now been in operation for more than four years. It combines the pre-positioning and delivery of humanitarian supplies with the deployment of roster members to meet vital skills gaps in emergency responses among UN partners. The RRI has been instrumental in responding to emergencies in Haiti, Pakistan, Liberia, Libya and more recently in the Horn of Africa.</p>
<p>We will support the unique coordinating role of the UN in responding to humanitarian crises. Our support for the new UN Central Emergency Response Fund is a strong signal of this support and we will continue to support the work of the new Fund (p.34)</p>	<p>Funding of €81 million has been provided by Ireland to the Central Emergency Response Fund since 2006. Irish Aid continues to work closely with the UN and like-minded donor partners to further strengthen the UN's humanitarian coordination and response capacity, particularly UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).</p>
<p>We will establish a Hunger Task Force, drawing together public and private sector expertise, to examine the particular contribution Ireland can make to tackling the root causes of food insecurity, particularly in Africa (p.52)</p>	<p>The Hunger Task Force was established and began its work in 2007. The Hunger Task Force Report was published in 2008 and this has provided an excellent framework to guide the Irish Government's response to addressing global hunger and food insecurity. A Special Envoy on Hunger was appointed in 2009, and his November 2010 report noted Ireland's strong and positive response to the Hunger Task Force Report, its strong leadership role in the fight against global hunger on the international stage and the significant progress made in implementing the Hunger Task Force Report recommendations. Irish Aid has undertaken to direct 20% of Irish Aid's budget on hunger and hunger related actions by 2012, and is on track to meet this target.</p>
<p>We will assist developing countries in preparing to deal with the impact of humanitarian disasters (p.34-38)</p>	<p>Irish Aid prioritises disaster risk reduction activities particularly when support is provided to partner NGOs through the Humanitarian Programme Plan (a funding scheme designed to provide more predictable funding to a number of NGO partners for their work in protracted humanitarian emergencies) and through other programming. Efforts are also made to ensure that this approach is effectively incorporated into longer term development work.</p>
<p>We will provide flexible and timely funding to local, Irish and international organisations that demonstrate a clear capacity to provide effective humanitarian assistance in a manner that is responsive to local needs and adheres to humanitarian principles (p.34).</p>	<p>In the period 2006-2010, Irish Aid provided €347 million in emergency humanitarian funding assistance and nearly €82 million in support for emergency preparedness and post-emergency recovery funding.</p>

Building Government Capacity and Accountability

White Paper Commitment	Progress
<p>We will support our partners in the fight against corruption and will work with other donors, international organisations and civil society to ensure that our development assistance continues to reach the poor and those in greatest need (p. 39-42)</p>	<p>Improving governance, reducing corruption and building accountability are integral to Irish Aid's approach to the fight against poverty. Also, Irish Aid has in place a comprehensive programme of appraisal, monitoring, audit, and evaluation of expenditures designed to ensure that funds are spent effectively and benefit the most vulnerable people.</p>
<p>We will engage with the African Union about how best to support the African Peer Review Mechanism, which provides scrutiny of the economic and political governance of African countries by other African Governments. In particular, we will look at how to support the implementation of the recommendations of these reviews at the national level (p.40)</p>	<p>Whilst Irish Aid has not funded the African Peer Review Mechanism at the global level, engagement has taken place at each Programme Country level – and recommendations arising from African Peer Review Mechanism reviews are followed up using existing dialogue and engagement channels.</p>
<p>We will support the development of a diverse and independent civil society in our programme countries and encourage governments there to facilitate greater civil society participation and partnership in development planning (p.41 & 77)</p>	<p>Acknowledging the centrality of good governance and accountability, civil society engagement is a key component of all Irish Aid programmes at country level. Where possible, programmes seek to provide the bridge between governments and civil society organisations. Irish Aid endeavours to maximise the impact and efficiency of civil society engagement by participating in mechanisms with other development partners.</p>
<p>We will actively support the development of free and independent media in our partner countries as an important actor in the promotion of accountability and good governance (p.78)</p>	<p>Irish Aid has supported the development of a free and independent media in the Irish Aid Programme Countries, for example through the Tanzania Media Fund, the Deepening Democracy Programme in Uganda, and through a regional NGO in Zambia (Media Institute of Southern Africa).</p>
<p>We will increase our support for gender equality measures, with a specific focus on preventing and responding to gender-based violence (p.61-62)</p>	<p>Gender equality is mainstreamed across the Irish Aid programme. In addition, expenditure on specific gender equality initiatives has increased from €3.3 million in 2003 to €5.1 million in 2010. Of this, a significant amount has been spent on measures to address gender-based violence. In order to support implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, a National Action Plan was launched on November 25th 2011.</p>
<p>We will ensure that robust oversight systems are in place to protect and account for the spending of Irish Exchequer funds in developing countries (p.42).</p>	<p>Irish Aid has in place rigorous accounting and audit controls which are essential to ensuring a transparent, effective and high quality programme. Irish Aid programmes are regularly and intensively audited and evaluated by independent audit firms, by the Evaluation and Audit Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and by the independent Audit Committee of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Public Accounts Committee in the Oireachtas plays a key role of oversight. All programmes are evaluated to ensure that funds are used for the purposes intended, in particular in respect of outcomes and value for money.</p>

Trade and Development

White Paper Commitment	Progress
<p>We will continue to advocate a better trade deal for Least Developed Countries (p.55 & 65)</p>	<p>Ireland continues to be committed to fulfilling the development dimension of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Doha Development Round and is working towards this in the contributions at EU level to the ongoing negotiations, with a particular focus on Least Developed Countries.</p>
<p>We will support multilateral 'Aid for Trade' initiatives for Least Developed Countries to help build their capacity to trade and to take account of the impact of multilateral trade agreements (p.66)</p>	<p>Irish Aid has provided financial support through multilateral organisations such as the WTO and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for trade-related assistance for the LDCs and other vulnerable countries. We have provided approximately €19m in funding from 2007 to 2011 to a number of such Aid for Trade initiatives.</p>
<p>We will increase our financial support for initiatives which promote fair and ethical trade, including support for efforts in Ireland to raise awareness of these issues (p.66)</p>	<p>Irish Aid continues to support the promotion of fair and ethical trade globally. This includes funding of over €3m to the Irish Fairtrade Network (IFTN) in 2011 for a programme of work to support food labelling initiatives and smallholder producers in East Africa and Central America. IFTN also is active in Ireland raising awareness.</p>
<p>We will provide increased support for private sector development in our programme countries. An independent not-for-profit business development organisation, Traidlinks, is being established with Irish Aid support, to help promote business relationships between the Irish private sector and the private sector in developing countries (p.106)</p>	<p>In September 2011, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade launched an Africa Strategy that seeks to define a relationship with Africa that goes beyond aid to include stronger economic and political relations. This will form the basis for an increase in Irish private sector engagement across Africa. Irish Aid also supports private sector development in its Programme Countries.</p>
<p>We will explore the value and feasibility of creating an Irish development bank (p.115)</p>	<p>Following initial analysis and the difficult current economic climate, this has not been pursued.</p>

Investing in People - The Social and Productive Sectors

White Paper Commitment	Progress
<p>We are committed to developing programmes that address the key causes of illness and poor health among the poorest and most vulnerable people and to strengthening health systems in the poorest countries (p.45)</p>	<p>Over the period covered by the White Paper to date, more than 35% of Ireland's bilateral aid has been spent on Health, Education and HIV and AIDS. Nutrition is increasingly emphasised in health and AIDS programming across Irish Aid. Combating diseases of poverty, provision of basic health services and reaching rural communities are priorities in all Irish Aid programming at global, regional and country levels.</p>
<p>We will spend at least €100 million per year combating HIV and AIDS and other communicable diseases in developing countries (p.48)</p>	<p>Since the publication of the White Paper in 2006 to date, Irish Aid has delivered on this commitment and spent over €100 million annually on HIV and AIDS and other communicable diseases in developing countries through multilateral and bilateral support and through support to the work of NGOs and a number of Irish institutions.</p>
<p>We will maintain our focus on the provision of high-quality primary education, situated within comprehensive national education plans (p.43)</p>	<p>Irish Aid launched its Education Policy in 2008 and made the provision of high quality primary education situated within comprehensive national education plans its core focus. Irish Aid education investments, since the launch of the White Paper amount to €50.1m (12.8%) in 2006, €72m (12.1%) in 2007, €83.4m (12.8%) in 2008 and €64m (12.8%) in 2009 and . Each year this financial support has been channelled through four complementary channels within the Irish Aid programme. The main channel is through direct support to the national education plans in Programme Countries. Support is also provided through selected Global Partners, for example the Global Partnership for Education (formerly known as FTI). In addition, support is provided through civil society partners for their education programmes, and through the emergency and recovery support.</p>
<p>We will fund health research by Irish, international and developing country research institutions focussed on the specific health needs of the poorest countries (p.47)</p>	<p>Research to deal with diseases of poverty and the health systems needs of low income countries is funded by Irish Aid and implemented by Irish researchers and institutions, global partnerships, regional bodies and country-level researchers. New products for neglected diseases are being delivered, evidence to guide health systems strengthening and quality of care is being produced, and health research capacity is being improved at country level.</p>
<p>We will support activities across the programme to increase access to safe water and basic sanitation (p.63)</p>	<p>Irish Aid recognises that the water and sanitation challenges are central to human development and economic growth. For example, in 2010 over €7 million was allocated to support water, sanitation and hygiene programmes.</p>
<p>In line with the national development plans of our key partner countries, we will look at funding productive infrastructure projects, where appropriate and sustainable, with the aim of facilitating economic growth (p.29)</p>	<p>While Irish Aid resources in partner countries generally do not support major infrastructure investment due to technical and financial resource constraints, Irish Aid has joined the Private Infrastructure Development Group with a view to using public funding to leverage significant private sector investment in developing countries, most especially in Africa. Recent reports indicate that for every dollar invested in infrastructure by the PIDG, this leverages an investment of twenty seven dollars from the private sector.</p>

Investing in People - The Social and Productive Sectors

White Paper Commitment	Progress
We will conduct a major review of the fellowship programme to ensure that it continues to serve as a capacity-building tool for our partner countries (p.44)	Following on from an evaluation of the Fellowship Training Programme in 2007, a programmatic approach, linked to clear results, has been successfully adopted for the Programme aligning more closely to Irish Aid priorities at country level.
We will examine the possibilities for increased activity in the area of disability and development, such as support for specific programmes to address the needs of disabled people (p. 116)	Issues around disability are systematically considered in the design of Irish Aid development programmes and addressed in a multidimensional way. There is an emphasis on access by the disabled and other marginalised groups within support to basic education and social protection in developing countries. Irish Aid supports Irish development NGOs which undertake health and human rights work that benefits people with disabilities, and has a partnership with the International Labour Organisation on this. More than €6.5 million was provided since 2008 specifically to NGOs working with people with disabilities.
We will identify new and innovative ways to reduce vulnerability, provide social protection and build productive capacity.	Since the publication of the White Paper in 2006, Irish Aid has progressively increased its focus on social protection and support to a wide range of social protection tools (for example cash transfers, school feeding, free health care). This support has contributed to addressing inequalities and poverty in our countries of engagement.

Cross-Cutting Issues: Gender, Environment, HIV and AIDS and Governance

White Paper Commitment	Progress
Four issues cut across and inform all of the work of Irish Aid: Gender, Environment, HIV and AIDS and Governance. These issues will be mainstreamed into the work of Irish Aid(p.15)	An Irish Aid mainstreaming strategy was developed in 2007 and this aims to build internal capacity to mainstream the identified cross cutting issues. Progress has been made with a training programme rolled out across all programme countries. Policies have been developed or updated for the four cross cutting issues.

Peace, Security and Development

White Paper Commitment	Progress
We will work to develop a distinctive role for Ireland in the areas of conflict-prevention and resolution and peace-building, drawing from our political, diplomatic and aid experience and resources (p.58)	A Conflict Resolution Unit was established in Political Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2007 and has worked closely with Irish Aid in developing a programme of strategic responses to conflict-affected countries. Irish Aid continues to support the Stability Fund as a key tool in developing partnerships in conflict contexts and supporting key multilateral and NGO partners working in the area of conflict.
We have provided financial support to the newly-established UN Peace Building Commission. We will support the evolving work and role of the Commission in the post-conflict reconstruction of states and societies (p.57)	Funding of €10 million was provided to the Peace Building Commission in 2006. In 2010, a further pledge of €3 million was made to the Peace Building Fund. To date, €750,000 of this pledge has been delivered.
We will continue to play our part in UN-approved peace-support operations around the world, including in Africa (p.57)	The Irish Defence Forces have trained Uganda peacekeepers for Somalia and have also recently deployed to Lebanon following the most recent two year deployment to Chad.

Irish Aid and the Irish Public

White Paper Commitment	Progress
We will invite the Oireachtas to establish a new Joint Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Irish Aid, replacing the previous Committee on Foreign Affairs (p.105)	The Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs established a Sub Committee on Development Cooperation and this was active in discussing the aid programme, visiting some partner countries of Irish Aid, and providing guidance on and oversight over the aid programme. The current Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade has taken a keen interest in the aid programme, and has held numerous discussions and sessions on this. A visit was made to Ethiopia in November 2011.
We will establish a new Inter-Departmental Committee on Development to strengthen coherence in the Government's approach to development and to make best use of the expertise and skills available across the public service (p.96)	An Inter-Departmental Committee on Development (IDCD) was established in April 2007 and serves as a forum for inter-departmental dialogue on the development implications of government policies and activities and on the opportunities for harnessing expertise and skills from across the public service to support Ireland's ODA programme.

Irish Aid and the Irish Public

White Paper Commitment	Progress
<p>We will invite the Oireachtas to put in place the necessary arrangements for regular development debates in the Dáil and in the Seanad. Such debates will promote more political discussion about international development cooperation and the important role Ireland can play (p.105)</p>	<p>The Oireachtas committees (as mentioned above) played an active role in ensuring that discussions on development, on international aid, and on the Irish Aid programme took place at regular intervals – and this has been crucial in ensuring cross-party support for the aid programme. The Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) Irish Section also played an important role in mobilising its members (TDs and Senators) to discuss such issues, and has been active in promoting the role of Parliaments in the aid effectiveness agenda. Over 608 Parliamentary Questions were received by Irish Aid from 2007-2010 dealing with many international development issues in general, as well as our overseas aid programme in particular – and this too has been an important function in the Oireachtas.</p>
<p>We will open an Irish Aid Information and Volunteering Centre to make more and better information available to the public about volunteering opportunities for individuals, institutions and communities across Ireland. (See p.105) The Volunteering Centre will also manage those volunteering opportunities for which Irish Aid has direct responsibility, including internships within Irish Aid and placements through the UN Volunteers programme (p.104)</p>	<p>The Irish Aid Information and Volunteering Centre opened in Dublin city centre in January 2008 and since then over 38,000 people have visited. Over 240 events are being held in the Centre each year and approximately 11,000 school children and students have participated in the education programme. The Centre has also provided information about volunteering opportunities. The Centre facilitated the recruitment of 85 UN Volunteer interns and 105 UN volunteer placements since 2006.</p>
<p>We will continue to provide support for development education at primary, secondary and tertiary level in Ireland and through informal channels of education (p.107)</p>	<p>Irish Aid published a new strategy for development education in 2007 that aims to ensure that development education reaches a wide audience in Ireland. Integration of development education in the formal and non formal education systems is one of the key objectives of the strategy. Since 2007 Irish Aid has provided funding of over €20 million for development education activity.</p>
<p>We will launch a new scheme to help build strong links between schools in Ireland and schools in developing countries. This will help young people in Ireland to understand more fully the nature and scale of global development challenges. Applications for funding under this new scheme will be invited towards the end of 2006 (p.106)</p>	<p>Irish Aid's <i>WorldWise</i> schools linking and immersion programme was launched in 2006 and currently around 10% of the post-primary schools are participating in school linking activities.</p>

Irish Aid and the Irish Public

White Paper Commitment	Progress
<p>To ensure continuing strong public support, it is essential that the public are aware of the achievements of their aid programme. We will, therefore, increase and enhance our public information activities, to strengthen public ownership and awareness of the programme, including through the launch of a major public information campaign (p.107)</p>	<p>Irish Aid promotes awareness of the aid programme through participation at high-profile national events such as the National Ploughing Championship and the Electric Picnic Festival.. Awareness of programme and the Millennium Development Goals is highlighted through the Irish Aid Our World Awards for primary schools. Participation has increased from 50 schools in 2005 to 565 in 2010. Irish Aid's annual reports in recent years have had a strong focus on reporting on results achieved through the programme.</p>
<p>We will develop a programme for more strategic engagement between Irish Aid and higher education and research institutes in Ireland. Rollout of the programme will begin in 2007 (p.106)</p>	<p>Since 2007 Irish Aid's Programme of Strategic Cooperation has promoted collaborative partnerships for research and learning between higher education institutes in Ireland and in developing countries. The aim of the programme is to promote pro-poor policy making and to further develop the skills and knowledge needed to respond to development challenges and opportunities in partner countries. Under the current phase there is a strong focus on strengthening capacity of the higher education sector in Ireland. €12 million has been allocated to eight full projects and five networking grants. A transition phase has recently been launched with a focus on Hunger, Health and HIV and AIDS and Education.</p>
<p>We will provide financial support for events to mark Africa Day, 25 May, in order to promote a more positive and comprehensive understanding of Africa in Ireland (See</p>	<p>Irish Aid, in close cooperation with community groups and city councils in Dublin and Limerick, has successfully organised events to mark Africa Day since 2008. It has now become an established event in the annual development calendar. The high level of participation in the various events by members of the public and the level of media coverage provides a strong platform for raising awareness and understanding of Africa and of the results achieved by Irish Aid.</p>

Annex B

Format for Submitting a Response to the Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid

1.0 Cover Page

Nature of views (indicate personal / on behalf of an organisation):

Organisation (if applicable):

Role in organisation (if applicable):

Postal address:

Web-address:

Email:

Daytime telephone number:

Release of Response: Irish Aid may release all or part of your response, subject to data protection requirements. Please indicate if you are willing to authorise this release (indicate YES / NO).

Freedom of information: Responses are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts and may be released in total or in part. Please indicate if there are aspects of your response that you seek to have withheld, and the reasons for same.

Date of posting response:

2.0 Response:

Introduction: If respondents wish to include an introduction, setting out any background information to their organisation / activities undertaken to prepare their response / other relevant information, this should be kept as brief as possible

Progress Made: Has the Government been successful in implementing the commitments contained in the White Paper on Irish Aid?

Changing context: What are the implications of the changes in the global and domestic context for the Government's aid programme in the future and how will these affect current priorities?

Key Issues: How should the Government respond to the key issues of hunger, fragility, climate change, basic needs, governance & human rights, and gender equality? Are there other issues?

Given the limited resources and the need to focus these, which issues should the Government prioritise in its future aid programming?

Ways of Working: How can the Government further strengthen its ways of working in delivering an effective aid programme, with a view to delivering real results in poverty reduction?

Other comments: If the respondent seeks to address other issues – of direct relevance to the White Paper on Irish Aid – they should do so in this section.

- **Maximum limit word count: 5,000** -

3.0 How to Make Your Response

Written responses should be submitted – preferably by email – to:

WhitePaperReview@dfa.ie

Documents should be submitted in a format that is compatible with Microsoft Office systems (Word docs or PDFs).

Postal responses should be mailed to:

Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid

Irish Aid

Riverstone House

23-27 Henry Street

Limerick

Ireland

Responses should be submitted by **5pm on 25th April 2012**.