



Self Help Africa

Self Help Africa

**Submission to Irish Aid's public consultation on Ireland's International
Development Policy**

23 August 2018

Nature of views: Organisational
Organisation: Self Help Africa
Postal address: Self Help Africa, 17-22 Kingsbridge House, Parkgate Street, Dublin 8
Web-address: selfhelpafrica.org
Email: jerry.macevilly@selfhelpafrica.org
Daytime telephone number: 01 677 8880
Freedom of Information: Self Help Africa recognise that responses are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts and may be released in total or in part. Self Help Africa does not require any part of this submission to be withheld.
Date of posting response: 23 August, 2018

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	3
1) WHAT ELEMENTS OF IRELAND’S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE SHOULD THE NEW POLICY REFLECT?	5
SMALLHOLDER AGRICULTURE	5
PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATION	5
GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS	6
2) WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHANGING GLOBAL CONTEXT FOR IRELAND’S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION?	8
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.....	8
MALNUTRITION	8
YOUTH EMPLOYMENT.....	9
URBANISATION	9
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?	11
SDG IMPLEMENTATION.....	11
CLIMATE ACTION	11
GENDER EQUALITY & WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT	12
SOCIAL PROTECTION.....	13
4) HOW CAN WE IMPROVE DELIVERY OF IRELAND’S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION?	14
AFRICAN AGRI-INVESTMENT FUND.....	14
KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER & RESEARCH	15
FUNDING STREAMS.....	16
DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION.....	17
END NOTES	18

Introduction

Self Help Africa (SHA) has been working with rural communities to overcome the challenges of hunger and poverty for fifty years. Our vision is a thriving and resilient rural Africa where smallholder farmers and their families prosper and meet their full potential.

The organisation aims to contribute to this vision by supporting the development of sustainable and profitable farm businesses that provide gainful employment opportunities and a disposable income for smallholder farmers and their families. SHA has programmes in Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Malawi, Zambia, Burkina Faso, Togo and Eritrea.

The organisation works with smallholder farmers, farmer associations, cooperatives and agribusinesses to help farmers grow and sell more food, improve diets, diversify incomes and make their livelihoods more sustainable and resilient to external shocks. SHA is collaborating with the private sector to create sustainable and scalable solutions to improve food security and lift smallholders permanently out of poverty. The organisation increasingly links its development work with humanitarian action in our countries of operation, in particular through our resilience framework and programming.

As part of the Gorta group and working in collaboration with our group companies - Partner Africa, Traidlinks and TruTrade - we have a proven track record of working across agricultural value-chains in sub-Saharan Africa in order to reduce poverty, increase farming income and profit margins, and support business growth.

Key Recommendations

SHA welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to inform Ireland's new international development policy. Ireland has a significant opportunity to develop a leading overseas development policy by utilising our distinct domestic expertise and building on our existing areas of influence in sub-Saharan Africa.

Our experience has shown us that developing economies in sub-Saharan Africa are particularly seeking support and partnership around three specific issues relating to agriculture and agri-enterprise:

1. Knowledge transfer – to improve research and education that is tailored to the needs of African agribusiness development with a focus on rural smallholders and the use of ICT to enable faster and greater access to larger numbers of rural people.
2. Investment – to support the development of small and medium size agri-enterprises in rural areas for the creation and sustaining of jobs, as well as to increase the income-earning opportunities of poor people.
3. Market Access – to ensure small-scale producers participate fully in meeting rural and urban food demand.

SHA's submission responds to these priorities and includes the following key recommendations:

- Establish strategic partnerships with Irish academic and research institutions in support of knowledge transfer, research and innovation, as well management training, in partner countries.

- Build on the success of the African Agri-food Development Programme and develop further partnerships between the Irish agri-food sector and African agribusiness.
- Develop a dedicated African Agri-Investment Fund of €50 million over the next five years as a pilot to provide investment and access to credit for indigenous small to medium sized African companies.
- Maintain and enhance Ireland's focus on smallholder farmers as key drivers and beneficiaries of interventions relating to nutrition, agriculture and inclusive economic growth.
- Continue to target agriculture funding in LDCs and fragile states in sub-Saharan Africa where Ireland has a clear and positive track record, in particular in Ethiopia and Eritrea and across the Sahel.
- Support a nutrition-sensitive, holistic approach to sustainable agriculture in partner countries which promotes diversified diets based on indigenous crops and pulses.

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

There are several elements of Ireland's international development experience which carry major benefits and should be maintained. These include -

- The focus on the quality, and not merely the quantity, of its development assistance, which has enhanced Ireland's reputation, built trust, and facilitated strong relationships with developing country partners and multilateral institutions.
- The commitment to poverty reduction in LDCs, supporting self-reliance and economic growth that reaches the poorest.
- The prioritisation of gender equality across humanitarian, nutrition, agriculture and civil society engagement programmes.

Smallholder Agriculture

We commend Irish Aid (IA) for its success in delivering internationally recognised programmes in the areas of hunger eradication and nutrition. Ireland's prioritisation of smallholder farmers and a sector-wide approach to enhancing rural livelihoods differentiates Ireland from other leading donor states.

We recognise that there have been significant achievements since the 2013 'One World, One Future' Policy including the commitment to invest 20% of the aid budget on hunger and the strategic focus on combatting undernutrition through the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) network. These successes demonstrate the major advances that can be made when a clear policy objective and a whole-of-government approach are established.

Building on this collaborative approach, we believe there is a major opportunity for IA to champion agribusiness development by supporting African smallholders with potential to engage successfully in markets. It is in this context that **SHA recommends that IA maintains and enhances its focus on smallholder farmers as key drivers and beneficiaries of interventions of its agriculture-related programming.**

Underinvestment presents a significant barrier to IA maximising the impact of its interventions. **The percentage of agriculture related ODA has declined from almost 13% in 2008 to 4% in 2016.** Agriculture-related investment must keep pace with projected increases in Ireland's overall ODA monetary amounts **and it is essential that a commitment to this effect is included in the new development policy.**

SHA endorses the submission of Dóchas, including the call for a published ODA roadmap to reach 0.7% GNI by 2025. In order to ensure efficient and effective management of these increasing amounts, it is also important that IA takes steps to enhance its technical capacity and ensure it is appropriately structured.

Private Sector Collaboration

The DFAT's 2011 Africa Strategy, as well as the 2013 'One World, One Future' Policy and 2015 'Global Island' Policies all underline Ireland's commitment to

supporting inclusive economic growth with a clear focus on the need for jobs and livelihoods improvement.

Ireland has a proven track record of delivering innovation in market development and commercially sustainable models for smallholder agriculture, and in ways that incorporate strong collaboration with the private sector. The African Agri-food Development Programme (AADP) has proved a constructive instrument in developing partnerships between Irish and African agri-food companies, encouraging investment and building markets for local produce. The Ireland Kenya Agri-Food Strategy is a further positive development in this area with its focus on stronger partnerships and enhanced investment in the agri-food sector in Kenya. Importantly, the Strategy not only seeks to facilitate increased trade but also has the objective of increasing farmer incomes based on a commitment to gender equality, climate change and nutrition.

SHA supports the stated proposal in the consultation paper to build on the AADP and develop further partnerships between the Irish agri-food sector and African countries. Such partnerships should have a primary focus on supporting sustainable growth of the local food industry and build markets for local produce in line with SDG target 8.3. As noted in Ireland's 2014 DAC review, it is recommended that IA produce a strategic framework on scaling up private sector partnerships in order to support planning, oversight and capacity building in the context of SDG implementation.

Geographic Focus

It is important that Ireland's new policy remains responsive to the levels of deprivation and inequality which persist in sub-Saharan Africa. Although the percentage of people living below the poverty line of \$1.90 a day has declined since 1990, extreme poverty remains for significant numbers in absolute terms in the region. In 2015, close to 350 million people were considered extremely poor, 60 million more than in 1990. ¹

SHA recommends that **IA continue to target funding in this region in line with the priorities laid out in the consultation paper.** Maintaining this country focus will allow IA to ensure optimum benefit is derived from resources previously committed, to build on strong relationships with government partners, and to enhance interventions in vulnerable communities.

The recent peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea opens up significant new avenues for economic development. Because of Ireland's long-standing relationships with Ethiopia, and SHA's current work in Eritrea with Vita and Teagasc, Ireland has a significant opportunity to support this fledgling peace process, particularly through knowledge-transfer in agriculture.

It is also noted that IA intends to broaden engagement with a wider range of countries and stakeholders in the Sahel and Francophone West Africa. It is considered that Ireland has the opportunity to play a stronger role in fragile or conflict-affected states in this region. Building on the Irish Defence Forces' major contribution to peace-building and security in Chad and Mali, **IA should seek to deepen its engagement in these and neighbouring fragile states**, including Chad, Central African Republic, Niger and Burkina Faso, and identify synergies with existing expertise in humanitarian action and conflict prevention. SHA's Strategic

Plan 2017-2021 outlines how the organisation intends to transfer our proven approaches in agricultural development and resilience to more fragile areas and 'poverty pockets' within our current countries of operation including Burkina Faso and Togo, as well as the possible expansion into fragile states, including Niger and Mali.

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

Agribusiness Development

Approximately two-thirds of sub-Saharan Africa's population depends on agriculture for their livelihood, and the sector is responsible for generating one-third of the continent's GDP. Agri-businesses account for more than 30% of national incomes as well as the bulk of export revenues and employment. However, sub-Saharan Africa productivity growth in agriculture is declining, both in absolute terms and relative to industry and services.²

Strengthening investments to develop indigenous agri-business is key to stemming this decline. Targeted investment also has the potential to generate sustained income flows and prosperous livelihoods in both rural and urban areas. However, small scale agri-businesses tend to face major barriers accessing the finance needed to ensure market participation and improve productivity. New funding models are therefore required which can ensure access to finance for small to medium-sized African companies that would typically be neglected by larger commercial banks and other funders.

In the light of the above, it is essential that the new development policy places a particular emphasis on:

- The development of scalable agri-businesses (from 'community focussed' to 'investment ready').
- Training and capacity building for business leaders.
- The role of small and medium-sized enterprises to satisfy local demand for services, offer local employment, and provide larger firms with inputs and services.

SHA's key recommendations to enhance delivery of Ireland's development cooperation respond directly to these action areas (see section 4).

Malnutrition

As recently noted by the Committee on World Food Security, insufficient progress is being made against Zero Hunger targets, including the elimination of all forms of malnutrition.³ Global hunger and food insecurity have worsened - in 2016 an estimated 815 million people were chronically undernourished, compared to 777 million in 2015.⁴ Furthermore, while the global prevalence of stunting among children under age five has fallen over the past decade, stunting remains a significant challenge, particularly in Africa.⁵ The worsening trends in global hunger and undernutrition are exacerbated by poverty and conflicts, which are further impacted by climate shocks.⁶ Most conflicts strike hardest in rural areas, heavily impacting agricultural production and livelihoods.

It is in this context that IA should continue to focus on reducing chronic malnutrition and micro-nutrient deficiencies, particularly in fragile states and conflict-affected areas. In order to respond to the multiple drivers of stunting, a multi-sectoral, holistic approach is required. SHA has recently developed a model of Community Integration of Nutrition within Agriculture Programmes (CINAP) in combination with basic WaSH which lays the foundation for new integrated nutrition

and livelihoods programming ensuring nutrition sensitive and nutrition specific components are embedded in agriculture interventions.⁷

Maintaining a continuous supply of nutritionally rich foods throughout the year is key to overcoming malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. Diverse diets are more likely to include a variety of nutrient dense foods required for good health.⁸ However, food systems in several developing countries have traditionally focused on increasing yields of certain cereal crops. **SHA recommends that IA support a nutrition-sensitive, holistic approach to sustainable agriculture in partner countries which promotes diversified diets based on indigenous crops and pulses.**⁹

It should also be noted that while high levels of undernutrition persist, higher urban incomes are also leading to a major transition in dietary patterns with increasing demand for animal-based and processed foods. In Africa, the number of overweight children under 5 has increased by nearly 50 per cent since 2000.¹⁰ This trend is strongly linked with non-communicable disease in later life.¹¹ **IA should support partner governments to take early action to combat rising levels of overnutrition/obesity,** in particular nutrition education on the benefits of local nutritious foods and healthy diversified.

Youth Employment

With the region's population expected to more than double over the next 35 years, more than 10 million people may enter the labour market every year in sub-Saharan Africa.¹² The vast majority of this increase is expected to take place in rural zones and promoting decent employment in rural areas is therefore key to enhancing growth and reducing poverty.

Furthermore, young people are most likely to migrate to urban areas in response to the lack of employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in the agricultural sector. This outflow of a younger workforce creates imbalances in the age and potential skillsets in the remaining rural labour force, threatening the capacity of the agri-food sector to sustain not only the rural economy but also urban communities.¹³ These issues are also linked to wider migration challenges: most migrants from West and East Africa move from rural to urban areas within their own countries before seeking to cross the continent and reach Europe from Libya.¹⁴ **In order to improve options for young migrants, Technical and Vocational Education and Training and life skills training should be prioritised.** IA should also focus investment in rural areas to build robust food systems **and support agro-industries which can generate more productive farm and non-farm employment opportunities.**

Urbanisation

Urbanisation and growing demand from urban food markets will also have a major impact on agribusiness development. The value of urban food markets in sub-Saharan Africa is projected to grow from US\$150 billion to US\$500 billion between 2010 and 2030.¹⁵ This expansion will require the development of midstream and downstream segments of food value chains such as processing, storage, transportation and marketing of food and non-food agricultural products.

This provides opportunities to expand off-farm employment and support rural zones which service nearby urban food markets.¹⁶ It is necessary to provide greater support to the development of cooperatives and producer organisations, for-profit

market brokering services, innovative use of ICT, as well as agricultural insurance and risk management products.

Ireland can play an important role in **ensuring that small-scale producers are able to participate fully in meeting urban food demands**, applying replicable aspects of our own experience of agricultural transformation.

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?

SDG Implementation

Nutrition, agriculture and inclusive economic growth are fundamental to the delivery of all of IA's proposed priorities and **SHA strongly supports the inclusion of this key intervention area in the consultation paper**. In applying the SDGs as the overarching framework for our development cooperation, achievement of the Goals depends crucially on progress in rural areas. Equally, the achievement of SDG 2 (zero hunger) underpins the achievement of several other Goals, including those related to gender, emergency response, climate and governance.

SHA welcomes the commitment that priorities will be framed by the principles of leaving no one behind and reaching the farthest behind first. The FAO's recent analysis shows that, since the 1990s, rural transformations in many countries have led to an increase of more than 750 million in the number of rural people living above the poverty line. To achieve the same results for those that have been left behind, the FAO have emphasised the need to leverage the potential of food systems to drive agro-industrial development, boost small-scale farmers' productivity and incomes, and create off-farm employment in expanding segments of food supply and value chains.¹⁷

As noted in section 2, key to delivering these objectives is capitalising on growing demand coming from urban food markets and improving links between small urban centres and their surrounding rural zones. SHA recommends that IA **support a holistic approach to inclusive economic growth in rural areas by prioritising the development of small and medium agribusiness as a means of delivering support indirectly to smallholder farmers**.

Climate Action

SHA commends IA for its prioritisation of climate action, particularly in the context of agriculture and nutrition programming. We strongly support the focus on increasing resilience in small-scale farming through improved local and national adaptation planning and implementation. Gender responsive actions are also critical in this regard due to the more severe impact on women and the crucial part they play in managing natural resources in already vulnerable communities.

Given the impact of climate shocks to food security in sub-Saharan Africa, **the integration of climate actions across agriculture and nutrition programming should continue to be prioritised**. SHA notes in particular the significant impact of drought conditions on agricultural and pastoral livelihoods in the Horn of Africa.¹⁸ With continued population growth and climate change there is also a need to address the over-reliance on a limited number of crops, promoting more indigenous crops and pulses.

The High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition has noted that food price spikes in 2008 were partly driven by weather events that are likely to become more frequent with climate change. This resulted in some countries limiting grain for export which exacerbated the situation, raising prices in other parts of the world.¹⁹ **IA should take into account the likelihood of commodity spikes due to climate**

impacts and potential for land dispossessions in the context of Ireland's humanitarian assistance, including the use of 'surge capacity' funds.²⁰

In order to ensure IA delivers on all aspects of sustainability in its agriculture programming, it will be necessary to support greater productivity in a way that reduces environmental impacts, promotes effective natural resource management and mitigates polluting emissions. In order to improve coherence with climate change obligations, it is recommended that IA –

- Continue to support holistic climate smart approaches which protect and enhance the natural resource base, increase productivity, diversity and build upon indigenous knowledge.²¹
- Continue to fund climate related research, in particular mitigation measures in the context of ruminant production.
- Ensure that Ireland's multilateral engagement (including at the CFS, UNFCCC and Human Rights Council) prioritises *small-scale* food producers, especially women and their key role in safeguarding food and nutrition security.
- Promote the reduction of Ireland's polluting emissions in view of the negative impact these have on Ireland's programme countries.
- Ensure increased levels of climate finance in line with other EU member states, placing a particular emphasis on small scale women farmers.
- Combat land degradation, deforestation and water scarcities by working with partner countries in the formulation of appropriate policies and legislation to strengthen the governance of food systems and rural land management.
- Advocate for stronger accountability mechanisms for human rights violations by public and private entities in accordance with Ireland's National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights.

Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment

Ireland's commitment to leave no one behind cannot be achieved without the empowerment of women and girls. Progress on targets under SDG 5 (Gender Equality) is also fundamental to achieving Zero Hunger objectives.

Despite communities' dependence on women to grow food, the persistence of gender-based discrimination means that women do not benefit equally from agrifood value chain development. They face particular barriers in access to productive assets, economic opportunities and participation in decision-making processes. In many low-income countries, they remain trapped in the low-skilled and low-paid nodes of the food supply chain, often in casual and insecure employment

SHA welcomes the inclusion of gender equality as a priority area of focus in the new development policy. **It is essential that IA continue to support targeted efforts to mainstream gender equality across agriculture programmes.** Gender relations are a primary component of the social and economic context that shapes value chain functioning at all levels and are also deeply affected by the economic shifts inherent in value chain improvement.

Specifically, SHA recommends that the Ireland's new development policy should -

- Ensure agricultural investment strategies prioritise women's social and economic empowerment,.

- Support women's access to training, inputs, credit, financial services, land and inputs,.
- Promote analysis and guidance on mainstreaming gender throughout the project cycle among partner organisations.²²
- Highlight the importance of involving men in women's empowerment initiatives, in line with SHA's household approach - Family Life Model – to address gender-based constraints.
- Integrate GBV prevention and response into economic growth projects.

Social Protection

SHA supports IA's proposal in the consultation paper to enhance social protection in fragile contexts. Social protection measures are essential to progress on targets on SDG 2 and 8 as they provide a basic income for the poorest in rural areas and enable the poor to invest time in their own farms rather than working as labourers on other farms.

SHA recommends that **IA prioritise unconditional cash transfers** which can -

- enable the poor to buy their own inputs, increasing choice and supporting the agriculture input supply chain.
- provide a safety net for innovative farmers, especially female farmers and for those who wish to retrain and leave agriculture.
- reduce food insecurity and malnutrition during critical periods of the year (seasonal hunger gap), including through graduation approaches.

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

African Agri-Investment Fund

SHA strongly supports the statement in the consultation paper that '*Investment in agriculture is an effective way to reduce extreme poverty, particularly in hard to reach or marginalised areas with the potential to create job opportunities for growing rural populations.*' As discussed above, responsible and inclusive investment in sustainable food systems should be at the heart of IA's approach to rural and urban transformation in Africa.

In developing countries, access to long-term finance and capital is extremely limited or impossible for a large section of the population. In fact, the banking system is often unsuited to the needs of small entrepreneurs in working-capital intensive businesses and does not allow the emergence of income-generating activities. Furthermore, investors are often unable to justify the added transaction costs of outreach, contract negotiation, input supply(etc.), associated with working with smallholders. Support for private sector investments is therefore an essential link in the development cooperation chain as it drives economic growth.

Proposed Fund

Building on the success of the African Agriculture Development Programme, SHA is calling **for the creation of a new African Agri-Investment Fund to provide investment and access to credit for indigenous small to medium sized agri-enterprises in Africa**. It is suggested that this initiative comprise €50 million over the next five years as a pilot with a view to establishing a larger scale fund.

The Fund would act as a dedicated instrument to assist small and medium African companies and co-ops to work with smallholder farmers and improve access to inputs and markets, helping them achieve fair prices for their products and ultimately enabling households to have secure livelihoods.

As noted in Ireland's 2014 OECD DAC review, Ireland is one of the few leading donor states that does not have a dedicated fund in place to leverage private investment in new enterprises in developing countries. These funds are of varying size and structure and have been established to support a range of development objectives. They are generally managed by development banks or accounting/professional service consultancies (see summary of investment and challenge funds in separate annex).

SHA has expertise in the design of impact funds and was recently selected, in conjunction with Imani Development Limited, to establish and oversee the implementation of a new €18 million challenge fund with the objective of integrating 100,000 Kenyan smallholders/pastoralists into agri-enterprise value chains over five years (the EU-funded Kenya Initiative for Long-term Integration of Market Operators in Value Chains).²³

Focus

SHA proposes that the Fund should, at least initially, focus on investments in agriculture-based enterprises where the primary beneficiaries of the businesses' activities are rural households living on less than US\$ 2 per day. Investments should

be made in enterprises that have the potential to create significant rural employment, support the production of a diversity of nutrient-rich foods and drive growth in rural agri-food industries by increasing their sourcing capacity. Examples include farm input suppliers, companies providing AI services, farm machinery manufacturers, companies producing inputs for IPM (bio-control agents), food processing companies that provide a market for smallholders, and companies providing financial and insurance services to smallholder farmers.

Format & Criteria

A particular focus should be on support for the 'missing middle', such as agricultural cooperatives and SME agribusinesses, whose financial needs are too large to be served by microfinance institutions, and too small to be considered by commercial banks and private equity funds. Funding should be provided through equity, loans or blended finance model to ensure that the targeted businesses are run efficiently and returns should include social benefits.

Supported projects should be assessed using the DCED Standard for Results Measurement.²⁴ Investments should prioritise the involvement of smallholder female farmers and integrate climate and resilience strategies. They should also be aligned with nutrition priorities, including national food-based dietary guidelines.

The Fund should seek to ensure responsible investment in agriculture and food systems by integrating core elements of the Committee of World Food Security Principles For Responsible Investment In Agriculture And Food Systems and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Knowledge Transfer & Research

Investing in and building partnerships with private sector actors and research institutions is key to building capacity for agribusinesses and generating opportunities for rural smallholder farmers in Africa. It is in this context that **SHA welcomes IA's proposals to extend start-up skills and supports for agri-business entrepreneurs and to improve research partnerships with Irish institutions.** Through the new development policy, Ireland can contribute strongly in the areas of knowledge transfer and research for development, particularly in relation to agri-technology agricultural vocational training, and business education. In supporting knowledge transfer partnerships, capacity-building for African agribusiness should be prioritised.²⁵

SHA also welcomes references to technological innovation in the context of improved knowledge transfer and research. The introduction of innovative technologies is key to the adoption and adaptation of sustainable farming systems and practices. As evidenced by SHA's work on mobile extension in Malawi, Uganda and Burkina Faso, ICT offers particular benefits and can be used to reach more vulnerable and isolated communities in cost effective ways. Improved technical knowledge and skills are also essential to smallholder productivity and increasing youth employment.²⁶ As part of a new research agenda, IA should introduce a strategy to leverage opportunities in ICT and other emerging technologies with a focus on poverty reduction and food security.²⁷

IA has played a leading role in the establishment of the Irish Forum for International Agriculture Development (IFIAD) and **we strongly support IA's strong commitment to knowledge sharing and innovation in agriculture for**

development through this multidisciplinary platform. This collaborative approach has also been key to the success of the Irish Potato Coalition which is seeking to maximise the potential economic and nutritional benefit that potatoes provide to rural communities. IA has also provided significant support for international agricultural research through the CGIAR system, both through direct funding from Ireland and project funding through Irish Embassies.

SHA proposes that this strategy should be maintained in the new policy and recommends that IA -

- **Establish strategic partnerships with Irish academic and research institutions**(such as Teagasc and the Smurfit Graduate Business School) in support of research and innovation, as well management training, in partner countries.
- **Build on collaboration with researchers, businesses and development practitioners through IFIAD and provide dedicated funding to the Forum** in order to support sharing of best practice and joint research related to sustainable food production systems, land and resource management and agricultural productivity.
- **Introduce competitive research grants to support the delivery of IA's policy priorities.** Grants should be open to a wide range of research institutions in both Europe and IA target countries. In order to reduce the workload on IA, the management of the research programme should be contracted to suitable institutions, along the lines that DFID's agriculture, livestock and health research programs.
- Continue to support international agriculture research, prioritising key strategic partnerships with CGIAR institutions.

Funding Streams

It is important to recognise the considerable time, effort and resources required to progress integrated social and economic development. Reducing funding and/or ending programme support too early leaves individuals still vulnerable to external shocks and stresses. Fragile communities challenged by conflict, climate impacts or inadequate nutrition also require more stable funding lines. Clearly national and in-country resources are limited, however a recognition of the pace of development, as well as the movement from basic subsistence to economic growth, suggests ethical and practical considerations should guide planned interventions. In SHA's view, **funding cycles longer than 3 to 5 years are necessary in order to ensure concrete results and sustainable improvements in livelihoods.**

SHA's work on resilience-building in agriculture across our programme countries is increasingly being recognised²⁸ and we are well placed to improve linkages between development and humanitarian action. We wish to maximise the impact of our resources on the ground in response to protracted crises , including for activities which are not currently covered under the Humanitarian Programme Grant. In order to ensure a more comprehensive and coordinated response to humanitarian crises, **SHA recommends humanitarian funding is opened to organisations outside of the Humanitarian Programme Plan and Emergency Response Fund Scheme.**

SHA also endorses the submission of the Irish Emergency Alliance. **The Alliance is calling for government support for the development of a new emergency appeals mechanism.** The development of an emergency appeals mechanism

responds to public demands for greater collaboration among NGOs in the international development sector. This mechanism is well established in other donor states where it has allowed for increased funding for those in need thanks to greater public awareness and a range of efficiency gains.

Development Education

SHA welcomes IA's recognition of development education as a key component of Ireland's SDG implementation. It is also important that the new policy highlights the role of development education as extending beyond awareness-raising and removes the confusing division between development education and public education which currently features in the Programme Grants II Guidelines. IA should place greater emphasis on education and active participation of the Irish public as key to the achievement of SDG targets. It should also be noted that the capacity of development education to carry out increased activity on the Goals is currently challenged by ongoing funding constraints.

This prioritisation of engaged citizenship is also reflected in EU policy, including the DEAR Call for Proposals. As noted in the consultation paper, recent progressive legislation and referendums in Ireland also highlight how positive change can be brought about through a robust civil society and an informed public. The global context, including the rise of populism and retreat from multilateralism, will equally impact the delivery of the new development policy. Therefore, **it is essential that IA champion the role and independence of civil society both in Ireland and in partner countries.**

End Notes

- ¹ FAO, The Future of Food and Agriculture: Trends and Challenges, Rome, 2017
- ² Ibid.
- ³ CFS contribution to the 2018 HLPF, 'Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies In-depth review of Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 17'
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Development Initiatives, Global Nutrition Report 2017: Nourishing the SDGs. Bristol, 2017
- ⁶ IFPRI, 2018 Global Food Policy Report. Washington DC, 2018.
- ⁷ See bit.ly/sha-nutrition-integration
- ⁸ Demeke, M., Meerman, J., Scognamillo, A., Romeo, A., & Asfaw, S., Linking farm diversification to household diet diversification: Evidence from a sample of Kenyan ultra poor farmers. ESA Working Paper No. 17-01. Rome, FAO, 2017.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ WHO, Factsheet: Obesity and Overweight, February 2018 [<http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight>]
- ¹¹ Gunhild Stordalen & Shenggen Fan, Chapter 2 'The Global Food System under Radical Change' in IFPRI, 2018 Global Food Policy Report. Washington DC, 2018.
- ¹² FAO, The Future of Food and Agriculture: Trends and Challenges, Rome, 2017
- ¹³ FAO IFAD IOM WFP, The Linkages between Migration, Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development. Rome, 2018.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ FAO, The State Of Food And Agriculture: Leveraging Food Systems For Inclusive Rural Transformation, Rome, 2017.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Tsitsi Makombe, Julia Collins, John Ulimwengu & Ousmane Badiane, 'Africa: Call for Sustaining Growth and Building Resilience' in IFPRI, 2018 Global Food Policy Report. Washington DC, 2018
- ¹⁹ HLPE, Climate change and food security. A report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security, Rome 2012.
- ²⁰ Wiebelt, Manfred; Breisinger, Clemens; Ecker, Olivier; Al-Riffai, Perrihan; Robertson, Richard D. and Thiele, Rainer, Climate change and floods in Yemen: Impacts on food security and options for adaptation. IFPRI Discussion Paper 1139, Washington, D.C, 2011.
- ²¹ FAO, The Future of Food and Agriculture: Trends and Challenges, Rome, 2017
- ²² SHA, Guide on Gender and Inclusion, 2014; SHA Ethiopia, A Guide To Integrating Gender Into Self Help Africa Programming, 2016 [https://selfhelpafrica.org/ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/02/Integrating_gender_LowRes2.pdf?x51075]
- ²³ See <https://selfhelpafrica.org/uk/kilimo/>
- ²⁴ See <https://www.enterprise-development.org/measuring-results-the-dced-standard/>
- ²⁵ See for example the approach taken by Partners in Food Solutions - www.partnersinfoodsolutions.com
- ²⁶ FAO, The Future of Food and Agriculture: Trends and Challenges, Rome, 2017
- ²⁷ See DFID, Digital Strategy 2018-2020, Doing Development in a Digital World, London 2018. See also relevant recommendations on technology and knowledge transfer in IFPRI, 2018 Global Food Policy Report. Washington DC, 2018
- ²⁸ SHA, Resilience Programming Framework, 2015 [https://selfhelpafrica.org/us/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2015/12/Resilience_Programming_Framework.pdf?x51075]