

Nature of views: On behalf of an organisation

Organisation: Tearfund Ireland

Role in organisation: Chief Executive

Postal address: 5-7 Upper O'Connell Street, Dublin 1

Release of Response: YES. Irish Aid may release all or part of this response, subject to data protection

Freedom of information: None.

Date of posting response: 1st March 2012

Re: White Paper submission from Tearfund Ireland

Tearfund Ireland welcomes this opportunity to contribute to the review of the White Paper on Irish Aid. This document is intended as a supplement to Dóchas '**Submission to the Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid**', which Tearfund Ireland has contributed to.

1. **Development should be clearly defined and measured and a common language used across the Irish government and partners**

In Ireland during the 'Celtic Tiger' era development was usually synonymous with economic growth. We hope that Irish Aid, through the White Paper, can stimulate the debate on our modern reliance and narrow focus on financial indicators of prosperity and hopefully change the agreed definition of development. Tearfund Ireland believes there is not only a need for change but a desire for a new democratic global green economy with human and environmental sustainability at its heart. As described in Sarkozy's Commission on the Measurement of Economic Development and Social Progress it would "shift the emphasis from measuring economic output to measuring people's wellbeing". It would explore how a human and societal flourishing approach might be adopted and applied to policy decisions and take the issue of human and societal flourishing from the margins of political debate to its heart, which is where it belongs and where it is needed¹.

The use of a common language is important. Terms like 'development', 'poverty' and 'rights-based approaches' are used by multiple actors (even between Irish government departments) with varied meaning. Clarity on these definitions would be helpful.

Tearfund Ireland

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¹ Wholly living: a new perspective on international development (2010) Cafod, Tearfund & Theos

2. A clear theory/framework of change should be articulated

The White Paper should articulate an overall 'theory/ framework of change' within which the Irish government and its partners are working, as highlighted in the Dochas submission. This would define the long-term outcome and demonstrate the unique role and added value of the different actors and how they work in harmony to achieve the desired outcomes.

3. The role of faith and values should continue to be acknowledged

'Religion can be a force for good or bad in (African) development but it can't be ignored'
Commission for Africa (2005) Our Common Interest

Ireland has been relatively unique as a donor country in recognising the role of faith and the contribution of faith-based organisations to development. But there is a growing recognition in the wider international development community that faith and values play a critical role in human and societal development and that faith-based organisations continue to play an important role in poverty reduction and the strengthening of civil society.

As the Ireland Aid Review Committee (2002) stated '*the historical roots of the Ireland Aid programme lie in the remarkable work which has been carried out over many years by Irish missionaries*' and recommended that '*...a special effort should be made to support the development work of Irish missionaries ...who are making an invaluable contribution to the alleviation of poverty and suffering*'.

Irish Aid should continue to acknowledge and support the unique added-value and expertise of these organisations and help create an environment which is conducive to innovation and supportive of a holistic development model

4. Support for Irish development partners to be innovative and to move up the value chain

As articulated in the Dóchas submission, "the role of international (including Irish based) NGOs are changing, they will need to reinvent themselves and explore ways to 'move up the value chain' – one way is by supporting innovation and becoming more innovative. Yet, to date, innovation is effectively penalised within the sector." And that "an explicit strategy to encourage experimentation, learning and innovation" is needed.

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There must be also clear recognition of the importance and value of partnerships between NGOs in the North and South. More emphasis within Irish Aid funding schemes should be placed on longer-term capacity-building of Southern NGO partners.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to contribute to this White Paper.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ruben Coulter".

Chief Executive
Tearfund Ireland

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