



The Irish Association of Non-Governmental
Development Organisations

Terms of Reference for Dóchas Policy Working Group (PWG) 2020

The Dóchas PWG is a group of members who have come together to network, learn and share their resources and expertise. They also expect to engage with key stakeholders, namely Irish Aid and DFATD, the Oireachtas and Irish MEPs in order to promote dialogue and influence matters relating to the policy priorities of Dóchas and its members and to support key stakeholders in promoting Ireland's principled leadership at home and on the world stage.

1. Membership

Membership is open to any member of Dóchas (full or associate) who wishes to actively engage in shaping policy. Membership is based on active participation (see Section 6). The group may propose that a non-member may join for a specific purpose of sharing information, collaboration and the building of expertise, but this would be time-bound and subject to approval by Dóchas.

2. Areas of Focus

Priority thematic areas of mutual interest, as identified by participating Dóchas Members during the PWG annual planning meeting in February 2020, are as follows:

1. **Financing for Development**
2. Climate
3. Conflict and Humanitarian Action and Principles
4. Migration
5. Gender

Of these 5 priority thematic areas, the group decided to concentrate predominantly on “**Financing for Development**” for 2020, recognizing the capacity constraints within the membership to dedicate adequate time to investing substantially in other thematic areas. Given the emergence of the COVID-19 crisis and the Government elections in 2020 – which has led to a protracted government formation process - the PWG felt that this warranted an even greater prioritisation of ‘Financing for Development’, given that humanitarian and development needs will increase, while GNI will decrease. Given that a new Programme for Government will be developed and a new budget issued in October, this demands strong actions on behalf of the Dóchas Working Groups to ensure that ODA is protected, that funding levels are *at least* maintained to address increasing needs, and that the target of 0.7% is worked towards. It is around this thematic area that the key strategic joint initiatives will be planned and coordinated.

However, this does not preclude advocacy initiatives, information sharing and learning being pursued with respect to the other thematic areas on a more *ad hoc* basis. Thematic areas of focus may change year to year.

In pursuing these thematic areas, and particularly that of “Financing for Development”, Dóchas members will engage in:

Policy Analysis

- Monitor policy developments in designated priority areas
- Develop tailored policy analysis around these themes and developments (incl. key messages on funding for development)
- Identify key events and opportunities for engagement
- Identify opportunities to feed into the Humanitarian Action Working Group (HAWG) and COHAFA meetings

Key Stakeholder Advocacy Engagement

- Strategic outreach and policy support to identified key stakeholders including Irish Aid, DFATD, the Oireachtas and MEPs (e.g. through hosting roundtables, JCFATD briefings and submissions etc.)
- Networking and forging of government relationships to facilitate dialogue

Facilitating Good Practice and Learning

- Ongoing sharing of best practice, innovation and lessons learned from combined field experience
- Identifying areas for addressing through mutual learning modules and events
- Sharing learning and collaborating with other Dóchas working groups where appropriate

Partnerships

- Maintaining linkages with other coalitions and platforms (e.g. Coalition 2030, ICGBV, HAWG and other Dóchas working groups, Concorde, VOICE, and others)

3. Methodology

Full policy and procedures for all Working Groups are outlined in Section Two (Peer Learning) of the Dóchas Membership Handbook.

The principal form of contact will be through e-mail. Given the rapidly changing development policy landscape in 2020, face-to-face/virtual meetings will now be scheduled every month with the option for additional ad-hoc meetings in response to specific situations. In case of interest by certain members on specific initiatives, sub-working groups may be established in areas of shared interest, for a finite period. Such sub-working groups will be responsible for establishing their own administrative, budgetary and communication requirements, and will report back to the main group.

4. Financing

The group may require some financing in order to hold events or undertake specific initiatives, in line with its objectives and annual plan. Estimates of costs with brief outline should be submitted to Dóchas with the plan by the end of Q1, or before (and/or during the course of the year where changes are necessary).

5. Coordination

Two co-Chairs will be elected from among group members annually by a straight majority vote, on the basis of one vote for each agency participating. A quorum of four agencies needs to be present to allow meetings and voting to go ahead. A proxy vote can be submitted to the Chairs in advance of the meeting by email.

6. Commitment

Active participation is required to be a member of this group. This requires a representative of an agency to be present at 50% of meetings. This group is open to members who hold an advocacy and/or policy function within their organisation and recognizes that attendance may change depending on the subject matter being discussed, while ensuring a degree of consistency is maintained.

7. Role of and Link with Dóchas

Dóchas will where possible provide office space for meetings. The Dóchas secretariat, principally through the Head of Policy and Programmes, is available to support the development of the group, to facilitate working group meetings either virtually or face to face, and to maintain up to date mailing lists of group members. Dóchas will facilitate information sharing between this group and others through virtual communication and joint meetings, and ensure coherence across the groups.

The Policy WG will ensure that its work compliments the overall priorities and strategic interests of Dóchas. While one of the objectives of the group is to support the development of policy for Dóchas, the articulation of that policy is the role of the Chairpersons, CEO and the Board of Dóchas. Where a new policy statement or position is developed, Board approval will be required in line with Dóchas governance and external communications protocol. On occasion Dóchas may require written reports from the group on working group activities, such as in advance of the Annual General Meeting.

All public communications developed by Dóchas Working Groups are developed on behalf of Dóchas. Therefore any public communication will be issued in the name of Dóchas, rather than in the name of the group (see section 2.2 of Membership handbook for further detail).

8. Review

The usefulness of the group and the Terms of Reference will be evaluated by the group on an annual basis, and externally every three years.

9. List of Members

As of May 2020:

- ActionAid
- Children In Crossfire
- Christian Aid
- Concern Worldwide
- Financial Justice Ireland
- Frontline Defenders
- GOAL
- Gorta-SHA
- IDEA
- Irish Family Planning Association
- Misean Cara

- National Youth Council of Ireland
- Oxfam
- Plan International Ireland
- SightSavers
- Tearfund Ireland
- Trocaire
- UNICEF
- World Vision

10. Officers

May 2020 – May 2021

Co-Chair: Brona Higgins, Concern Worldwide, Dr. Alan McMurray, Children In Crossfire

Dóchas Programme Manager: Gillian Ivory