



Strategy Plan 2007–2011

Promoting public engagement for development

Development Education

 **Irish Aid**
Department of Foreign Affairs
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha

The Government intends that every person in Ireland will have access to educational opportunities to understand their rights and responsibilities as global citizens as well as their potential to effect change for a more just and equal world.

White Paper on Irish Aid 2006

Development Education Strategy Plan 2007–2011

Promoting public engagement for development

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Foreword | 5 |
| 1. Why support development education? | 6 |
| 2. The wider context | 6 |
| 3. Lessons learned | 7 |
| 4. What we want to achieve | 8 |
| - Strategic aim | 8 |
| - Component objectives | 8 |
| 5. How we will deliver results | 9 |
| - Resources | 13 |
| - Management and implementation | 13 |
| - Development Education Advisory Committee | 13 |
| 6. Monitoring and evaluation | 16 |
| 7. Principles | 17 |
| Appendix I | 19 |
| Appendix II | 20 |



Foreword



Minister of State for
Overseas Development,
Michael Kitt T.D.

I am very pleased to introduce Irish Aid's new strategy plan for development education for the period 2007 to 2011.

The next five years will be an important time for the Irish Aid programme. Global poverty, underdevelopment and exclusion are among the most critical challenges faced by the world today. We in Ireland are playing our part in the global response to these challenges. We are working with our partner countries in the developing world and with international donor organisations to alleviate the effects of global poverty, but also to address underlying causes.

Our aid budget is expanding rapidly to meet the UN Millennium Development Goal target of 0.7% of gross national income by 2012. The majority of our assistance goes to the very poorest people in some of the world's poorest countries. This support is given on behalf of the Irish people and it is important that it is clear why it is given, where it goes and what it achieves. Informed and engaged citizens are best placed to critically address complex social and economic issues linked to development. Development education plays an important role in building the conditions in which we can continue to meet these global challenges and is a key part of our overall aid programme.

As the developed and the developing world become more interconnected, the importance of mutual understanding and respect between diverse societies and perspectives grows. Development education is also part of this process – building bridges between people in an increasingly complex world.

An expanded aid programme underlines the importance of engaging the Irish public on the issues that affect the world's poorest nations. Development education brings these issues into the classrooms and lecture halls of Ireland. This document sets out Irish Aid's priorities in this area and illustrates how we intend to raise awareness and understanding of development issues through our support for high-quality development education projects.

Our work in development education is carried out in partnership with many committed individuals and organisations. Many of these partners have assisted in finalising this strategy, and I thank them for their contribution, in particular the members of the Development Education Advisory Committee.

The strategy is ambitious. It is about building on engagement with partner organisations, educators and citizens to promote our common agenda for development. We are committed to achieving the goals within this strategy and I look forward to working with partners in the coming years to deliver development education programmes of which we can all be proud.

Michael Kitt

Michael Kitt TD

Minister of State for Overseas Development
Department of Foreign Affairs

1. Why support development education?

Development education aims to deepen understanding of global poverty and encourage people towards action for a more just and equal world. As such, it can build support for efforts by government and civil society to promote a development agenda and it can prompt action at a community and individual level.

Such support is increasingly important as the Irish Government and other donors commit significant additional resources in the coming years to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The *White Paper on Irish Aid* published in 2006 sets out the Government's strategies and policies on development. It recognises the key role for development education in Ireland and the importance of working in partnership with civil society to achieve its aims.

2. The wider context

While public support for development assistance is consistently strong in Ireland, there is a need to deepen understanding of the issues that underlie poverty and underdevelopment.

In recent years development education is increasingly recognised at European Union, national and civil society levels as having a key role to play in building a deeper understanding of the causes and complexities of poverty and underdevelopment and in contributing to public debate and activism on the need to alleviate global poverty and promote sustainable solutions to these issues.

The focus of Irish Aid's programme is on poverty reduction, particularly in least developed countries in Africa. Gender, the environment, HIV/AIDS and governance are the four priority issues that cut across all of the work of Irish Aid because of the direct link to poverty reduction. Promotion of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are also at the heart of our approach and these priorities will inform our support for development education programmes.

Promoting development education within the education system presents both challenges and opportunities. The curriculum in schools is crowded and classrooms are increasingly diverse culturally and in terms of value systems. This places pressures on students and teachers alike but also offers new opportunities including the promotion of development education within intercultural and global learning.

As well as schools and higher education institutions, a broad range of civil society organisations including Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), voluntary and community groups, the trade union movement, religiously affiliated organisations and advocacy groups have been active in development education in Ireland for many years. Partnership with these groups will continue to be essential to reaching our development education objectives. Our support for these partners is part of our broader engagement and support for civil society working in the development area in Ireland.

3. Lessons learned

This strategy builds on over thirty years experience of supporting development education in Ireland. More recently, Irish Aid's work in this area has been guided by "*Deepening Public Understanding of International Development: development education strategy plan 2003-2005*". Under the plan, Irish Aid sought to improve the long-term impacts of development education by building capacity and supporting multi-annual partnership projects.

(See Appendix II for a list of outputs from the 2003-2005 strategy plan.)

A review of the 2003-2005 strategy, and consultations with NGOs and civil society prior to drawing up this strategy identified the following challenges and opportunities:

- > A strong and vibrant development education sector is critical to reaching our objectives in this area and efforts will be made to strengthen both individual and organisational capacity to respond to the challenges ahead.
- > The review identified the adult and further education sectors as areas that are currently underrepresented in development education.
- > There is a relative paucity of research in the development education area in Ireland. Support for high-quality research which can inform development education policy and practice at all levels needs to be strengthened. This includes research in areas such as developing indicators to assess impact of development education programmes, public attitudes and how information and education supports can be most effectively delivered.
- > Continuous professional development, both for teachers and other educators, should remain a key priority.
- > Support for the integration of ethnic minorities and their representative bodies within development education offers an opportunity to strengthen the southern perspective in development education.
- > The increasingly crowded curriculum at all levels of the education system places heavy demands on teachers and educational institutions. Irish Aid will need to explore new ways of supporting educators to effectively integrate development education into their work.

In addition to these priorities, experience to date has confirmed:

- > The need to promote linkages and mutual learning between development education and the broader Irish Aid programme.
- > The need for a partnership approach to our support for the development education sector.
- > The need to maintain sufficient flexibility in support mechanisms to allow effective responses to new opportunities and challenges.

4. What we want to achieve

We want the Irish public to have the opportunity to be more deeply informed about development and global justice issues, the role of government and civil society, and to be more critically engaged with the Irish Aid programme.

Strategic Aim

To ensure that development education reaches a wide audience in Ireland by increasing the provision of high-quality programmes to teachers and others involved in development education and by working with the education sector, NGOs and civil society partners.

The following objectives will contribute to realising this aim:

Component Objectives:

1. Strengthen coherence between development education and national education, citizenship and development policies in Ireland and support the growth of best practice in development education at European and international levels.
2. Contribute to high-quality development education in Ireland through strengthened support for development education practitioners and the organisations in which they work.
3. Support the further integration of development education in formal and non-formal education programmes in Ireland.
4. Ensure that our development education initiatives raise public awareness and understanding of the underlying causes of global poverty and inequality and Ireland's role in tackling these issues.

5. How we will deliver results

↳ Objective One

Strengthen coherence between development education and national education, citizenship, and development policies and support the growth of best practice in development education at European and international levels.

Implementation:

Irish Aid will work to deepen relationships with relevant policy makers to strengthen coherence between development education and wider education policy in both the formal and non-formal sectors. This will include close collaboration with the Department of Education and Science and its agencies including the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), as well as with other government departments and state agencies which hold responsibility for issues related to education, sustainable development and citizenship. The Interdepartmental Committee for Development will have an important role to play in this respect.

Within Irish Aid, the Development Education Unit will seek to draw from the experience gained from implementing our development policies and strategies in partner countries to inform our development education programmes in Ireland. In implementing this strategy, the Unit will work with Civil Society Section to ensure coherence with Irish Aid's Civil Society Policy in order to give effective support to NGOs working in the area.

Irish Aid will also continue to play a role in the promotion of best practice in development education at European and international level. Opportunities to participate in and influence international policy in this area will be pursued as appropriate.

Irish Aid will support high-quality research with a view to informing its policies and programmes.

Priorities:

- > Enhance cooperation with the Department of Education and Science and its agencies.
- > Actively pursue opportunities to bring development perspectives to the educational policies of other relevant governmental agencies in Ireland.
- > Contribute to the growth of best practice in development education at European and international levels.
- > Support the production of high-quality research on development education policy and practice.
- > Explore opportunities to support Education for Sustainable Development within the broader context of development education.

↳ Objective Two

Contribute to high-quality development education in Ireland through strengthened support for development education practitioners and the organisations in which they work.

Implementation:

The effectiveness of development education depends upon the skills and quality of individuals and organisations involved in the design and delivery of development education programmes. Irish Aid will continue to support initiatives that build the cohesiveness and skills base within the development education community. It will support fora for the discussion of critical policy issues, and communication and dissemination of learning within the practitioner community. Support will be provided at individual, organisational and sectoral levels.

Irish Aid will continue to support development educators throughout Ireland. Initiatives that address possible regional imbalances will be examined to ensure that educators throughout Ireland, especially those new to development education, have access to development education support and advice.

Priorities:

- > Promote high standards in the design and delivery of development education in Ireland.
- > Support the spread of best practice in development education in Ireland.
- > Support professional pathways for development educators, both through third level and in-service training.
- > Support national networks in the development education sector.

↘ Objective Three

Support the further integration of development education in formal and non-formal education programmes in Ireland

Implementation:

Irish Aid has identified priorities for support at each stage of the education cycle. These priorities will be kept under review over the period of this strategy plan and adjusted as necessary. Irish Aid will continue to prioritise development education in teacher education, curriculum-based interventions, higher education, voluntary youth work and community education. Adult and further education will be targeted for future expansion. Particular attention will be paid to opportunities to promote north-south cooperation within Ireland in the area of development education and teacher education.

Priority Areas:

- > **Primary Education**
Irish Aid will continue to focus on both the initial and continuous professional development of primary teachers, including through its support for colleges of education through the Development and Intercultural Education (DICE) project and through funding to development education organisations working with primary teachers. Promoting development education within the primary school curriculum will be an ongoing focus of our work in this area. This includes support for high-quality teaching resources for primary teachers.
- > **Post-Primary Education**
The focus on continuous professional development of post-primary teachers, through funding for third-level institutions providing teacher education and funding to organisations working with post-primary teachers will be maintained. Promoting development education within the second-level school curriculum will continue to be a strategic priority. This includes support for quality education resources to support teacher education and learning.

A Schools Linking and Immersion scheme has been implemented with a view to raising awareness and understanding of development issues. Support will focus on educational partnerships based on mutual learning between schools in Ireland and in developing countries.
- > **Higher Education**
Particular emphasis will be placed on facilitating research in development education. Focus will be maintained on supporting professional development for development educators and on promoting development education within undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Ireland. Our support in this area will complement our work under the Programme of Strategic Cooperation between Irish Aid and Higher Education and Research Institutes 2007-2011.
- > **Voluntary Youth Work**
Irish Aid will pursue its work in partnership with the National Youth Council of Ireland in implementing the joint Strategy for Voluntary Youth Work 2004-2007. A new strategy will be developed to further promote development education in the youth sector. Particular importance will be placed on the professional development of youth workers, both initial and in-service, and on education materials.
- > **Adult and Further Education**
Irish Aid aims to build on the existing development education models, such as those of the trade union movement, in the adult and further education sector. This will include exploring opportunities for greater support to educators involved in adult education through intermediaries such as the National Association of Adult Education (AONTAS). Irish Aid will explore opportunities for greater cooperation with the vocational education sector to integrate development education into further education programmes and to introduce accredited development education modules and courses. The development of education resources for further education teachers will also be a priority.
- > **Community Education**
The community education sector has been a vibrant space for development education for many years. Irish Aid will continue to support structured education programmes at this level. The development of FETAC accredited courses will remain a priority.

↘ Objective Four

Ensure that our development education initiatives raise public awareness and understanding of the underlying causes of global poverty and inequality and Ireland's role in tackling these issues.

Implementation:

Given the Government's commitment, under the Millennium Development Goals, to substantially increase overseas development aid in the coming years, it is vital that all sectors of society be given opportunities to understand the issues at stake in meeting the challenge of tackling world poverty.

Irish Aid will work closely with media channels to encourage and fund creative communication on complex development issues. Presenting the perspective of people in developing countries through case studies and personal testimonies is a key means to achieving this. Innovative approaches to communicate development education messages will be explored. Irish Aid will also continue to support civil society initiatives aimed at broadening and deepening understanding among the Irish public of the complexity of development issues.

The Irish Aid Volunteering and Information Centre will assist in promoting understanding of development issues. In its public information work, Irish Aid will ensure that the images and methodologies used are consistent with our partnership approach to development.

Priorities:

- > Work with civil society partners to effectively communicate development education messages.
- > Encourage engagement and a critical understanding of the response of the Irish Government to the challenge of global development.
- > Work with development education partners to maximise the use of communication technology and the Irish Aid Volunteering and Information Centre to deepen understanding of development issues.

Resources

The emphasis in the *White Paper on Irish Aid* (2006) on the importance of development education implies a commensurate level of resources if Irish Aid is to deliver on its objectives. To increase the provision of high-quality development education, Irish Aid aims to expand its funding of the sector in real terms over the period of this strategy.

Funding decisions will be guided by the priorities and criteria set out in the strategic plan. Specific funding guidelines will be issued separately.

Irish Aid will continue to provide mechanisms for disbursing effective grant aid to organisations and partners that can fulfil Irish Aid's development education objectives. Where appropriate new funding mechanisms will be developed.

Management and implementation

Responsibility for the implementation of Irish Aid's development education strategy lies with the Development Education Unit, which is part of the Public Information and Development Education Section of Irish Aid. The business plans for the Unit will be based on the objectives of the strategy and detailed outcomes and performance indicators will be developed. Irish Aid recognises the need for specialised educational expertise in carrying out its development education work and is putting in place measures to ensure that this capacity is maintained following the transfer of the Irish Aid office to Limerick.

The Section also has operational responsibility for other Irish Aid programmes with educational components, such as the Irish Aid Fellowship Training Programme and the Programme of Strategic Cooperation between Irish Aid and Higher Education and Research Institutes. These areas are complementary to our work in the development education area.

The Section also has responsibility for raising public awareness of the Irish Aid Programme. The Irish Aid Volunteering and Information Centre offers a dynamic environment for individuals and groups to learn about international development issues and the role of Irish Aid in tackling global poverty.

Development Education Advisory Committee

The Development Education Advisory Committee (DEAC) is tasked with:

1. Advising the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Irish Aid on policy matters and on strategies for the promotion of development education.
2. Overseeing reviews and evaluations of development education activities.
3. Managing an annual consultation forum on development education.

As outlined in the *White Paper on Irish Aid* (2006), the DEAC is expected to play a useful role in advising the Minister for Foreign Affairs on policy in this area and on implementation of this strategy.





6. Monitoring and evaluation

Irish Aid is committed to ensuring that all its projects and programmes meet the highest standards and are subject to both internal and external review and evaluation.

A mid-term review will be conducted in 2009 to measure progress towards delivering the plan's objectives and priorities. An external evaluation will be commissioned upon completion of the plan.

Irish Aid will also support efforts, nationally and internationally, to develop coherent benchmarks to measure the impact and effectiveness of development education interventions.

Irish Aid may also audit supported projects and programmes periodically.

7. Principles

The principles underpinning this development education strategic plan are based on Irish Aid's guiding principles, as outlined in *The White Paper on Irish Aid* (2006).

Partnership

Ireland's relationship with the developing world is based on a spirit of partnership and equality. Irish Aid acknowledges the commitment and expertise of education providers and NGOs in the field of development education and will seek to build on existing partnerships and build new partnerships with other bodies and NGOs that share our principles and priorities. The needs of our partner countries will continue to guide our development programme.

We will work closely with the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA), a representative organisation for development education practitioners established in 2004, and the Development Education Working Group of Dóchas, the Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations. It is important to build a southern perspective into our development education interventions in Ireland. Development education practice needs to be informed by the realities in developing countries and the complexity of the challenges which these countries face. This can be achieved through linking partnerships with developing countries and the inputs of southern development educators based in Ireland.

Public Ownership and Transparency

We will seek to create a greater sense of ownership of the Irish Aid programme through building greater public awareness and critical understanding of development issues. Development education support will be delivered in an open, accountable and transparent manner. The basis for funding decisions will be transparent. We will consult with partners on major policy initiatives.

Effectiveness and Quality Assurance

We will use public resources efficiently and effectively, providing value for money for the Irish taxpayer. To maximise effectiveness, we will ensure high-quality planning and management of projects and support. Rigorous audit and evaluation will be used to ensure that resources are optimised to achieve high-quality development education outcomes and that lessons learnt from our work inform our future strategies.

Coherence

We will work for a coherent approach to development education across all government departments. Within Irish Aid, we will work to ensure coherence across the full range of development education activities and supports.

Long-term Sustainability

Our initiatives and support will be durable and will aim to deliver long-term benefits to educators, students and all who participate in programmes we support. We will work towards sustainable improvements in the projects we fund.

Table of Equivalent

U.S. Customary System

$(\text{yd.}) = 36 \text{ in}$

$= 3 \text{ ft}$

12 in

var



Appendix I – Development of the strategy

The strategy was developed by Irish Aid with the support of external consultants. Informed by a review of the previous strategy plan, *The White Paper on Irish Aid* (2006) and extensive documentation, the consultants facilitated workshops with partner organisations and carried out interviews within the Development Education Unit. Irish Aid officials helped to further define the key issues for consultation. The consultation process was also informed by:

Individual interviews:

Matthias Fiedler, DICE

Su-Ming Khoo, National University of Ireland, Galway

Anne Molloy and Astrid Perez-Pinan, Comhlámh

Colm Regan, 80:20

Dr. Peadar Cremin, Mary Immaculate College

Deirdre Hogan, Ubuntu Network (Teacher Education for Sustainable Development)

Mary MacGillicuddy, Kerry Action for Development Education (KADE)

Frank Flood, Irish Aid

Johnny Sheehan, National Youth Council of Ireland

Focus groups:

Dóchas

Development Education Advisory Committee (DEAC)

Non-governmental development organisations – Trocaire, Concern, Self-Help

Non-formal education organisations – LYCS, Africa Solidarity Centre, IDEA, LASC

Discussion groups in the DEAC Forum:

Formal development education organisations

Non-formal development education organisations

Questionnaire to networks:

KADE (Kerry Action for Development Education)

Ubuntu Network (Teacher Education for Sustainable Development)

DECNET

Further consultations during the drafting stage were held with:

IDEA

Dóchas

DEAC

Appendix II – Achievements from 2003-2005 development education strategy plan

| Objective | Achievements |
|---|--|
| To integrate a development education perspective in relevant education policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Effective inputs into NCCA's "Interculturalism and the curriculum" steering committee from 2003-2004 > Submission to the proposed Social and Political Education subject in the senior cycle |
| To integrate and support the delivery of development education in selected areas in the formal and non-formal education sectors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Support for establishment of the Limerick Teacher Education Development Education project (2005) > Development of the DICE project to support the integration of development education and intercultural education in initial primary teacher education in all colleges of education in Ireland for the period 2004-2007 > Partnership with NCCA for mapping opportunities for development education in the senior cycle curriculum > Support for the development of a cross-disciplinary programme approach in third-level universities which has the potential to broaden the access to and provision of development education > Development of "Development Education Strategy for the Voluntary Youth Sector 2004-2007" in partnership with the National Youth Council of Ireland and other stakeholders and creation of a three year strategic partnership with the NYCI implementing the youth strategy > Support for 'Year of Citizenship through Education 2005' activities |
| To provide support to civil society organisations in Ireland to increase public understanding of development issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Funding provided twice annually between 2003 and 2005 through the Development Education Grants Scheme for 224 projects and programmes |
| To facilitate capacity building of the development education sector to support and promote development education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Support provided for the development of a high-quality journal for development education (<i>Policy and Practice</i>) and regular conferences for the sector > Support provided for the development of two professional development courses at third-level |
| To promote more effective use of communications to increase public understanding of development issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Establishment of the Simon Cumbers Media challenge funding scheme > Support provided for the 'What in the World?' TV series 1 and 2, produced by KMF Productions and broadcast on RTE and other European TV channels in 2004 and 2005. |
| To identify and maximise educational opportunities for public engagement with the Irish Aid Programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Support for the Science for Development Award at BT's Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition > Support for the Global Citizen Award category of the Young Social Innovators Programme for second-level schools in which Irish Aid is a gold partner > Development of a primary schools award – Our World Media Awards Competition for primary schools |

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