

## **“Setting Goals for a Better Ireland in a Just World”**

### **Policy Process for a Successor to the Millennium Development Goals**

#### **Briefing Note**

The “Millennium Development Goals” (MDGs), agreed in 2000, are supposed to be achieved by 2015. The UN have launched consultations on what the priorities and targets for the post-2015 framework should be. A “High Level Panel” has been appointed by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. Consultations have taken place in some 66 countries and 11 global thematic meetings have been organised. Countless NGOs have published papers on the strengths and weaknesses of the MDGs, and how to improve them. Websites and social media are alive with comment.

#### **UN “High-Level Panel”**

The “High-Level Panel”, co-chaired by the UK Prime Minister and the Presidents of Liberia and Indonesia, has hosted open meetings with civil society representatives in many countries. One of the Panel’s strengths has been its commitment to participation, in order to foster “global ownership of a shared development agenda”.

Panel members have “agreed on the need for a renewed Global Partnership that enables a transformative, people-centered and planet-sensitive development agenda which is realised through the equal partnership of all stakeholders”.

The Panel emphasised that the global framework should contain overall goals, but that implementation must be decided through partnerships at national and local level. The global framework should stipulate the goals, but not the means – those should be the subject of domestic political and social, mutually accountable, processes.

#### **European Union**

The European Commission has published a “Communication” on the Post-2015 framework. This emphasised that the goals should be universal and apply to all countries. Commissioner Piebalgs stated that “eradicating extreme poverty across the globe in a single generation is within reach. It is not a question of resources, but rather of having the political will and the right framework.”

The Commission stated that the framework should include a very limited set of goals, addressing not only quantitative targets but also qualitative ones such as standards in education, nutrition, access to clean water and air. The

framework should address crucial elements such as the basic human living standards, the drivers for “inclusive and sustainable growth”, the sustainable management of natural resources, as well as “issues of equity, equality and justice, and peace and security.”

### **National NGO consultations**

The “Beyond 2015” project and the Global Call to Action Against Poverty have consulted NGOs around the world on their priorities for the new framework. Reports from 22 national consultations show that NGOs appreciate the MDGs for the progress they have inspired, but that they are concerned about the rise of inequality within and between societies.

Many reports stress that the new global framework must be based on four pillars: human rights, equality & justice, environmental sustainability and poverty eradication. These principles must be underpinned by a foundation of “good governance”, or responsible government and clear democratic accountability.

### **Irish Development NGOs**

Irish Development NGOs, through Dóchas, launched a manifesto for the Irish EU Presidency which included recommendations for the new global framework. They emphasised the need to first ensure the full achievement of the current Goals. The new framework should focus on “zero poverty”, and be ambitious and based on human rights. Poor people and vulnerable groups must be empowered to engage meaningfully as right-holders at all stages of the process of developing of the new framework.

### **Looking Forward**

In September 2013, a special UN summit will be convened (co-hosted by Ireland and South Africa), to take stock of progress to date, and to seek an emerging consensus.

Dóchas will endeavour to present the results of the 20<sup>th</sup> April event, in combination with the results of earlier work they have done, to the European Union leaders before they finalise the EU negotiation position for this summit at the May EU General Affairs Council. With Ireland in the EU Presidency it is important that Irish civil society is to the fore in seeking an ambitious and progressive position from the EU.