



Submission to the Irish Aid White Paper Consultation 2018

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

Organisation (if applicable): IDEA, the Irish Development Education Association.

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Irish Development Education Association (IDEA)

IDEA, the Irish Development Education Association, is the national network for Development Education in Ireland and a leading voice for the sector. We represent over 70 members involved in the practice, promotion and advancement of Development Education in formal, non-formal and informal settings. Together we work to strengthen Development Education in Ireland and to grow understanding of the crucial role of Development Education in achieving an equal, just and sustainable future.

IDEA's vision is of an equal, just and sustainable world where empathy, solidarity and active citizenship are fostered and people are empowered to analyse and challenge the root causes of injustice, poverty and inequality.

IDEA members' work encompasses global citizenship education, education for sustainable development, human rights and equality, delivered through formal, non-formal and informal education. This breadth of engagement is one of the sector's core strengths, enabling it to engage with a wide array of audiences using a range of tools drawn from education and development practices.

1. What elements of Ireland's international development experience should the new policy reflect?

Ireland's new policy on international development must continue to maintain and build on Ireland's experience and reputation for quality Development Education and public engagement. Within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Irish Aid's ambitious strategy for Development Education, there are opportunities to apply fresh thinking to this vital area of Irish Aid's work. In this White Paper, Development Education must be articulated as central to the delivery of Irish Aid's vision at all levels of the organisation, in order to bolster Ireland's international development programme and fulfil its obligations under the SDGs. As the national network for Development Education in Ireland, IDEA's submission focuses on two key areas (i) the strategic prioritisation of Development Education in the White Paper and (ii) the necessary investment to make this strategic prioritisation a reality.

(i) Strategic Prioritisation of Development Education: The White Paper should reflect Ireland’s commitment to Awareness, Engagement and Participation

Strategic prioritisation of Development Education can ensure that Ireland leads out on Development Education and public engagement programmes that not only build support for Ireland’s development programmes but also engage diverse sectors of Irish society in deeper and more sustained conversations and action related to global development issues.

Development Education must be given strategic prioritisation within this White Paper, in order to facilitate subsequent planning to achieve its potential as a catalyst for change. The launch of the *Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017-2023*, and the backing of both the then Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade and Minister of State for International Development, is a clear signal of the strategic importance of Development Education in Irish Aid's work. The *Review of the Irish Aid* programme published in February 2018 by the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence the Committee stated that;

'Strong national development education is integral to awareness-raising of the SDGs and progress on achieving them, at personal, local, national and global levels; this should be explicitly recognised by the Government.'¹

What is now required is a further integration of Development Education, and the Irish Aid Development Education Strategy, into Irish Aid policy, management planning and overall strategy.

The GENE *Peer Review of Development Education in Ireland* in 2015 supported this strategic positioning of Development Education within international development policy, stating that;

'the high level of skills, experience, and commitment related to DE among stakeholders in Ireland . . . should be nurtured and built upon in the next Irish Aid strategy. The positive potential and opportunities ahead for DE and GE [Global Education] in Ireland are very significant. In addition, the Sustainable Development Goals provide an opportunity to link the strong work to date in DE in Ireland, with commitment to Global Goals.'²

IDEA believes that the strategic prioritisation of Development Education is necessary to achieve the level of public engagement and involvement in the SDGs envisaged by the *Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018 -2020*, an important component of Ireland’s framework for implementing the SDGs. Focussing solely on awareness-raising will not achieve the desired aim; education and active participation of the Irish public are essential for the success of the SDGs. Development Education is logically central to achieve the Implementation Plan, which includes academia and the education

¹ Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence (February 2018) *Review of the Irish Aid Programme*: 28

² GENE *Global Education in Ireland* (2015) - Peer Review: 5

sector as two of the key stakeholders and seeks to increase public awareness and participation of the SDGs, by actively supporting stakeholders with meaningful opportunities to participate and contribute to Ireland's progress. Further, it envisages the government supporting and promoting policies and initiatives across the whole of government which contribute towards meeting the Goals at home and abroad, and identifying opportunities for enhancing policy coherence.³ Development Education is essential to this, in ensuring the meaningful whole-of-society participation required to achieve this National Implementation Plan for the SDGs.

IDEA proposes that this strategic prioritisation of Development Education come under an approach of Awareness, Engagement and Participation. IDEA calls for 'engaging the Irish public' to be established as a priority in the new international development white paper, alongside gender, humanitarian need, climate action and governance.

This approach is central to the realisation of IDEA's vision of an equal, just and sustainable world where empathy, solidarity and active citizenship are fostered and people are empowered to analyse and challenge the root causes of injustice, poverty and inequality'⁴. It is essential to the success of the Irish Aid programme that the Irish public continue with their strong support for development cooperation. In order to ensure that this happens, activities that promote increased public awareness of, and engagement with, the Irish Aid programme and the difference it makes in the lives of people living in poverty around the world, must be encouraged, supported and adequately funded through the Irish Aid strategy.

Activities need to effectively communicate with the public in ways that convey the complexity surrounding poverty and inequality, and ensure that the root causes of global justice issues are analysed, reflected on, and challenged at a local and global level. Informed citizens are best placed to address complex social, economic and environmental issues linked to development, and to understand Ireland's commitment to taking action, through partnership, on these issues. Irish Aid's Development Education Strategy 2017 - 2023 *Strengthening Ireland's contribution to a sustainable and just world through development education* with its strategic goal that 'people in Ireland are empowered to analyse and challenge the root causes and consequences of global hunger, poverty, inequality, injustice and climate change, inspiring and enabling them to become active global citizens in the creation of a fairer and more sustainable future for all'⁵ should guide the actions under this strategic prioritisation.

To enhance this prioritisation, IDEA believes that the artificial and unclear distinction between Public Engagement and Development Education that has been put in place in the current Irish Aid Programme Grants II Guidelines should be removed. The distinction, and

³ *Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018 -2020*: 6

⁴ *A Vision for Development Education in Ireland*, IDEA, 2015.

⁵ Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017 - 2023: 22

the interpretation of Development Education in the Guidelines, are unclear and have given rise to confusion. Moreover, it risks discouraging NGOs from developing programmes that engage the Irish public. The interpretation of the scope of Development Education is too narrow and does not reflect the reality of Development Education in Ireland and in Europe. The action component of Development Education is not reflected sufficiently. The distinction between Public Engagement and Development Education in the Guidelines does not sufficiently account for crossover between these activities. This approach is at odds with international good practice. For example, the 2016 European Commission DEAR call enables applicants to incorporate elements of both 'Global Learning Education' and 'Campaigning and Advocacy'. Development Education programmes should be enabled to incorporate and combine these elements. IDEA would welcome an opportunity to contribute to this discussion.

2. Higher investment in Development Education

Ireland's high quality Development Education has been driven by the commitment of civil society over decades, and the ongoing commitment of Irish Aid to support Development Education must be commended. The Development Education sector in Ireland is now recognised as a valued, professional and vibrant sector that is also accountable and progressive. However, current overall levels of investment are not sufficient and result in uncertainties and a drain of expertise from the sector. The 2018 *Report of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence* stated that;

'[i]t has become clear in the meetings held and submissions received as part of this review that there is a concern around the low levels of funding for communicating the results of Ireland's development programme and educating people throughout the country about overseas development.'⁶

Development Education is a huge resource for international development and education in Ireland. However, underinvestment presents a significant barrier to Ireland reaching its fullest potential. There was a 23% decline in investment between 2011 and 2017 and whilst there is a commitment to address this, it must be noted that as yet, investment in Development Education has not kept pace with recent increases in overall ODA monetary amounts⁷. The Report of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence stated that:

'In 2015 the Irish Aid Development Education budget was 0.5% of ODA. This amounts to an annual investment in Ireland of approximately €0.71 per person. However, as referred to in a number of submissions, the rate of investment in Development Education has not been in line with overall increases in the aid budget and as a

⁶ Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence (Feb 2018) Review of the Irish Aid Programme:27

⁷ Dóchas (November 2017) Irish State Investment in Development Education 2011 - 2017.

percentage of ODA, development education has declined between 2011 and 2017 (in 2011, 0.73% of the ODA budget was allocated to Development Education)⁸.

The GENE peer review established both a need and capacity for increased investment in Development Education in Ireland. It stated that:

‘given the quality of strategies to date and the expected potential of a new Irish Aid DE Strategy, along with the growing capacity and the commitment of development educators on the one hand; and given the reductions in funding support to DE over several years on the other, there is now a need to plan for a staged series of increases in funding for DE (when budgetary circumstances permit).’⁹

In 2005, a European Commission conference of member state ministries, including Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs, and civil society representatives also recognised this and proposed that member states consider allocating a percentage of ODA to Development Education in order to ensure and secure quality and impact. It concluded that:

‘National and European authorities should ensure there is adequate funding for development education and awareness-raising in their planning. It is proposed that the European Commission and Member States move towards or beyond a figure of 3% of ODA, as proposed in a UNDP Report. This increase in funding implies the necessary quality, efficiency and effectiveness of development education and awareness raising activities.’¹⁰

IDEA strongly advocates that Irish Aid increase the Development Education budget from 0.57% in 2017¹¹ to 3.0% of ODA within an agreed timeframe. In addition, it proposes that this funding should be ring-fenced for Development Education. IDEA believes that the expertise and capacity now exists within the sector to effectively absorb this increase in investment in order to achieve the ambitions of the new strategy. A phased approach, with increases of 0.5% from 2019 would see that the 3% target is reached by the end of this current DE strategy (by 2019, 1%; by 2020, 1.5%; by 2021, 2%; by 2022, 2.5% and by 2023, 3%).

The success of Irish Aid's Development Education strategy requires a strong and secure Development Education sector for the delivery of high quality and impactful Development

⁸ Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence (Feb 2018) Review of the Irish Aid Programme: 28

⁹ GENE Global Education in Ireland - Peer Review: 5

¹⁰ European Conference on Public Awareness and Development for North-South Solidarity, Brussels, May 2005, quoted in The European Consensus on Development: The contribution of Development Education & Awareness Raising, 2007

¹¹ Dóchas (Nov 2017) Irish State Investment in Development Education 2011 - 2017.

Education in Ireland. It has been established that current financial commitments do not match the value, importance and potential of Development Education as set out in the strategy, nor the current demand for Development Education programmes. Underinvestment undermines the Development Education sector's capacity to deliver and increases the risk of losing expertise and experience from the sector.

IDEA believes that to use Irish Aid's funding to Development Education most effectively and sustainably, there must be a restoration of multi-annual funding modalities. Multi-annual funding is essential for the strategic development of both funded Development Education programmes and of the sector as a whole. Based on the same rationale, Irish Aid should grow its strategic partnership approaches. The ongoing Annual Grants cycle is extremely valuable in supporting innovation and supporting new actors in the sector. However, for established Development Education organisations it has clear costs, both financial and strategic, including being highly resource intensive and fostering ongoing uncertainty, and it also impacts on the Development Education sector as a whole in terms of strategic impact.

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

Development Education is crucial to facilitating an understanding of the world around us, to envision a fairer future and to act towards it. The recent rise of the far right, the refugee crisis, climate change, rising inequality within countries and between the Global North and South bring global justice to the fore on a daily basis. Development Education is an essential tool as society strives to understand and constructively react to local and global issues.

In the face of today's global context, the collective international commitment to the achievement of the SDGs is a positive opportunity for Ireland's international development cooperation. The key context for IDEA's submission to this White Paper process is this commitment by the Irish Government to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Development Education is central in Ireland's progress towards the Goals, and this is clearly articulated in the Goals themselves.

SDG Target 4.7 states that Ireland must 'ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development' (SDG Target 4.7).

SDG Target 12.8.1 aims to grow the extent to which global citizenship education and education for sustainable development (including climate change education) are

mainstreamed in national education policies, curricula, teacher education, and student assessment.

SDG Target 16.7 aims to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

Development Education is crucial to achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals in a sustainable, democratic and accountable way. Irish Aid's *Development Education Strategy 2017 - 2023* has set out a clear pathway to strengthening Ireland's contribution to this end. As it states, 'Development Education strengthens understanding of the global justice dimension of each of the Goals, inspiring and enabling people to take action at local, national and global levels. It is critical to achieving the promise of transformative change that defines the SDGs.'¹²

Ireland's *SDG National Implementation Plan 2018 – 2020* lays out a whole-of-government approach to implement the SDGs and this approach of policy coherence will be vital to the implementation of the plan. A central vision of this Implementation Plan is Ireland as a '*responsible global citizen*'¹³. In order to achieve this, the strategic priorities of the Plan mention the need to '*increase public awareness*'¹⁴, and '*foster public participation*'¹⁵. The plan recognises the role of education, and states that '*the education sector will... be a focus area for raising awareness of, and promoting engagement with, the Goals.*'¹⁶ Irish Aid's *Development Education Strategy 2017 - 2023* is specifically mentioned as '*a key enabler in this respect*'¹⁷.

The key contribution of Development Education to achieving the SDGs was also identified in the recent GENE peer review of Ireland, which urged for growing cooperation between the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Education and Skills, and relevant links across all government departments in response to the Sustainable Development Goals¹⁸.

The Government's Framework for Sustainable Development *Our Sustainable Future - The Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland (2012)* stated that 'Education for Sustainable Development needs to be embedded at every level of the formal and informal education system'¹⁹.

¹² Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017 - 2023: 4

¹³ Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018 -2020: 6

¹⁴ Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018 -2020: 6

¹⁵ Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018 -2020: 6

¹⁶ Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018 -2020: 28

¹⁷ Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018 -2020: 28

¹⁸ GENE Global Education in Ireland - Peer Review: 5

¹⁹ 'Our Sustainable Future' – the Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland: 77

All of the clear articulations above on the importance of Development Education in the achievement of the SDGs point to the urgent need for a greater, more strategic support for Development Education in Ireland. This White Paper process provides that opportunity.

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

The SDGs are central to Irish Aid achieving its priority areas of work. The resurgence of universalism under the SDGs and the local-global dimensions of issues such as climate change and migration mean that development is no longer about north and south or developed and developing, but about shared global crises and phenomenon such as climate change and migration, threats to democratic principles and practices and human rights. Development Education, as a means of engaging the public in all of these issues, is a fundamental and essential part of international development.

IDEA supports the concept of development as shared responsibility – requiring citizens from all parts of the world, North and South, developed and developing. In fact, the traditional dichotomies of rich and poor countries, developed and developing countries are no longer appropriate labels in development discourse. The world is now acknowledged to be more complex and fluid with increasing income inequality in countries of both the North and South²⁰. This was highlighted by President Michael D. Higgins in 2016 “...one of the basic premises of the new framework for sustainable development is that all countries are inherently unfinished projects. No country is ever fully ‘developed’; all of them are ‘developing countries’, continuously transforming and seeking new ways to respond adequately to fluctuating global circumstances and to the fundamental challenge at the heart of every society: that of guaranteeing the well-being, flourishing and full participation of all its citizens, both today and in the future.”²¹

This establishes Development Education and active citizenship as a central pillar of international development, as a primary function of such programmes rather than simply in the service of them. Without doubt Development Education can generate support for international development but it can and should also be an integral part of it. It can stir critical consciousness and the public into sustainable engagement with the structural causes of poverty and move them beyond simple, charitable narratives.²²

²⁰ IDEA, 2012 Position Paper: *The Role of Development Education in Development Beyond 2015*; CONCORD, 2011.

²¹ <http://www.president.ie/en/media-library/speeches/achieving-sustainable-development>

²² McCloskey (2015) 'From MDGs to SDGs: *We Need a Critical Awakening to Succeed*', Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review, Vol. 20, Spring, pp. 186-194; Dóchas (2014) *Finding Irish Frames: Exploring how Irish NGOs communicate with the public*.

IDEA therefore calls for engaging of the Irish public, including Development Education, to be established as a strategic priority in the new international development white paper, alongside gender, humanitarian need, climate action and governance.

Universalism and the local-global nature of global challenges are central to the ethos of Development Education and the active citizenship that is enabled by Development Education. The SDGs and the Irish Aid White Paper Consultation Paper recognise this, establishing a more universal outlook and also highlighting the need for “fresh” thinking. Yet, while the inclusion of Development Education in the paper is welcomed, we suggest that how and where it is positioned does not indicate fresh thinking. As it stands, it continues to risk being seen as an add-on. Moreover, it is prescribed quite a limited role, as a means of ‘creating public awareness and ownership of the Irish development programme’. This limits both the potential of Development Education to contribute to the ambition of Ireland’s international development programme and the ambitions of a professional and vibrant sector.

The Public Consultation Paper for Ireland’s new policy on international development highlights the reputation that Ireland’s international development programme has earned and the influence it has had on other actors. Irish Aid’s support for Development Education is very much part of this. Ireland’s high quality Development Education has been recognised internationally. The Global Education Network Europe (GENE) peer review of Development Education in Ireland states “Both Irish Aid strategies to date have been highly commendable, Ireland clearly showing itself as a leader in Europe with regard to strategic development and coordination of DE.”²³ It commends the long-term commitment to Development Education within Irish Aid and Irish civil society: “The Peer Review report acknowledges the rich history, traditions, experience and skills evident in DE in Ireland. Irish support for DE is reflected in the range of committed organisations involved in DE, and the many initiatives and programmes in the formal and non-formal education sectors, and in civil society.”²⁴ Further, two independent reports commissioned by the European Commission identify Irish Development Education as an exemplary model for European counterparts (DE Watch: European Development Education Monitoring Report, 2010, 28 and 52; and OECD Development Co-operation Peer Review: Ireland 2014, 74–75). Ireland’s new policy on international development must commit to building on this by strategically prioritising Development Education and committing to the necessary investment to make this strategic prioritisation a reality.

²³ GENE Global Education in Ireland - Peer Review, 2015: 9

²⁴ GENE Global Education in Ireland - Peer Review, 2015: 9

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

This submission focuses on (i) the strategic prioritisation of Development Education in the White Paper and (ii) the necessary investment to make this strategic prioritisation a reality. In the context of this, IDEA makes the following recommendations on how to improve delivery of Ireland's international development cooperation through this White Paper.

Development Education should be:

- Identified as a 'Strategic Priority for Action: Awareness, Engagement and Participation' in the White Paper and the new Irish Aid Strategy
- Present in Irish Aid's management and strategic approaches, with clear actions associated with this prioritisation.
- Integrated across relevant departments, including the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, in a whole-of-government approach to Ireland's aid programme where policy coherence is key.
- Funded adequately, with a significantly increased investment as part of a commitment to move towards or beyond 3% of ODA by 2023 on a phased basis.
- Supported sustainably through strategic multiannual funding modalities and strategic partnerships, as well as the current Annual Grant system, which should continue for newer applicants, 'seed funding' and innovative approaches to Development Education reaching new audiences and key stakeholders.
- The distinction between Development Education and Public Engagement in the Irish Aid Programme Grants II should be removed, and the requirement to include Development Education or Public Engagement activity should be reinstated. IDEA would welcome the opportunity to contribute to this discussion.