

## *A Coherent Approach to Development*

Development cooperation is about more than the provision of aid.  
It is a concern of the Government as a whole, across all policy areas.

## A Coherent Approach to Development

Development cooperation policy is a policy of the Government as a whole and we are committed to improving coherence across the Government system in support of this policy. Development cooperation does not operate in isolation from other policies. Policies across the range of Government business impact upon developing countries. There is a need for coherence between development and other policies to maximise their positive impact on developing countries and to minimise possible negative impacts.

### Coherence across Government

Much has been done to improve coordination between Government Departments in recent years. It is important now to put in place formal arrangements to ensure that a strong development perspective is integrated into Government decision-making in relevant areas.

*We will establish a new Inter-Departmental Committee on Development, to be chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs or, in his absence, by the Minister of State responsible for Irish Aid, to strengthen coherence in the Government's approach to development and to make best use of the expertise and skills available across the public service.*

On occasion the development interest may seem to diverge from other areas of national interest. Such matters will be considered by the Committee. The Committee will provide an important opportunity for the development impacts of trade and other policies to be considered at the highest levels of Government.

Coherence is about more than vetting decisions for potential negative impact on development. It is also about harnessing the potential across Government for ideas and actions which can contribute to sustainable global development and to the objectives of Irish Aid. To this end, Irish Aid will share the expertise and experience it has gained over the last 30 years with officials across Government in order to strengthen the knowledge base for future work in this area.

Most Government Departments already contribute to the official aid programme. For the most part, this is through engagement with multilateral organisations, for example the support given by the Department of Agriculture and Food to the World Food Programme and that given by the Department of Health and Children to the World Health Organisation. Other activities include the management by the Health Research Board of a fund to promote global health research and the collaboration between the Department of Foreign Affairs and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment on identifying new opportunities for development education in the senior cycle.

The Committee will explore possibilities for further such actions, making the best possible use of the wealth of experience and expertise available across the Government system, in the context of the expanding aid budget. For example, the Department of Education and Science and Irish Aid will explore possible options for enhancing the input of Irish educators to improving the quality of education in developing countries, in support of national education plans, and will report back to the Committee.

Coherence is also about harnessing the potential across Government for ideas and actions which can contribute to sustainable global development.

### **Department of Foreign Affairs**

The Department of Foreign Affairs manages the greatest part of the aid programme. We will ensure a coherent approach in the work of the Department across the full range of instruments available to it: political, diplomatic and aid. This coherence will be pursued in our approach to issues in the UN and the EU, as well as in our bilateral activities. Structured dialogue between the different divisions of the Department is already underway and will be deepened.

### **Coherence in the European Union**

In the Development Policy Statement agreed in 2005, all EU member states committed to strengthening policy coherence for development. Within the Union, Ireland will be a strong advocate of greater policy coherence, in line with our own commitments and in accordance with Article 178 of the EC Treaty.





## Making Aid Work

The quality of our assistance is as important as the quantity.

The international community must deliver more aid and better aid. We will work with other donors, with partner governments and with multilateral organisations to enhance the quality and effectiveness of development assistance worldwide.

## Making Aid Work

Aid volumes are increasing globally. Ireland has committed to reaching the UN target of 0.7% of GNP in 2012. In 2005, EU member states undertook to increase their aid levels significantly: those member states which joined after 2002 committed to reaching 0.33% of GNP by 2015 and other member states committed to reach the 0.7% target by 2015. Other donors have made similar commitments. These decisions will result in billions of euro of additional development assistance being made available in coming years.

Increasing the volume of assistance is not enough on its own. The assistance given must be as effective as possible. This is demanded by the scale of the problems we are trying to tackle and it is demanded by the public who fund these programmes in all donor countries, including in Ireland.

The Irish Aid programme enjoys strong support in Ireland. However, there are also some questions in the public mind about the effectiveness of development assistance. In a 2005 survey, more than 20% of Irish people said that they did not know if it is making a difference. People need to know that their assistance is having a real impact on the lives of the world's poorest people.

Given the complexity of the challenge – meeting the diverse needs of hundreds of millions of people in dozens of countries – there is no single right way to deliver assistance. However, we are committed to improving our performance on an ongoing basis, through international cooperation and through evaluation of our own efforts.

Improving quality is essential for donors of all sizes. It is also an issue for recipient governments who must develop and demonstrate the capacity to use aid well.

All sides must be held to high standards.

The Paris Declaration is considered the roadmap for improving aid effectiveness.

### Paris Declaration

In March 2005 in Paris, the Governments of 35 donor countries, 56 recipient countries and a number of international organisations committed to a range of measures designed to make aid more effective. These commitments can be summarised as:

#### Ownership

Recipient countries should have authority over their own development policies and planning.

#### Alignment

Donors should align their assistance with recipient countries' national development strategies and work through their systems. This requires that the recipient countries' strategies and the systems in place to implement them are adequate.

#### Harmonisation

Donors should plan their activities in ways that maximise overall efficiency and efficacy, for example through common arrangements in planning, funding, monitoring and evaluating development interventions.

#### Managing for results

Results, not the financial and other inputs, should be the basis for measuring whether and how aid works.

The assistance given must be as effective as possible. This is demanded by the scale of the problems we are trying to tackle and it is demanded by the public who fund these programmes.

The commitments and indicators agreed in the Declaration are a practical guide to what must be done to improve aid quality. The implementation of these commitments is a challenge for all donors.

Ireland is further down the road of implementation than some other donors; we are already engaged in harmonisation efforts with other donors at country level and the principle of local ownership guides our work.

In addition, our aid is already 100% untied. This will continue to be the case. This means that it is not tied to the use of Irish goods or services and so the goods and services used in projects and programmes can be more appropriate to needs, as well as often being less expensive.

### Working with Like-Minded Donors

Ireland works closely, in formal and informal settings, with other donors who share a similar approach to development assistance. These fora provide opportunities to exchange experiences, to discuss emerging issues which are of relevance to international development cooperation, to prepare for key international meetings, and to consider opportunities for joint cooperation, internationally and in partner countries. These alliances serve to strengthen Ireland's international influence and ensure our aid programme strongly reflects best international practice.

### Quality Assurance

The high-quality of Irish Aid is very well recognised internationally. It is important that, in the context of a growing aid budget, a commitment to delivering high quality development assistance is maintained. Quality assurance will be ensured by a continued investment in the personnel and management systems which are required to provide the necessary oversight for the

planning, implementation and review of development cooperation programmes.

### Audit and Evaluation

Irish Aid has an Evaluation and Audit Unit which ensures that the projects and programmes we support are subject to evaluation by independent experts. In addition, key areas of expenditure are subject to Public Expenditure Reviews, which are made available to the Houses of the Oireachtas.

These evaluations assess the relevance of project outcomes to policy goals, long-term impact and sustainability, the value of the results to the intended beneficiaries and accountability and value for money of expenditure.

The process of evaluation makes the programme better able to respond to the needs of the world's poorest people. To improve the programme, it is necessary to recognise and to learn from past mistakes and past successes.

*We will publish all external evaluations and public expenditure reviews to ensure that the programme is held to the high standards it sets.*

Recent years have seen considerable advances in the internal audit functions across all Government Departments. In keeping with these advances, an independent Audit Committee has been established to oversee the work of the Department of Foreign Affairs, including in relation to its management of Irish Aid. We will ensure that the audit functions of the Department are adequately resourced as the programme continues to expand.



## Irish Aid and the Irish Public

Irish Aid belongs to the Irish people. It is paid for by Irish taxpayers, and carried out on their behalf.

## Irish Aid and the Irish Public

### Volunteering: A Role for Individuals, Institutions and Communities

#### Individuals

Development work is becoming increasingly professionalised and there is increased local ownership of the development process by the people and governments of developing countries. However, volunteers can continue to make a difference.

Overseas volunteering has a long tradition in Ireland. We have a world-renowned corps of volunteers working throughout the developing world.

Interest in overseas volunteering continues to be strong. At present, the Government funds more than 1,000 volunteers, lay and missionary, each year. There are opportunities for people with energy, skills and enthusiasm, but the information available on these opportunities is sometimes limited.

Our goal is to build on the volunteering tradition by providing increased assistance and information to prospective volunteers.

*We will make information about volunteering opportunities more easily available.*

With the establishment of a **Volunteer Corps Unit** within the Department of Foreign Affairs and the opening of the **Irish Aid Volunteering Centre**, the Government will provide information, support and advice to those wishing to volunteer.

The opening of the Centre will be a significant new departure. For the first time, an accessible public office will provide comprehensive information on all aspects of development and volunteering.

We aim to match the experience and expertise of prospective volunteers with agencies and institutions where such skills will be of benefit in the developing world.

We will actively promote the opportunities and the assistance available to those wishing to volunteer, including through the media, so that the strong volunteer energies which exist across Ireland can be harnessed for the benefit of development cooperation.

#### Institutions

Support for volunteering will not be limited to individuals. Increasingly, public and private institutions are looking to play a part and to contribute to those in need.

There is much expertise in the Irish public and private sectors which could be harnessed for development cooperation.

To facilitate that process, we will develop a scheme to provide support and guidance to such organisations in their efforts to establish partnerships and linkages.

Each year we will issue a call for proposals for partnership development projects from Irish public and private institutions. We will assist eligible projects financially.

The Irish Aid Volunteering Centre will provide information for public and private sector institutions wishing to engage in these activities.

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### Communities

Many community groups are already engaged in cooperation with communities across the developing world and many others have expressed interest in developing such partnership cooperation. We will provide advice and assistance to all such groups.

Community groups are eligible to apply for funding under the Micro-Projects Scheme, which was launched in 2006.

The Irish Aid Volunteering Centre will provide information for community groups wishing to engage in these activities.

We will make information on these funding schemes more widely available, including through public calls for proposals, so that all eligible groups and institutions can avail of the opportunities on offer.

### Working with the Oireachtas

The Oireachtas is one of the most important constituencies for Irish Aid, as it is for any area of Government activity. The broad cross-party support which development cooperation enjoys is a core strength of the programme.

We will work to keep the members of the Oireachtas informed of and engaged with the work of the programme, including through organising visits to see the work of the programme in the field.

*We will invite the Oireachtas to put in place the necessary arrangements for regular development debates in the Dáil and in the Seanad.*

Such debates would facilitate detailed, public discussion of what we do, how we do it and why we do it. Dedicated debates would allow the complexities of development and the difficult challenges faced to be explored. This public discussion would contribute to the aim of continually improving the quality of the aid programme.

*We will invite the Oireachtas to establish a new Joint Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Irish Aid, replacing the previous Committee on Foreign Affairs.*

### Irish Aid Information and Volunteering Centre

*We will open an Irish Aid Information and Volunteering Centre in Dublin.*

The Centre will provide a service to individuals, organisations and communities who wish to volunteer to assist developing countries. It will become the first point of contact for those seeking to make a contribution to development.

The Centre will also provide information on the work of Irish Aid, and on development and development education more generally. It will provide a service for those wishing to become engaged in development at home in Ireland, with a particular focus on educators, children and young people.

It will have an exhibition space which can be used to highlight development issues and to promote more comprehensive, complex and positive images of developing countries.

## Cooperation with the Higher Education Sector

Irish Aid has strong linkages with higher education and research institutes in Ireland.

Collaboration with the higher education sector is important, not just in the context of the next few years, as Ireland expands its programme, but also in the long term. We value the linkages developed with higher education and research institutes, and we are committed to deepening the level of engagement.

*We will develop a programme for strategic engagement between Irish Aid and higher education and research institutes in Ireland. Implementation of this programme will begin in 2007.*

## Schools Linking and Immersion Scheme

We recognise the importance of working with both teachers and students in our efforts to build awareness and understanding of development issues.

Building on existing activities, we will develop a schools linking and immersion scheme to provide support for projects linking schools in Ireland with schools in developing countries.

Support for immersion projects, in which both teachers and students from Ireland would undertake educational visits to developing countries, will form an integral part of the scheme from the beginning. *Applications for funding under this new scheme will be invited towards the end of 2006.*

## A Role for Irish Business

There is a role for Irish business. The importance of the private sector in the fight against poverty is increasingly being recognised. Local businesses in developing countries can benefit from contact with appropriate business partners, who can offer expertise, investment and support.

In 2004, Irish Aid established the Private Sector Forum as a pilot project to promote linkages between the Irish private sector and the private sector in developing countries. The members of the Forum have proposed that it should now be established as an independent not-for-profit organisation, "Traidlinks", to provide a platform for the Irish private sector to contribute to the development agenda.

The new organisation will be led and run by Irish businesses and will be supported by both Irish Aid and the private sector. Its activities will include business development, academic skills programmes and creating strategic partnerships.

It is expected that the organisation will work mainly in Africa. The initial focus will be on the food and agriculture industries, as the dominant private sector activity in Africa. As the organisation grows and develops it may look at working in other business sectors.

While this work was facilitated initially by Irish Aid, the private sector can also provide leadership in this area. We will be open to sustainable proposals for poverty reduction from the private sector.

The Government intends that every person in Ireland will have access to educational opportunities and understand their rights and responsibilities as global citizens as well as their potential to affect change for a more just and equal world.

### Public Information

The Irish Aid programme is regarded very highly outside Ireland. Within Ireland, despite broad public and political support for the programme, understanding and awareness remain limited of how Irish Aid works and what it is achieving.

*To ensure continuing strong public support, it is essential that the public are aware of the achievements of their aid programme. We will, therefore, increase and enhance our public information activities to strengthen public ownership and awareness of the programme, including through the launch of a major public information campaign.*

Most of the work of the programme is carried out thousands of miles from Ireland – this presents particular public information challenges, but these are challenges we can meet. We will present to the Irish people the results of their aid spending.

The opening of the Irish Aid Volunteering Centre will be a key part of Irish Aid's broader communication activities. The high street Centre will act as a focal point for efforts to increase public awareness of the Government's actions in the area of development.

### Development Education

Beyond an awareness and understanding of what the Government is doing, it is important that people have an awareness and understanding of global development challenges.

People in Ireland have an important role to play as citizens, at local and international level. To this end, we will provide support for development education, which has a crucial role in enlarging public understanding of development issues and the underlying causes of poverty and underdevelopment in the world.

The Government intends that every person in Ireland will have access to educational opportunities to be aware of and understand their rights and responsibilities as global citizens and their potential to effect change for a more just and equal world.

We will support the integration of development education within education in Ireland and the promotion of greater public awareness and understanding of development issues. To be most effective, this must involve close, structured cooperation between the Departments of Education and Science, and Foreign Affairs, and with the National Council of Curriculum and Assessment.

The Development Education Advisory Committee will remain a useful instrument to offer advice on policy matters and on strategies for the promotion of development education.

### Working with the Media

The Department of Foreign Affairs will work with the media in Ireland to encourage greater understanding and coverage of development issues.

A key instrument in this will be the Simon Cumbers Media Challenge Fund, which provides financial assistance to journalists and media organisations covering international development issues.

We will also examine new areas of activity. These may include exchanges between journalists from developed and developing countries and support for journalist training.

We will continue to support the CONNECT initiative, which is a collaboration between Irish Aid and a number of NGOs to promote more and better coverage of development issues in Ireland.



# Management of the Programme

# Management of the Programme

The unprecedented increases in Official Development Assistance (ODA) during the period 2006-2012 will have very significant management implications. The aid programme has almost tripled in size from €254 million in 2000 to an estimated €734 million in 2006. The increase between 2005 and 2006 (estimated at €189 million) is greater than the entire programme as recently as 1996 (€142 million). Aid expenditure will double again by 2012.

The programme is undergoing its largest-ever expansion. This expansion is occurring rapidly. This creates opportunities to do much more in terms of quality interventions and in terms of influencing the international development agenda. However, these opportunities are accompanied by risks. The effective and accountable delivery of very large aid expenditures will pose significant management challenges.

We recognise that the enormous expansion in the size of the aid programme will place heavy demands on those administering it. Maintaining the high standards of the programme while carrying out such a major expansion and implementing the decision on decentralisation will be particularly difficult.

## Structure

As far as the structure of Irish Aid is concerned, this subject was examined in detail by the Ireland Aid Review Committee, which issued its report in 2002. The conclusion of the Committee was to emphasise the importance of the Irish Aid programme continuing to be vested in a dedicated Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs. This conclusion was fully accepted and endorsed by the Government.

## Major Review

This White Paper sets out the policy direction of the expansion of the aid programme. A revised and detailed management plan is now needed in order to implement to best effect the changes and expansion outlined in the document.

The scale of the programme and the challenges it faces justify a fundamental review of Irish Aid's systems, structures and procedures.

*We will undertake a major review of the management of the Irish Aid programme.*

The review will embrace the financial and administrative systems, including approval, monitoring, audit and evaluation mechanisms, management information systems and the management and technical competencies necessary to guide the programme through this era of growth. The overall aim of the review will be to advise on the optimal development of Ireland's aid programme to ensure total quality assurance, as it moves towards reaching the target of 0.7% of GNP by 2012 as committed to by the Taoiseach.

This review will be conducted by the Department of Foreign Affairs in conjunction with the Department of Finance. A report will be made to Government with recommendations.

Ensuring adequate staffing levels to plan, implement, monitor, audit and account for the increased ODA spending is an urgent priority. It is proposed that the staffing requirement be considered in the context of the management review referred to above.

## Decentralisation

Under the Government's decentralisation programme, the Development Cooperation Directorate of the Department of Foreign Affairs, which is Irish Aid's headquarters and is currently based in Dublin, will move to Limerick.

The management of decentralisation is guided by the Decentralisation Implementation Group under the auspices of the Department of Finance, while the Department of Foreign Affairs plays an active role in order to ensure a coordinated approach to the process.

The transfer of Irish Aid to Limerick presents significant challenges. It calls for particular vigilance in order to ensure the continued coherence of development and foreign policy, and a fully joined up approach to development across all Government Departments.

Risk-management issues are being addressed through planning and risk-management strategies. This involves adequate handover periods in order to ensure the retention of corporate memory. Appropriate training and induction courses are being provided, and will continue to be provided for new staff. Staffing changes are being phased in order to facilitate this process.

The most up-to-date information and communications technologies will be used to ensure strong links between Dublin, Limerick, embassies and Irish Aid offices.

A knowledge management strategy for Irish Aid has been developed with a number of key initiatives currently being implemented, including developing an intranet and the mapping of key processes.

## The Advisory Board for Irish Aid

The Advisory Board for Irish Aid was established in 2002. The mission of the Board is to:

- > Oversee the expanding programme
- > Advise on strategic direction
- > Work closely with Irish Aid to maximise quality, effectiveness and accountability

In this context, the Board provides advice to the Minister, Minister of State and senior Irish Aid management on the strategic direction of the programme.

The Advisory Board played an important role in the preparation of this White Paper, with three written submissions, the organisation of a major stakeholders' conference and ongoing dialogue with Irish Aid. The Board has now turned its attention to its own role. It feels that, with the expansion of the aid budget and the changes that is bringing in the programme, the role of the Advisory Board needs to develop as well. The Board wishes to deliberate further with a view to presenting detailed views by the end of 2006.

The mission of the Board will remain the same, but it is timely to set out in greater detail the role of the Board and its relationship with Irish Aid. The management review of Irish Aid will take into account the role of the Advisory Board. Close consultation with the Board will be essential to the process of elaborating its role into the future.



## Looking to the Future

## Looking to the Future

Development cooperation is not static; to be effective, it must adapt and develop to respond to the changing world. Irish Aid too must adapt. It has evolved over the last 30 years to meet new development challenges, to keep up with changing best practice and to make the most of the opportunities presented by expanding budgets.

The programme will continue to evolve, new lessons will be learned and new areas for cooperation will be explored. We will remain open to new ideas, which will be explored in line with the principles set out in this White Paper.

This chapter looks briefly at a number of issues which are part of international development cooperation, in which Irish Aid has, to date, had a limited engagement but which present possibilities for further action in the future. This list is not exhaustive. For example, sustainable energy will increasingly be a challenge for developing countries, as for developed countries, and may demand greater attention from donors.

### ICT

There is increasing recognition of the potential of information and communications technology (ICT) to drive economic growth and reduce poverty. Ireland is an example of a country that has successfully employed ICT as a tool and an enabler in its development, and has become a knowledge-based economy.

The risk for the Least Developed Countries is that they will be left behind in the global ICT revolution. Mobile communications are beginning to have a significant impact on how business is conducted in developing countries and will play a pivotal role in furthering their economic growth. However, African countries still lag far behind the developed world in the roll-out and application of ICT, which is crucial for improving the efficiency of business practices and also attracting foreign direct investment. Developing countries will find it increasingly difficult to compete on a global level without adequate ICT infrastructure in the future.

In order for ICT to effectively support the reduction of poverty, inequality and exclusion in developing countries, it must also be used as a tool to aid practical and sustainable interventions which address the underlying causes of poverty. In the area of education, for example, Irish Aid supports the Dublin-based Global e-Schools and Communities Initiative (GeSCI), which seeks to use these technologies to improve the quality of education in the developing world. GeSCI works with partner countries at the local, national, and international levels to support, create and implement strategies to harness ICT for education and community growth.

The Irish experience of transformation into a knowledge-based economy has garnered the interest of governments in many developing countries. We will work in the coming years to make the policies and thinking behind this transformation more accessible for interested countries, making use of the expertise available across the public and private sectors in Ireland, as recommended in the eighth Millennium Development Goal.

**Development cooperation is not static; to be effective, it must adapt and develop to respond to the changing world.**

Irish Aid will continue to work with the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources to engage with the international community and with multilateral organisations on ICTs in order to exploit our experience in this area for the benefit of developing countries.

### **Development Finance**

The availability of capital is a critical issue facing entrepreneurs and small businesses in developing countries. Unlike some donors, Ireland does not currently have an international development bank or finance institution through which we can finance and lend capital to support private sector projects in developing countries.

We will explore the value and feasibility of creating an Irish development bank.

### **Migration and Development**

Migration is an issue that links developed and developing countries together in a visible, if complex, way.

International migration has increased in scale and scope as a result of globalisation and has contributed to the development both of countries of origin and countries of destination. The number of international migrants worldwide has more than doubled since 1980 and is now estimated at 200 million. The challenge is to maximise the development benefits of migration and to minimise its negative effects.

The UN has agreed that governments should seek to make the option of remaining in one's own country viable for all people, in particular through efforts to achieve sustainable development.

The International Organisation for Migration estimates that remittances sent by migrants to their countries of origin may have amounted to more than US\$100 billion in 2003. Not all of this money went to developing countries, but the total was considerably more than total Overseas Development Aid (ODA) flows in the same year. In some countries, such remittances represent a significant source of income and can make a perceptible impact on poverty. However, these should be seen as complementary to, and not supplanting, ODA flows from donor countries.

Many developing countries suffer from the loss of well-educated and highly-skilled people attracted by the career prospects offered in wealthier countries. It is estimated that Africa has lost 20,000 professionals a year since 1990. The effect is keenly felt in the health sector, where qualified personnel are not easily replaced. Ireland will work to ensure that developing country governments have the resources to retain health professionals and other critical public service employees. We will examine with our EU partners how best to address the issue of recruitment of such personnel in Europe in a way that does not further weaken already fragile health systems in developing countries.

Where people have been displaced by conflict or natural disasters, Ireland will work with the responsible authorities and international organisations to assist and support their safe and successful return to their homes in line with the UN guidelines on internal displacement and international refugee law.

## Disability and Development

Of the estimated 600 million disabled people worldwide, 70% live in developing countries, and according to UN statistics, 82% live below the poverty line.

People with disabilities are among the most vulnerable and marginalised in developing countries. Disabled children are the least likely to go to school and the mortality rate of children with disabilities in developing countries is comparatively much higher than that of non-disabled children. Much disability in developing countries is preventable and is closely related to malnutrition, poor sanitation, disease, poverty and conflict.

Traditionally disability has received limited attention from aid agencies and donors. It is clear now that, if the Millennium Development Goals are to be achieved, the needs of disabled people must be considered alongside other development challenges by national governments, donors, international organisations and NGOs.

Our existing work in this area includes programmes to remove landmines and ongoing water and sanitation programmes, which are central in tackling trachoma, the leading cause of preventable blindness in the world.

*We will examine the possibilities for increased activity in the area of disability and development, such as support for specific programmes to address the needs of disabled people.*

## Innovative Partnerships

Increasingly, we are seeing the development of new and innovative partnerships for cooperation, bringing together governments, civil society, the private sector, charitable foundations and affected peoples and communities.

One example of such a partnership is the relationship between Irish Aid, the William J. Clinton Foundation and the government of Mozambique.

In July 2003, Irish Aid agreed a framework of cooperation to support the Clinton Foundation's HIV/AIDS Initiative to strengthen the health sector response to HIV/AIDS and to provide access to treatment in affected countries. Under this agreement, Irish Aid committed €50 million over five years, focussed primarily on Mozambique. Ireland is now the single biggest bilateral donor to the health sector in Mozambique. Ireland has contributed aid to Mozambique reaching and, in some cases exceeding, its HIV-related targets. Huge challenges remain, but our partnership is proving to be a successful one.

Another example of an emerging partnership is with the government of the Netherlands. The government of the Netherlands shares our concern at the lack of progress on the Third Millennium Development Goal – promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment. We are committed to redoubling efforts to focus attention on gender equality and its importance in poverty reduction.

As a first step, both governments have agreed to establish a strategic partnership to focus on specific measures for women’s empowerment and gender equality: inter alia, to promote women’s political participation, to end violence against women and to build strong women’s movements for good governance and accountability.

*We will seek out innovative partnerships which can increase the impact and effectiveness of our development cooperation efforts.*



*Mkata Road between Kilosa and Mekele, Tanzania.*

Irish Aid support to the Kilosa District of Tanzania amounted to over €30 million by 2003. By this time, 507 km of roads and four bridges were built in the district. When Irish Aid phased out its programme, a fully functioning road construction plant was handed over to the Regional Government of Kilosa.

