



1- How has/is the Global Citizenship Strategy contributing to the five key output areas:

(answer any or all of the sections below with insights, challenges, examples)

a) Learners and their Communities: Engaging people from the broadest possible range of backgrounds, including those marginalised from mainstream education.

There has been support for the expansion of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) work to non-formal education spaces since the beginning of the strategy in the form of funding and Irish Aid interest and feedback. e.g. Irish Aid (IA) has been supportive to various strategic partnerships including the Adult and Community Education (ACE) partnership, Saolta. IA has also supported LYCS (Lourdes Youth and Community Service) Adult Ed in recent GCE programming, funding a broad range of projects that engage learners using participatory and engaging methodologies, aiding in reaching marginalised groups.

However, funding has been capped in the past year for strategic partnerships, and so has been significantly restricted.

The breadth and depth of the Saolta Strategic Partnership in terms of ACE scope and knowledge, skills, connections and networks has contributed impactfully across the broadest possible range of backgrounds including those marginalised from mainstream education. This has been achieved through an all-Island approach in Ireland with connections established in the north of Ireland through strategic partner connections in Saolta. Saolta's work has contributed substantially to community initiatives through capacity building and direct engagement with ACE Non Governmental Organisations and Civil Society Organisations, however, more information is required about Irish Aid's "Community Initiatives" (Capital C, capital I).

Can you outline any insights, examples, or impact of this output?

- Saolta's Partners Aontas and Irish Rural Link (IRL) play a key role here and their roles are being somewhat expanded in the 2024 to 2026 programme. In 2025 Saolta will have two network officers, one in Aontas and one in IRL who will work specifically to engage with the memberships of the two partners mentioned above. Both organisations have strong remits in 'hard to reach' areas of Ireland.
- LYCS' "Seldom Heard Programme" began in September 2024, and consists of a GCE Leadership Programme, a Theatre of the Oppressed GCE programme developed and delivered for underrepresented learners, and a GCE Drug Education programme that aims to connect local and global implications of drug trade developed and delivered for young people who have experience of/awareness of the drug trade. However, it is challenging to meaningfully and consistently engage with these hard-to-reach groups, and so this will require continuous support and interaction with the sector, and seeking of expert opinions from other GCE organisations.

- Global Action Plan (GAP) has worked closely with Prosper Fingal and WALK over the last six months on issues of climate justice, biodiversity and fast fashion. The same programme is also currently supporting a family resource centre in North Inner City Dublin with an 8-week GCE course. So we have some evidence to support this, and expanding on this is the stated aim of our 2024 application.
- Friends of the Earth's Innovation Fund project engaging with traveller & Roma communities: creation of Roma climate justice worker role to develop Roma energy poverty project, leading to dialogue event with various stakeholders.

What gaps and/opportunities remain in this area?

- Comhlámh collaborated with IDEA to start conversations/projects around anti-racism and immigration, but needs more space / capacity / resources and connections to develop this. We believe that GCE has a very strong role to play in countering hatred within our communities; that our approaches need to be informed, at all times, by migrant-led organisations/people who have lived experience of racist and discriminatory behaviour and policies; and that, as a sector, we could be more present and more directly engaged with seldom-heard communities, such as those LYCS works with.

What should be prioritised in this area in 2025?

More resources allocated by Irish Aid in 2025 to advance GCE projects and processes that focus on anti-racism and immigration.

b) **Policy and Curriculum:** Strengthened policy coherence and integration of GCE in key policies and curricula

Can you outline any insights, examples, or impact of this output?

- Saolta has been working with Solas as they move towards revising their Further Education and Training (FET) strategy. Also, as part of the work Saolta carries out with local authorities there is emphasis placed on the importance of embedding GCE and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into county development plans and other strategic documents. Saolta has also been working with the Teaching Council in relation to ensuring that the commitment to GCE mentioned in the Céim Standards is realised

What gaps and/opportunities remain in this area?

- The opportunity to ensure that there is sufficient provision for the embedding of GCE means that along with providing resources and financial support, time allowance is also written into policy to allow for the growth of GCE.
- We would request updates/communication from Irish Aid to the sector on the progress and learnings from the following:
 - Overview of progress of Irish Aid activities
 - Revitalised Community Initiative mentioned in the Irish Aid commitments
 - Engaging of Local authorities and Public Participation Networks (PPN): work to engage Local Authorities and PPNs being done by organisations, more support from Irish Aid to

strengthen this would be very beneficial

What should be prioritised in this area in 2025?

- In the IDEA submission to Irish Aid in 2021, there had been mention of the potential for a GCE QQI qualification to be created and rolled out. This is still a strong recommendation, for continued mainstreaming of GCE study in non-formal education settings.
Requests made for funding in 2024 to develop QQI-approved course on GCE themes

Policy must include time allowance for the provision of GCE in the ACE sector. This will require cross government-departmental collaboration on policy and strategy.

c) **Institutions:** Strengthened institutions and organisations working to deliver quality GCE and strategic and collaborative approaches supported

Can you outline any insights, examples, or impact of this output?

- The emphasis by Irish Aid on strategic partnerships. The recent development of a strategic partners working group as an initiative by the strategic partners themselves is a positive.
- As part of our Multiplier programme, LYCS aims to develop a GCE drama facilitation mentoring programme for staff of adult education centres in late 2024/2025.
- Saolta is delivering GCE training to Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes across the country. Saolta is also working with the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) Inclusion group, the ETBI Professional Development Forum, and The Association of Irish Local Government .
- Saolta also delivers bursary support for a level 9 GCE cert in Maynooth University
- Saolta's Training of Trainers Programme is capacity building through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for tutors, teachers, trainers, and facilitators in the ACE sector with a focus on ETBs and FET.

What gaps and/opportunities remain in this area?

Adult and Community Education does not feature much in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) strategy there needs to be coherence between the two strategies.

What should be prioritised in this area in 2025?

- Communication between Irish Aid and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) which prioritises making time and space for the implementation of GCE. Unless tutors, teachers and staff are given time to upskill and implement GCE practices it will be a difficult sell to add one more item to an already busy workload for ETBs.

d) **Educators:** Increasing capacity among educators and practitioners to deliver quality GCE

Can you outline any insights, examples, or impact of this output?

- Saolta will begin the process of subgranting in the 2024 to 2026 programme so that smaller and more specialist organisations can access funding.

What gaps and/opportunities remain in this area?

- Part-funding from Irish Aid for Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) grantees is helpful for groups that don't have larger GCE funding. Challenge for IA is to build on this so that those smaller orgs can build their capacity in GCE.
- Saolta has in place a plan for a sub-granting mechanism however this has been delayed due to and IA funding freeze in 2023

What should be prioritised in this area in 2025?

- Necessary funding in order to provide the stable resources needed for the role out of GCE across ACE. Including but not limited to: Job security for workers in the sector, time and financial support to ACE practitioners is an essential area within ACE and specifically FET that needs more emphasis.

e) **Irish Aid Awareness:** Strengthened public engagement and understanding of development cooperation, the work of Irish Aid and the SDGs.

Irish Aid Awareness: Irish Aid are recognising the various forms that GCE work can take, and supporting more concerted efforts to reach marginalised communities through evidence based funding supports for GCE organisations in the ACE sector.

Can you outline any insights, examples, or impact of this output?

- The above is evidenced through the cross-sectoral funding of strategic partnerships which actively promote the work of Irish Aid in through their programmes.

What gaps and/opportunities remain in this area?

- Irish Aid rely on organisations to promote/talk about Irish Aid's work (overseas and GCE). With this in mind there's a need for GCE training for staff/ministers across governmental departments.

What should be prioritised in this area in 2025?

GCE training for staff/ministers across governmental departments as part of Irish Aid's commitment to policy coherence and to strengthen cross-government coherence on both GCE and ESD.

2. How has/does the GCE Strategy address immense challenges such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), climate change, war, poverty, growing inequality and misinformation-fuelled radicalisation?

Can you outline any insights, examples, or impact of this output?

- By Promoting partnerships between Irish organisations and organisations in the Global South and between educational organisations and specialist development organisations such as the strategic partnership in the ACE sector between 6 Irish organisations including Concern Worldwide.
- Saolta also works with the International Development Department in Maynooth University

What gaps and/opportunities remain in this area?

- Greater connection with other government departments with an emphasis on embedding international perspectives into all relevant areas of work.

What should be prioritised in this area in 2025?

- Stronger focus engagement with international communities in Ireland and learner led inter-sociocultural educational forums and GCE practice. There is a wealth of intercultural knowledge, skills, and wisdom in Ireland that could be focused on with greater supports.

3. How is the impact of GCE actions measured by Irish Aid/your organisation?

- Effective Impact measurement for GCE actions continues to be a topic of discussion in the ACE sector - growing and changing all the time
- IDEA fulfil a key role in this area - e.g. research showcase, knowledge shares etc.
- In 2023, Comhlámh completed a research project, led by a PI in Maynooth University, in collaboration with STAND and the Centre for Global Education exploring conceptualisations and constructs of global citizenship, and was funded as a year-long project under the New Foundations scheme (supported by Irish Research Council (IRC) and Irish Aid). It was particularly useful in that it provided the opportunity to explore these concepts from an all-island perspective.
- There are various Communities of Practice/Peer Support Networks in the sector. Recent evaluations show that members value these collaborations a lot - it would be useful to have an analysis by Irish Aid of the impact of 'communities of practice' in the sector.
- Similarly, analysis/review of the Performance Management Framework would be useful for GCE in the sector

How can Irish Aid/your organisation improve the ways to measure impact of GCE actions?

- Output 4 Educators:
Developing methods to collaborate within the sector on effective impact measurement

- avoid overlap and duplication in resources, map connections between programmes in the sector
- Research: Is there research being conducted into ACE sector GCE Projects commissioned by Irish Aid, and if so, sharing of learnings, M&E methods, what is working well, where the gaps are etc.

4- Do you have any other comments or suggestions to contribute to this Mid-Term Review of the GCE Strategy?

We would very much welcome:

- 1) Improved communication between Irish Aid and ACE sector, in order to work more effectively in partnership together:
 - More regular updates from Irish Aid for organisations on Irish Aid GCE Budget i.e. programmes funded, amount allocated to GCE overall
 - Update/Analysis of Innovation Fund
 - Information on funding opportunities available outside of Irish Aid - Leargas/Access Europe could partner on this?
- 2) Further commitment to GCE within the Department of Foreign Affairs:
 - Encouraging interdepartmental dialogue within the DFA - ensuring that there is a forum for GCE work within departments
 - Creating and funding a GCE Facilitator role within each department
 - GCE CPD for DFA staff - (potentially provided by IDEA)
 - honouring the commitment to spend at least 10 million euro on GCE in 2025 in working towards achieving most of the commitments under the current strategy.
- 3) Continued efforts on policy coherence, and we would really welcome the progress to date on this to be included in the Mid-term Review report
- 4) GCE Roles within ETBs created:
 - GCE posts in each ETB that are supported and highly visible
 - At policy level, Irish Aid to support cross departmental effort to integrate GCE across
- 5) Lead a conversation on Artificial Intelligence and what this means for the development education sector:
 - Consultation process that seeks to understand the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on GCE
 - Sustainability/environmental/ethical concerns around AI
 - Far right messaging/Mis and dis-information: access to reliable information - anti-racism programmes etc. need more capacity, resources and connections to develop approaches informed by migrant-led organisations.
 - Access to digital technology: digital divide is still a huge issue in ACE
 - Resources on upskilling around AI, reliability of information - help sector to embrace new technologies
- 6) Support to ensure that the revitalised Community Initiative reaches marginalised groups:

- Additional work in relation to people with disabilities
- data around the level of funding across sector to above groups

- 7) Specific commitments that seem to be outstanding according to our information and which we recommend prioritisation of in 2025 are:
- a. "develop a new strategic partnership for the third level sector and for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in post-primary education - building on our work with DICE, SUAS and the Ubuntu programme"; (p.3)
 - b. "we will launch a revitalised Community Initiative to engage people from the broadest-possible range of backgrounds, including those marginalised from mainstream education" (p.3),
 - c. "We will engage with IDEA on the establishment of a new research working group within the Association and encourage collaboration with HEIs and other partners to agree a research agenda for the sector" (p.31)

If there has been work advanced by Irish Aid on these commitments that we are unaware of, we would appreciate inclusion of an update on their progress in the Mid-Term Review report.