



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD

HELP IRELAND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

IRELAND'S NEW **INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

PUBLIC CONSULTATION PAPER



Irish Aid

An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

A man in an orange polo shirt and brown trousers is working in a field of green crops. He is using a wooden-handled hoe to work the soil. The background shows a hilly landscape under a cloudy sky.

**IRELAND'S OVERALL AMBITION IS TO
PLAY A CONTINUED LEADERSHIP
ROLE IN TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD,
INCLUDING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS.**

IRELAND'S

NEW INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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OVERVIEW

In June 2018 the *Global Ireland: Ireland's Global Footprint to 2025*¹, set out a plan to double Ireland's worldwide scope and impact by 2025. It commits the Government to publishing a new international development policy and to progress towards the United Nations target of providing 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) in Official Development Assistance (ODA) by 2030. The intention is to strategically position Ireland's international development policy to continue to contribute to the reduction of poverty; reinforce and build on our influence within the EU, the broader multilateral system, and with bilateral partners; and resonate with citizens at home. Ireland's ambition is to play a continued leadership role in transforming our world, including implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In the new policy, it will be essential to maintain the reputation for quality which Ireland's international development programme has earned. Implementation of the new policy will require both careful planning and ongoing consultation and coordination with other Government Departments and stakeholders. A policy of prudent financial management, spirit of partnership and culture of results will underpin this effort.

The development of the new policy on international development is being led by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in close consultation with other Departments to ensure coherence between Ireland's domestic and foreign policies.

The new policy on international development will build on Ireland's strengths. Interventions abroad will reflect the experiences of Irish people and our own development path. In this spirit, following a consultation involving Government Departments, we are now seeking contributions from the Irish public. This public consultation will run until the end of September.

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION ABOUT?

This public consultation paper sets out a framework for the new policy on international development. It provides details of the consultation process, and information to guide submissions by the public. The first part of this public consultation paper, set out in **Section I** below, sets out the starting point:

WHAT ELEMENTS OF IRELAND'S LONG ENGAGEMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD INFORM THE NEW POLICY?

Section II focusses on the changing context:

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHANGING GLOBAL CONTEXT FOR IRELAND'S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION?

Section III considers our vision and our proposed priorities:

DO THE PROPOSED PRIORITIES CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OUR VISION OF A MORE EQUAL, PEACEFUL, SUSTAINABLE WORLD IN A CHANGING GLOBAL CONTEXT?

The final part, **Section IV**, considers how things might be done differently and proposes criteria for action to deliver on this vision:

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE DELIVERY OF IRELAND'S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION?

1. https://merriestreet.ie/Merriestreet/en/ImageLibrary/20180622_Global_Ireland.pdf

I: WHERE WE ARE COMING FROM

IRELAND'S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION

1.1 Since the foundation of the State, Ireland has been a committed and active member of the international community. Beginning in 1974, Ireland's development cooperation and humanitarian action has contributed to the reduction of global poverty: it has responded to crises, has helped resolve conflicts and supported the rebuilding of lives and countries once peace has been restored.

1.2 The generosity of Irish people in solidarity with those in need is remarkable. This is no doubt informed by our history, culture and post-colonial experience. Our volunteering and missionary traditions saw educators and health workers travel to places where Irish Aid and Irish international aid organisations now work. Our story resonates internationally, as does the story of Irish transformation: the growth of Irish agri-food; the journey to having the highest percentage of third level graduates in Europe; the achievement of peace on our island; and even our recovery from the economic crises of recent years. Emigration has also shaped Ireland's reputation and Irish identity. Our diaspora, numbering over 70 million, gives us a profile beyond that of a small country of less than 5 million people. New arrivals to Ireland also enrich our profile, our identity and our experiences. There is great interest in learning from Ireland's transformation over the past century, including the long democratic process bringing greater equality for women, and for minorities in our society. Our

values as a society, our story, and Ireland's support for multilateralism are defining features of our international development cooperation.

1.3 The quality of Ireland's approach to development cooperation gives us an international leadership role far beyond our size and financial contribution. Regularly peer-reviewed by the OECD, Ireland has a reputation for delivering a high quality, untied, focussed and coherent development programme. In 2014 the Brookings Institute rated Ireland's development cooperation as *the outstanding aid programme* among other international donors. Ireland's values and standards influence how other actors engage with development processes. At the European Union and the United Nations our reputation as a generous and principled standard bearer of development cooperation and humanitarian actions helps project our foreign policy values and interests in an increasingly interconnected and unpredictable world.

1.4 In September 2017, the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Defence, began a review of the Government's ODA programme – Irish Aid. Their report launched in February 2018, highlighted the positive reputation of the Irish Aid programme and its high quality was a recurring theme in the interventions made to the Committee. Following visits to Malawi and Mozambique, and extensive engagement with Irish and international partners, the Joint Committee overwhelmingly endorsed that positive reputation, recommending that the focus on quality, untied aid, and on addressing the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable people and communities should continue. The report can be found at <https://beta.oireachtas.ie/en/publications/6829>

KEY ACTIONS UNDER ONE WORLD, ONE FUTURE

1.5 Ireland's current international development policy *One World, One Future: Ireland's Policy² for International Development* was launched in 2013.

It set out a five year vision, as well as goals and priorities for the overseas aid programme, under three overarching goals:

- **Reduced hunger and stronger resilience;**
- **Sustainable development and inclusive economic growth;**
- **Better governance, human rights and accountability.**

The policy anticipated the broad approach of the Sustainable Development Goals, agreed two years later following a process co-chaired by Ireland and Kenya in the United Nations.

1.6 Irish Aid annual reports³ provide an overview of the main elements of Ireland's development cooperation across humanitarian action, country programmes, multilateral partnerships, civil society organisations, public outreach and development education. The implementation of *One World One Future* took place in the context of reductions in Ireland's overall public expenditure arising from the financial crisis. Yet over the five years, development spending has been largely protected and our international reputation for delivering quality aid programmes has been maintained and results were achieved.

1.7 Engagement on **gender equality** and women's empowerment spans across the work of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Working through partnerships, a gender perspective has been implemented across humanitarian, human development, nutrition, agriculture, inclusive economic growth and civil society engagement programmes. It informs our work at the United Nations, including chairing of the Commission for the Status for Women in March 2018. Ireland produced a second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2015-18, in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. The

commitments in this plan extend to all of Ireland's peace and security work across Government. If our ambition to contribute to women's rights and gender equality globally is to be achieved, it will require the mobilisation of resources to implement the lessons learned from our existing work in countries, as well as using this learning effectively to underpin our international advocacy.

1.8 Ireland responds to **conflict and fragility** worldwide through our humanitarian action, peacekeeping, our work on disarmament, and the sharing of lessons from our own peace process. We have deepened Irish engagement in fragile or conflict affected states, including Sierra Leone, Liberia, Zimbabwe, Palestine and Colombia. Building on these efforts, Ireland played a significant role at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. Our support to the central role of the United Nations in humanitarian action is well recognised, complemented by our own efforts to improve the links between our humanitarian and development work. Strengthened coordination across Government will remain central to developing this agenda and to fulfilling Ireland's international commitments.

1.9 Ireland has developed a leading voice on **climate change and development** due to the high percentage of climate funding allocated to least developed countries, a strong focus on adaptation, and the perception that Ireland is not pushing a private-sector driven agenda. Our work on climate is underpinned by a strong commitment to institutional learning and capacity building, supported by the climate and development learning platform. The transparency of our climate finance information has been noted. Ireland has been rated as the second most transparent climate donor according to Adaptation Watch. At international level, we have provided significant support to strengthen the least developed countries negotiating group, and championed gender and other climate justice issues.

1.10 Ireland has sustained a strong international profile and reputation as an effective partner contributing to the achievement of **hunger and nutrition** targets at the United Nations and in the Scaling-Up Nutrition movement. We met our target of

3. <https://www.irishaid.ie/news-publications/publications/publicationsarchive/2017/september/irish-aid-annual-report-2016/>

20% of our ODA dedicated towards hunger in 2011. We are also noted for the strong rural agriculture focus in our livelihoods and resilience work at country and international levels. Ireland is currently the second most generous donor in terms of our *per capita* contributions to global basic nutrition after Canada. There are opportunities to learn and build on our strong track record in piloting and experience of sub-regional approaches, and to innovate with taking interventions to scale.

1.11 Ireland has maintained its **commitment to untied aid**, promoting inclusive economic growth in partner countries, including through interventions in areas including social protection and investment in agriculture. Ireland's National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights launched in 2017 provides guidance for Irish businesses to contribute to the SDGs. Ireland's engagement with blended finance instruments has been limited to date. The African Agri-Food Development Programme (AADP), an instrument for leveraging private sector finance, recently saw a significant expansion and is beginning to yield promising results. There is an opportunity to broaden our engagement with business, innovative finance and in improving the enabling environment for the private sector, as part of our contribution to inclusive economic growth and the development of new partnerships.

1.12 Ireland has contributed to **strengthening governance** and building sustainable health and education systems, as well as helping reduce the incidence and effects of HIV and AIDS. Our global partnerships, our work at country level and with civil society partnerships, all have a focus on strengthening governance and the protection and promotion of economic, social and cultural rights. Recognising social protection as an important policy instrument to reduce extreme poverty and as part of humanitarian action, Ireland advanced its work in this area as a catalytic policy actor, contributing to decision making processes and programmes at national level. A challenge for how we work is to improve our learning, flexibility and responsiveness to changing needs and political dynamics at country level.

CHANGES AND LESSONS FOR THE NEW WHITE PAPER

1.13 The lessons, challenges and opportunities from our work over the past five years and the evolving global context will inform our new policy:

1.14 The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) launched by the United Nations in 2015 represent a fundamental shift away from the approach of the Millennium Development Goals which they replaced. Fresh thinking is required to contribute to the SDGs' transformative ambition and the call to Leave No One Behind. Within this, Ireland's identity needs to shine through the new policy, with clearly defined priorities for making strategic choices. The evolving global context, marked by conflict, the threat of climate change, extreme violence against women and girls and growing inequality will require a transformative, integrated approach underpinned by a focus on gender equality, reducing humanitarian need, climate action and governance. In answering the call to Leave No One Behind, we will need to identify those who are furthest behind and try to meet their needs first. This could involve a shift, or a spread, in where we work.

1.15 Our criteria for action will be shaped by changes in **the context for development**. There has been a shift away from traditional political, economic, social and trading relationships. ODA is one of a growing range of sources of finance available to developing countries, though it remains a critical source of finance for least developed countries and countries in conflict. Traditional donors, like Ireland, no longer hold the same degree of influence over policy and reform processes. For our work in developing countries, tailored, flexible, and innovative approaches are required if complex circumstances are to be addressed. A balanced use of bilateral and multilateral channels for disbursing aid is one element of this. Exploring innovative forms of finance and new partnerships is another. There is an opportunity to build on our successful experience of facilitating institutional exchanges and private sector partnerships.

1.16 **Building our capacity and influence** will be fundamental for delivering on the ambition of the SDGs, the call to Leave No One Behind, and to reduce humanitarian need. This includes ensuring a strategic, coherent whole of Government approach to development cooperation and humanitarian action, whilst strengthening our representation and engagement at the European Union, United Nations and other multilateral spaces. Around 70% of total ODA is managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with the balance provided by other Government departments. Increasing the aid budget needs to be undertaken in a phased manner taking into consideration the capacity required across Government to manage and deliver a quality aid programme. A ‘whole of society’ approach to the SDGs demands a shift in how we communicate with and mobilise citizens about our development cooperation and humanitarian action, through development education, public outreach and deeper parliamentary engagement.

WHAT ELEMENTS OF IRELAND'S
LONG ENGAGEMENT WITH
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SHOULD INFORM THE NEW POLICY?

II: THE CHANGING CONTEXT

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

2.1 A series of new policies, updates and global events have changed the context for cooperation, policy making and implementation in the areas of peace and conflict resolution, humanitarian action and sustainable development. The **SDGs**⁴ serve as the overarching framework for our development cooperation. The subsequent **Paris Climate Accord**⁵ agreed in December 2015 securing comprehensive agreement towards the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change; commitments made at the **World Humanitarian Summit**⁶ in 2016 and the call of the United Nations Secretary General for a focus on conflict prevention together demand a comprehensive, transformative approach to sustainable development, humanitarian action and peace.

2.2 A series of complementary international policy frameworks that inform our work include:

- > the **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction**⁷, agreed in March 2015;
- > the **International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding**⁸, which 2016 Stockholm declaration recommitted members to the principles for engagement in Fragile States;
- > the **Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development**⁹ was signed in July 2015, and is linked to the SDGs;
- > the **Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation**¹⁰ predates the SDGs but is incorporated into the SDGs;

- > the **New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants**¹¹ adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2016 and chaired by Ireland. This set the scene for a global compact on migration, to be agreed later this year; and,
- > the **European Consensus on Development**¹² launched in 2017, and the emerging framework for the European Union's post-Cotonou partnership with Africa from 2020 onwards.

2.3 These interconnected international agendas each recognise that development is intimately related to policy areas of common interest to all countries, and that aid cannot be divorced from debates around peace, sustainability and equality. Achieving international agreement on how to implement and achieve these ambitious agendas, under the umbrella of the SDGs, and in line with distinct principles guiding peace and humanitarian action, will be a challenge. Ireland intends to contribute to the efforts of developing countries towards achieving the SDGs. This is in our own interest as well as the interests of developing countries. Ireland recognises the imperative of responding multilaterally to strengthen cooperation and achieve outcomes around gender equality, the movement of people, climate change, peace and prosperity.

4. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld/publication>
5. http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php
6. <https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/summit>
7. <http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework>
8. <https://www.pbsbdialogue.org/en/news-events/5th-global-meeting/>

9. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=400&nr=2051&menu=35>
10. <http://effectivecooperation.org/about/principles/>
11. <http://www.unhcr.org/en-ie/new-york-declaration-for-refugees-and-migrants.html>
12. https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/policies/european-development-policy/european-consensus-development_en

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

2.4 Gender equality remains an imperative in a world where women's rights continue to be violated, with violence against women and girls the most pervasive human rights abuse in the world today. Gender-based discrimination has tremendous costs for societies. Yet the case is proven: the economic and social return of investing in women and girls demonstrates the need for prioritising gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all facets of life. A focus on gender equality and women's empowerment is central to the achievement of the SDGs and to 'leave no one behind'.

2.5 The substantial fall in the share of the world's population living in extreme poverty across the globe provides some evidence of the contributions aid can make to development. Change is possible; even within the constraints of climate change and the fast pace of population growth. Unprecedented levels of economic growth in regions including Africa demonstrate great potential for transformative change. Technological innovation is reshaping our world and the nature of work. It holds the promise of innovative solutions, for example to harness the potential of green energy and transforming communications, but the challenge will be to extend the benefits to all, especially women and girls. Interventions that are demonstrating impact are struggling to keep pace with the scale of the needs of rapidly growing populations, and the increasing number of people living in cities and towns, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. The SDGs will not be met if the poorest and most marginalised people continue to be left behind by progress.

2.6 Extreme poverty remains – and will remain – concentrated in fragile contexts, in places of gross inequality, and especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Tackling extreme poverty is complicated by the impact of protracted humanitarian crises and the mass displacement of over 65 million people across Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe. Conflict and fragility, compounded by climate change, are increasing the vulnerability of millions. Increasing levels of inequality further threaten the integrity of societies,

and destabilise the basis for peace and sustainable development, generating ever greater humanitarian need. Threats to civil society space and disregard for human rights has limited the scope for action and eroded the basis for peaceful sustainable development in many contexts. Women and girls remain hardest hit by the effects of extreme poverty, climate change, conflict and displacement.

2.7 Uncertain and unpredictable global politics will shape the possibilities for collective action towards 2030. Fractured international norms and a retreat from multilateralism by some countries have affected political action on conflict and displacement, responses to humanitarian need and climate change, and the long term challenges set out in the SDGs. Funding of the United Nations agencies and other international institutions responsible for setting and guarding norms governing peace, humanitarian action and sustainable development has been directly affected. Reduced support has implications for the authority and capacity of international institutions to follow through on critical global agendas and to coordinate action to achieve the SDGs. Development policy has become increasingly politicised within this narrative of self-interest. This has contributed to the fragmentation of the focus of aid, and a decline in cooperation including the erosion of the aid effectiveness agenda. Ireland's focus in the new policy will be to reflect new realities and prepare for the future, being led by our values in our response.

WHY INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MATTERS FOR IRELAND

2.8 A safer, more peaceful, more sustainable and more equal world is in Ireland's fundamental interest as a small country with an open economy in an ever more interconnected and uncertain world. Our international development cooperation and humanitarian action, along with our human rights, peacekeeping, disarmament and security policies and actions, are at the heart of our efforts to create a more secure, stable and inclusive world. It reflects our best interests, as well as our values as a people.

2.9 Ireland's 2015 foreign policy review *The Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World*¹³ is based on the fundamental principles of justice, human rights, the rule of international law and supporting peace and friendly co-operation between nations. Our ability to shape the world according to our values is defined by our membership of the European Union, our participation in the United Nations, and our partnership with like-minded countries and other actors. Ireland is seeking election to the United Nations Security Council, for the period 2021-2022. If successful, this will place Ireland at the heart of United Nations decision making on matters of vital importance, including international peace, security and development. The campaign will also serve to greatly strengthen the awareness of Ireland – who we are and what we stand for – among the international community. We stand for the centrality of multilateralism to international relations, and the importance of a rules based system of laws and responsibilities. We stand for sustaining peace and protecting the most vulnerable globally. We stand for sustainable development, disarmament, humanitarian assistance, the realisation of human rights and the empowerment of women and girls. If Ireland were to be elected to a non-permanent seat on the Security Council our fundamental approach to any agenda item would be to advocate for these core values of our foreign policy, values which we have shown a commitment to since joining the United Nations over 60 years ago.

2.10 International development cooperation provides responses to the different themes of our foreign policy. **Our People** reflects and projects Ireland's solidarity with people in need and connects with diaspora in developing countries working for a better world. **Our Values** resonate through our development cooperation. The focus on a secure world, a just world, a fairer world and a sustainable world derive from our Constitution and are reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. **Our Prosperity** informs our work to help build the societies of the future, where people can live in dignity and thrive. **Our Place in Europe** is integral, as Ireland contributes to and shapes European development cooperation and humanitarian action. **Our Influence** is defined by our membership of the European Union, our participation in the United Nations and partnerships with like-minded countries and actors. These relationships allow us to maximise the impact of our development cooperation.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHANGING GLOBAL CONTEXT FOR IRELAND'S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION?



III: OUR VISION AND PROPOSED PRIORITIES



OUR VISION

3.1 Our ambition is to strategically position Ireland's international development policy to continue to contribute to the reduction of poverty and inequality and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our vision of this world is anchored in our values, working towards a world that is **more equal, peaceful and sustainable**.

3.2 Our signature foreign policies, set out in *Global Island*, to combat poverty and hunger and advance human rights are the basis for equality and are essential for achieving peace and sustainable development. A sustainable world requires the protection of our natural world. Through our development cooperation we are committed to supporting societies and livelihoods to be resilient and to promote sustainable resource management. A secure stable world where people can live without fear and in dignity is the foundation for peace and the protection of people.

3.3 Ireland is recognised internationally for its commitment to the reduction of poverty and vulnerability, and our focus on least developed countries and humanitarian action. In 2014 the OECD's review of Ireland's ODA programme highlighted our skills in building political networks, alliances and conditions to support development. Our work on integrating gender equality was noted, as was the added value of focusing on key priorities such as peace and hunger and under-nutrition. In looking forward we will build on these strengths to achieve our vision of a more equal, sustainable and peaceful world.

OUR PRIORITIES FOR TRANSFORMATION

3.4 Our priorities will be framed by the SDGs and their call to **Leave No One Behind**. We propose to advance our work on women and girls. We also propose to prioritise reducing humanitarian need, promoting climate action and strengthening governance across all our work, to counter the overlapping challenges of conflict, climate change and inequality. Together, these proposed priorities for transformation will provide scope for Ireland to play a leadership role, in line with the SDGs and humanitarian principles, aligning our political advocacy with research, learning and concrete action in our development programming and humanitarian action.

3.5 **Gender equality** is not only a basic human right, but its achievement has enormous socio-economic ramifications, unlocking potential for girls, boys, women and men. Deepening our understanding of the gendered impacts of poverty, inequality, climate change and conflict will be critical for inclusion and ensuring that women and girls are not left behind. Building on this, we need to do more to expand women's choices and capabilities, give women an equal voice and end violence against women. Transforming gender relations also involves a focus on boys, men and masculinities. We propose to redouble efforts to integrate gender across all of our interventions, alongside targeted efforts focussing on the education of girls, access to health, Women, Peace and Security and Gender Based Violence. Coherence with national policies will be achieved through the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security; alignment with the National Strategy for Women and Girls; and a commitment to update the Department's strategy on gender equality.

3.6 **Reducing humanitarian need** is a central focus for protecting people. Crises driven by conflict are growing in number and scale and becoming increasingly protracted, complex and cross-border in nature. At the same time, there are complex humanitarian crises resulting as a consequence of natural disasters, environmental degradation and climate-related events. The needs of displaced people and people living in crises are complex, non-linear and evolving; it is not possible

to draw a clear boundary between where humanitarian needs end and development needs begin. The new policy will recognise the crucial linkages between sustainable development, humanitarian action, disaster preparedness, conflict prevention, gender equality, peacebuilding and political solutions.

3.7 **Climate action** needs to be a clearer and stronger focus across all our work. Our explicit objectives will be to build more inclusive systems, address the needs of the most vulnerable, and instil a sense of urgency. Climate change threatens to undermine all efforts towards achieving the SDGs, and to fuel humanitarian need. Supporting social movements and institutional transformation will be important elements of generating ambition in climate action and informing a people-centred global response. Recognising that Ireland's approach is evolving in the current context, and that we too have lessons to learn from developing countries, will be important for coherence.

3.8 **Governance** underpins all of our efforts to strengthen systems and deliver on global goals. Starting with the rule of law for upholding human rights, through institution building for promoting governance and business innovation, systems strengthening is the underpinning of how we engage across this agenda, and across diverse contexts. State capacity building is central to long term sustainable development and for creating systems for the resolution of conflict, responding to shocks, and enabling access to education, health and social protection, at local, national and regional levels, especially for women and girls. Alongside the state, civil society and private sector actors have important complementary roles to play in developing, sustaining and strengthening systems and their governance.

OUR INTERVENTIONS

3.9 For the achievement of our vision and priorities for transformation, our proposed interventions are: **protection** – peace, conflict prevention and fragility; **food** - nutrition, agriculture and inclusive economic growth; and **people** – social protection, education and health. The proposed interventions respond to the changing context while building on Ireland’s achievements and lessons learnt since 2013. Our advocacy and our interventions will also draw upon Irish experiences at home which also resonate abroad.

PROTECTION: PEACE, CONFLICT PREVENTION AND FRAGILITY

3.10 Drawing from our own experience, Ireland will work to take an integrated approach to peace, humanitarian action and development helping to prevent conflict and address fragility, while recognising the distinct and principled nature of our humanitarian action. Ireland’s humanitarian engagement gives us a significant footprint in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. Ireland also provides humanitarian assistance in many of the states where its peacekeepers are located. Through our work on conflict and fragility, there is an opportunity to develop a more comprehensive Irish response to peace and security identifying synergies with other areas of development and instruments of foreign policy. Displacement and the protection of refugees and migrants will be another important aspect.

3.11 We will continue on our work on Women, Peace and Security. The education of children, and especially girls, in crisis situations is an emerging focus, drawing on our long investment in gender and in education, cutting across our work in these distinct spheres. Our work on resilience is another area where change is already taking place, with our response to disasters, including those caused by climate change, through both multilateral and civil society partners, increasingly integrated with long-term system building and conflict prevention.

FOOD: NUTRITION, AGRICULTURE AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH

3.12 Ireland’s development cooperation programme has long prioritised the fight against hunger and under-nutrition. Building on this, it is proposed to deepen Irish engagement to enable sustainable agricultural intensification and the subsequent value addition of existing, and new, nutritious and climate-specific, commodities to ensure local and regional, affordable access to nutritious food. An integrated approach to climate change, food security, nutrition and agricultural development can contribute to building resilient communities in some of the least developed countries of the world.

3.13 Investment in agriculture is an effective way to reduce extreme poverty, particularly in hard to reach or marginalised areas with the potential to create job opportunities for growing rural populations. Women’s economic empowerment and women’s access to and ownership of land will be critical for ensuring gender equality. Knowledge transfer and credit, linking markets and farmers, and investment and business knowledge are important elements. Bringing in the replicable aspects of our own experience of agricultural transformation and strengthening alliances with public and state agencies will foster a more integrated Government response to these global challenges.

3.14 We propose our approach to inclusive economic growth will continue to focus on fostering sustainable and climate-sensitive economic growth that supports employment and income generation for the poor women and men. Building the regulatory capacity of governments and investment in developing skills and education for young people are complementary elements. It is proposed to build on the Africa Agri-Food Development Programme (AADP) to develop partnerships between the Irish Agri-Food Sector and African countries to support sustainable growth of the local food industry, build markets for local produce and support mutual trade between Ireland and Africa.

PEOPLE: SOCIAL PROTECTION, EDUCATION AND HEALTH

3.15 Our efforts to address rising levels of inequality in developing countries will build on our strong track record in tackling poverty and vulnerability. The new policy will set clear priorities for addressing gaps in education, health and nutrition, and social exclusion and discrimination through building appropriate systems, strengthening governance and respect for human rights. We will focus on the delivery of social services to the most vulnerable, with particular focus on improved outcomes for women and girls and the inclusion of people living with disabilities.

3.16 Ireland's contribution to providing decent work and implementing national social protection systems in developing countries is informed by our national experience in providing social protection measures for over two million citizens. Social protection is a key tool in enhancing the social status and rights of the marginalised, promoting accountability and strengthening the citizen-government bond. We propose to focus on strengthening social protection, especially in fragile contexts, and on promoting supportive policies and programmes and links to inclusive economic growth.

3.17 Ireland's own economic transformation is linked to access to quality education, while much of Ireland's reputation in Africa comes from the work of Irish educators. We propose to build on Ireland's current work to further improve education outcomes, particularly for girls, in development and crisis contexts. A greater focus on skills development and employment programmes for disadvantaged young people is envisaged. New elements could include extending start-up skills to businesses and providing supports for new entrepreneurs in agri-business, complementing our work on food and nutrition, as well as building the cohort of post-graduate skills in developing countries through a further expansion of Ireland's Fellowship schemes.

3.18 Ireland has much to share in developing and improving health systems. Many Irish doctors and nurses have worked across Africa for many years, building a good reputation enhanced by Ireland's effective response to the HIV pandemic and the Ebola crisis. Looking ahead, Ireland will build on its ongoing work in health system development, to ensure that quality basic health services are reaching those most in need. Drawing on our own expertise and international experience, Ireland will work with partners to address the barriers to accessing health services. We also propose to continue to work closely with global partners in support of the Universal Health Coverage movement for effective action to ensure that quality basic health services reach those most in need.

DO THE PROPOSED PRIORITIES
CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT
OF OUR VISION OF A MORE EQUAL,
PEACEFUL, SUSTAINABLE WORLD IN
A CHANGING GLOBAL CONTEXT?

IV: DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

CRITERIA FOR ACTION

4.1 We are committed to consolidating the quality of our development cooperation as an integral part of our foreign policy. Five criteria for action are proposed to enable us to do things differently

We will work to:

4.2 **Build our capacity** to effectively manage development cooperation for the effective allocation and oversight of resources, transparency and accountability; for developing coherent strategies for policy influence and maximising impact; and for ensuring predictability. Continuing to ensure value for money, and illustrating how Irish taxpayers' money is delivering on results will be central to effective management and will require us to build on our existing learning culture to inform the continued development of skills, innovation and risk management.

4.3 **Deepen the coherence of Ireland's policies,** through strengthening our Whole of Government approach and focussing on delivering the SDGs at home and abroad. Harnessing our expertise across Government and taking a more integrated approach to evolving global issues, the SDGs and humanitarian action will be central. There is scope to deepen existing linkages and to build new relationships across Government in our engagement with multilateral agencies and the delivery of development cooperation, consistent with the principles of whole of Government action set out in *Our Public Service 2020*¹⁴. Robust coordination will allow the distillation of policy messaging, which can inform Ireland's influence at high level political meetings, including at the United Nations, OECD, international

financial institutions and with other countries. Particular consideration will be given to Ireland's role within the European Union's evolving development architecture, and how this engagement could most effectively contribute to the delivery of Ireland's development policy and policy coherence.

4.4 **Reinforce collective action** in multilateral and other spaces, as part of *Our Influence*. Ireland's place in the world is underpinned by a functioning multilateral system. Collective responses are vital for developing and implementing goals, norms and mobilising finance to respond to human development needs and crises, and to the challenges faced by civil society in developing countries. *Our Place in Europe* is also evolving, partly as the UK prepares to leave the European Union, but also as Ireland has become a net contributor since 2014, creating new opportunities for Ireland's voice to be heard at the European Union table. The new policy will reiterate the urgent need to protect multilateralism and civil society space, to prevent the erosion of norms and principles and to use multilateral engagement to advance priority areas. An effective response will require the appropriate resources and coherence to maximise our impact and leverage at global, regional, country levels with all partners.

4.5 **Strengthen public support and engagement** with the development cooperation programme, building on existing partnerships and including outreach beyond the traditional development community will be another focus. We propose to refresh our narrative to reflect the changing context and express our Irish identity in the new policy. Ireland has a vibrant NGO, missionary and development education sector, which will continue to play a critical role in implementing programmes, but

14. <https://ops2020.gov.ie/resources/Our-Public-Service-2020-WEB.pdf>

also in creating public awareness and ownership of the Irish development programme, and in holding us to account for our work. Irish society is changing also, with diverse new communities living in Ireland and changing social and cultural values focused on equality and human rights, as seen in recent progressive legislation and referendums. *Our People*, the strong cohort of Irish development workers and migrants in developing countries, including Irish investors and business owners, are assets for developing links with governments, business and community organisations for economic, education and cultural exchange. Irish Embassies in developing countries work closely with Irish businesses, supporting them to increase investment and trade with partner countries, creating jobs and contributing to development and innovation.

4.6 Enhance our research and learning from our programming, research partnerships, and evaluations. Excellent academic research for development is being carried out in higher level institutions. The new policy will look at how to better link with Irish research institutions and the Irish Research Council in producing high quality, policy-relevant and internationally influential research. Situating research and evidence centrally within our planning and reporting will create clearer links between knowledge generation and our programming. A clear research agenda will allow us to learn better from our experience to date and facilitate innovation. Strong research outputs will in turn strengthen our internal capacity, underpin coherence and inform our advocacy at global level.

WHERE WE WORK

4.7 The new policy will consider the geographic concentration of our current international development cooperation programme, examining the focus and potential overlaps between different areas of work. *Global Ireland* highlighted that Ireland's engagement with peace and conflict resolution and humanitarian action stretches across the globe, while our long term development interventions have had a primary, focus on East and Southern Africa and least developed countries. The proposed expansion of our network of Embassies, as well as membership of the African Development Bank, will broaden our focus to include more of North and West Africa.

4.8 In the Middle East Ireland already has a development programme in Palestine and provides humanitarian support to crises in Yemen and Syria. Proposals for a new Embassy in Amman, Jordan, will add to Ireland's capacity to respond to peace, humanitarian, and development issues in the region. In Asia, Ireland contributes to development through the Asian Development Bank and through a regional programme based in Vietnam, covering Laos, Thailand and Cambodia Myanmar. Further proposals for expansion of the Embassy network as outlined in *Global Ireland* will also allow us to do different things, focusing on specific needs in Asia, Latin America and Small Island Developing States.

PARTNERSHIPS

4.9 Ireland's principal partnerships for delivering on and achieving our international development policy objectives. These partnerships include multilateral and humanitarian organisations, our bilateral engagement with partner governments, our work through civil society and the role of institutional exchanges. The new policy will consider the appropriate approach and balance between multilateral, bilateral and civil society partnerships, taking into account the criteria for action. We recognise the need for more innovative partnerships. We propose to develop an approach to harness the potential contribution of business to low carbon sustainable development, such as through capital transfer, employment generation, knowledge transfer or support for rules-based systems.

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE DELIVERY
OF IRELAND'S INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND
HUMANITARIAN ACTION?

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONSULTATION

This public consultation will run from July to September. It will allow the general public in Ireland to contribute to a new Government policy document on International Development.

People and organisations can participate in the consultation as follows:

- > By responding online. Written responses should be submitted by email to whitepaperconsultation@dfa.ie by 5pm on Thursday, 23 August 2018.
- > By participating in **public consultations**, which will take place in **Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway** and **Sligo**.

Full details of how to take part, including formatting information for written submissions, are available at www.irishaid.ie

WHAT ELEMENTS OF IRELAND'S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE SHOULD THE NEW POLICY REFLECT?

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHANGING GLOBAL CONTEXT FOR IRELAND'S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION?

DO THE PROPOSED PRIORITIES RESPOND TO THE CHANGING CONTEXT AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OUR VISION OF A MORE EQUAL, PEACEFUL, SUSTAINABLE WORLD?

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE DELIVERY OF IRELAND'S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION?

Please note that all submissions may be published, and all submissions will be subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts. Comments involving allegations of any kind against a named or otherwise identifiable person or organisation may be viewed as defamatory by the subject of the comments. Those making submissions may be sued directly for any defamatory allegations in a submission and should avoid making such allegations

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