

PRESS RELEASE

2 May 2013

Government launches new Policy for International Development

**Irish NGOs welcome Government's reaffirmation
that Ireland's future depends on
a stable and fairer world**

Irish Development NGOs today welcomed the Government's new Irish Aid Policy Paper, *One World, One Future*, which forms the basis of the Government's engagement with development cooperation.

Commenting on the launch of the Paper this morning, Hans Zomer, Director of Dóchas, the network of 49 Irish Development NGOs, said:

"Seven years ago, the Government first set out explicitly in the White Paper on Irish Aid why Ireland invests in development cooperation. The White Paper was an expression of Irish people's sense of moral purpose to ensure that every person in the world could have a fair chance at living a full and dignified life".

"Today, we have a document that renews and reaffirms Ireland's vision for a better world and our role in helping to create it. This document celebrates who we are as a people – the values we hold dear and the changes we, as a country, want to bring about".

Dóchas pointed out that last month at a major event in the RDS, people from across Ireland voted on the priorities for a better Ireland and a fairer world. They said loud and clear that a more equal, democratic and environmentally sustainable world is essential for creating a better Ireland. This view has been echoed by people in developing countries around the world. These must be the priorities of the Government as it sets out to deliver on today's commitments.

"Ireland's place in the world is defined by our shared belief in peaceful cooperation among nations for the betterment of all people. This belief has led to us taking a prominent role in the EU and UN. Our past has taught us only through international cooperation can we reduce human suffering".

"Ireland is changing. We are facing huge challenges in our society with inequality, poverty and powerlessness increasing. The Development Policy reminds us that to overcome these challenges, we need to treat them as global and not only local challenges. Our future is interwoven with the future and prosperity of everyone else on this planet," said Zomer.

Dóchas members in particular welcomed the Government's focus on the need for joined up thinking in the fight against poverty.

"The Government acknowledged today that aid is crucial for poor and marginalised people, but that aid alone cannot end poverty. The new Policy on International Development brings greater clarity on how we bring about positive and lasting

change for the poorest of the poor. It is willing to make difficult choices in the protection of vulnerable people's human rights," noted Hans Zomer.

The new Policy has a strong focus on fragility and assisting countries and communities to increase their resilience to disasters and setbacks. Particular emphasis will be placed on equality, disability and the role of civil organisations in furthering the interest of, and giving a voice to, the world's poorest people.

Dóchas members particularly praised the renewed focus on hunger as the core development challenge to be addressed by Ireland but emphasised the need to address poverty's root causes.

"98% of hungry people live in developing countries, where almost 15% of the population is undernourished. We welcome the fact that Ireland has become a strong advocate for greater policy focus on hunger and nutrition. Yet, we need to see this complemented by more emphasis on the drivers of hunger, such as land grabs, biofuels and climate chaos," concluded Hans Zomer.

<ENDS>

Contact

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Notes for the Editor

- Dóchas submission to the White Paper consultation process, as well as other organisations' submissions, are available at: www.dochas.ie/Pages/Resources/Viewer.aspx?id=807
- The World We Want is a campaign led by Dóchas during the Irish EU Presidency to stimulate public debate and to influence the official Irish and EU policy position on the new global framework for development to replace the Millennium Development Goals after their 2015 deadline. For more information, see www.worldwewant.ie

Dóchas is the association of Irish Non-Governmental Development Organisations. It provides a forum for consultation and cooperation between its 49 member organisations, and helps them speak with a single voice on development issues. For more information, visit: www.dochas.ie

Dóchas Members

ActionAid Ireland – Afri – Africa Centre – Aidlink – AIDS Partnership with Africa – Alan Kerins Projects – Amnesty International Ireland – Camara Education – Centre for Global Education – Child Aid Ireland–India – ChildFund Ireland – Children in Crossfire – Christian Aid Ireland – CBM Ireland – Comhlámh – Concern Worldwide – Development Perspectives – Foundation Nepal – Friends of Londiani (Ireland) – Galway One World Centre – Gorta – Habitat for Humanity Ireland – Irish Council for International Students (ICOS) – Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA) – Irish League of Credit Unions International Development Foundation (ILCU/IDF) – Irish Missionary Union (IMU) – Irish Red Cross (IRC) – Kerry Action for Development Education (KADE) – National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) – Nurture Africa – Oxfam Ireland – Plan Ireland – Progressio Ireland – Self Help Africa – SERVE in Solidarity Ireland – Sightsavers – Skillshare International Ireland – Suas Educational Development – Tearfund Ireland – The Haven Community Foundation – The Hope Foundation – The National Council of Ireland YMCA Trust – Trócaire – Vita – Voluntary Service International (VSI) – Voluntary Service Overseas (Ireland) – Volunteer Missionary Movement (VMM) – War on Want Northern Ireland – World Vision Ireland.