



Irish Development Education Association submission to the consultation process on the Draft Strategy Statement 2014-2016 of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI).

The Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) is a national platform for organisations and individuals engaged in the provision, promotion and advancement of development education throughout the island of Ireland. We welcome the opportunity to input to this open and participatory consultation on the BAI's strategic role working on behalf of the public "to ensure that Ireland has a diverse and vibrant range of broadcasting services, content and programming that best serve the needs of Irish audiences."

IDEA Members comprise a wide range of civil society organisations, educational institutions, NGOs, Trade Unions and Individuals, and represent a strong and abiding constituency within Irish society, with a sustained interest in local and global justice and development issues.

IDEA believes that development education is a necessity in the age of globalisation and the knowledge society. Today's society asks a lot of us. The world has become smaller and yet more complex, we have access to more information than ever before. We need to be able to translate information into knowledge, deal with complexity and uncertainties and communicate effectively across cultural settings. The current global crises need world citizens that have the knowledge and skills to bring about change. It is vital that a broad range of balanced, nuanced programming covering global affairs is available, to enable the public to navigate this complex information environment and form their own perspectives.

The Irish Government has recognized this in its whole of government policy for international development *One World, One Future*, which commits to ensuring that every person in Ireland will have access to educational opportunities to be aware of and understand their rights and responsibilities as global citizens and their potential to effect change for a more just and equal world.

IDEA is concerned by the findings of a recent detailed public attitudes survey for Dóchas by Amárach Research, which found a high level of concern expressed for overseas development, coupled with a high level of public powerlessness. A full 53% of respondents say they "feel helpless in bringing about positive

change” and only 32% feel confident in their ability “to influence decisions affecting my local area.” Not surprisingly, this number is even lower when it comes to societal and global issues.

The BAI plays an important role in setting the parameters for public programming and welcomes the ambition of BCI to reach out to Irish audiences so that they are presented with, and critically engage with, a range of content that meets their needs and interests, and contemporary reality – **but contends that this should not be restricted to broadcasting that reflects “the life of this society”** (p.6).

Rather, we suggest, the range of content and programming should *reflect, and interrogate, both Irish society and the country’s increasingly complex and continually shifting relationship with a globalising world, including developing countries.*

The hundreds of thousands of supporters of Ireland’s overseas development sector embody a broad, sustained interest in Irish society in global justice and the developing world. With vigorous and diverse coverage of international affairs, and especially developing countries, seeming to be on a long-term trend of decline, this is an audience group which does not see its needs and interests – with the breadth of views and perspectives – adequately reflected in the volume, scope and quality of broadcast coverage in Ireland.

The BAI could play a valuable role in promoting and stimulating more quality content and programming that addresses global or world affairs while retaining distinctively Irish perspectives, content and/or production elements.

We are all global citizens now, and our awareness of international affairs has never been more relevant to examining and understanding our position in the world. We consider it vital that Irish broadcasters view it as part of their remit (to a greater or lesser extent across media and platforms) to bring audience members increased awareness, understanding, knowledge and tools to make sense of their position, and that of their country, in the world.

The Irish Development Education Association fully supports and endorses the submissions by:

- Dóchas, the Association of Irish nongovernmental development organisations.
- Just Forests, an IDEA Member organisation

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