IDEA Pre-Budget Submission 2020

IDEA, the Irish Development Education Association, is the national network for development education in Ireland and a leading voice for the sector. We represent members involved in the practice, promotion and advancement of development education in formal, non-formal and informal settings. Together we work to strengthen development education in Ireland and to raise awareness of the crucial role of development education in achieving an equal, just and sustainable future.

IDEA's vision is of a world where all people are active global citizens.

Our Mission is to advance and champion global citizenship and sustainable development by supporting and representing our members' development education work.

Our Values are of solidarity with people everywhere, especially marginalised and oppressed people; participation of all people in the decisions that affect them; collaboration with and between our members, and with other actors, to achieve our goals; innovation and trying new ideas and ways of achieving our goals. Learning is at the heart of everything we do.

Context: Ireland's ambitious aid programme and commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

In his foreword to 'A Better World: Ireland's Policy for International Development', An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar TD states Ireland has "placed the SDGs at the heart of our approach to international development" and that the new policy "grounds our International development policy in terms of what Ireland can, and must do, to achieve the SDGs"[1].

The successful implementation of Ireland's Sustainable Development Goals plan and our ambitious development programme requires both a whole of government and a whole of society approach in which the Irish public are actively engaged. Development education is crucial to this, as informed and participating citizens are a prerequisite to the sustained public support and participation that will be required to maintain the long-term commitment of resources required to deliver on national and European Union SDG implementation plans. This crucial factor is recognised in SDG 4.7 which calls for all states to ensure their citizens are educated on global citizenship, sustainable development and human rights.

In this context, in advance of Budget 2020, IDEA:

- Supports the call by Dóchas for Ireland to fulfil its promise to reach the UN target of spending 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) on Official Development Assistance (ODA). We also support the call by Dóchas for Ireland to reach the 0.7% target by 2025.
- Calls on the government to increase development education funding to 1% of ODA in Budget 2020, with a clear commitment to phased annual increases towards the internationally recognised benchmark of 3% of ODA by 2025.
- Joins with our colleagues across Irish civil society to call for the inclusion of a specific SDG line in Budget 2020 providing dedicated resources for Ireland's national implementation of the SDGs.
- Asks that the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development, led by the Department of Education and Skills, is resourced adequately.

[1]A Better World: Ireland's Policy for International Development, Government of Ireland, https://www.irishaid.ie/media/irishaid/aboutus/abetterworldirelandspolicyforinternationaldevelopment/A-Better-World-Irelands-Policy-for-International-Development-v3.pdf

Why move towards 3% of ODA for Development Education?

Enabling achievement of the SDGs

Development education is a key enabler of successful achievement of the SDG goals and targets. In his foreword to the Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017 – 2023, the Minister for Justice and Equality and the then Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Charles Flanagan TD recognised the importance and centrality of development education;

> Development education strengthens understanding of the global justice dimension of each of the Goals, inspiring and enabling people to take action at local, national and global levels. It is critical to achieving the promise of transformative change that defines the SDGs[2].

Ireland has developed a development education sector that has been driven over decades by the commitment of civil society and is recognised as a valued and professional sector that is accountable and progressive. In a 2017 Irish Aid measurement process it was established that 34% of primary schools and 59% of post-primary schools engaged with development education programmes and 172,920 learners gave an example of how participating in a development education learning event has influenced their attitude and behaviour. The recent mobilisations of thousands of secondary school students seeking urgent action in response to climate change is an important indicator of the growth of global citizenship amongst Ireland's young people.

The adoption of the Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017-2023, which guides all of Irish Aid's development education funding, is a clear signal of the strategic importance of development education in Irish Aid's work. The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment pointed to this strategy as a 'key enabler' in Ireland's Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018-2020.[3] The strategy sets out an ambitious vision for development

[2] Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017 – 2023 https://www.irishaid.ie/media/irishaid/allwebsitemedia/20newsandpublications/publicationpdfsenglish/Development-Education-Strategy-2017-2023.pdf

[3] Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018 -2020: 28

education for the next four years across a wide range of educational settings, from schools, to universities, to adult and community education.

Underfunding and Contraction

However, current overall levels of investment are not sufficient to strengthen the capacities and capabilities of Ireland's development education sector and are substantially short of what is required to enable Ireland to fulfil its potential to be a be a world leader in the sector. The 2018 Report of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence stated that 'there is a concern around the low levels of funding for communicating the results of Ireland's development programme and educating people throughout the country about overseas development.'[4]

In 2008, the ODA allocation was equivalent to 0.59% of GNI[5]. This allocation reduced in the meantime and Budget 2019 indicated an ODA allocation of just 0.39% of GNI. In addition to this much lower ODA investment, the proportion of ODA assigned to development education has also declined. The most recent data available shows investment in development education declined from 0.73% of ODA in 2011[6] to just 0.57% of ODA in 2017[7]. Therefore, the development education sector has been impaired from achieving its potential by an extended period of financial contraction and strain.

Investing to achieve delivery of the SDGs

In 2005, a European Commission conference of member state ministries, including Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and civil society representatives proposed that member states consider allocating a percentage of ODA to

[4] Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence (Feb 2018) Review of the Irish Aid Programme:27
[5] Irish Aid Annual Report 2017: 61 https://www.irishaid.ie/media/irishaid/publications/Irish-Aid-Annual-Report-2017.pdf
[6] Dochas Submission to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in respect of Irish Aid White paper consultation on Ireland's New International Development Policy https://dochas.ie/sites/default/files/D%C3%B3chas%20Development%20Education%20WG%20Submission%20to%20White%20Paper%20Consultation%202018.pdf
[7] Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence (Feb 2018) Review of the Irish Aid Programme: 28

development education in order to ensure and secure quality and impact. It concluded that:

> 'National and European authorities should ensure there is adequate funding for development education and awareness-raising in their planning. It is proposed that the European Commission and Member States move towards or beyond a figure of 3% of ODA, as proposed in a UNDP Report. This increase in funding implies the necessary quality, efficiency and effectiveness of development education and awareness raising activities.'[8]

The 2015 Global Education Network Europe (GENE) peer review established both a need and capacity for increased investment in development education in Ireland. It stated that:

> "Given the quality of strategies to date and the expected potential of a new Irish Aid DE Strategy, along with the growing capacity and the commitment of development educators on the one hand; and given the reductions in funding support to DE over several years on the other, there is now a need to plan for a staged series of increases in funding for DE (when budgetary circumstances permit)."[9]

Ireland has a respected development education sector that has the potential to create the informed, critical-thinking global citizens that are necessary to give support to and participate in the successful delivery of the SDGs. The sector also has the potential to become a world-leading centre for development education.

IDEA believes that the expertise exists within the sector to effectively deploy a substantial increase in investment in order to achieve the ambitions of the new Irish Aid strategy and to build a world-leading educational capability. Therefore, IDEA strongly advocates that Irish Aid increase the development education budget to 1% of ODA in 2020. IDEA also seeks a phased approach with meaningful annual increases to achieve the 3% target by 2025.

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[8] European Conference on Public Awareness and Development for North-South Solidarity, Brussels, May 2005, quoted in The European Consensus on Development: The contribution of Development Education & Awareness Raising, 2007

[9] GENE Global Education in Ireland - Peer Review: 9 https://gene.eu/wp-content/uploads/Gene_NationalReport-Ireland.pdf

Sustainable Development Goals: Ireland's National Implementation Plan

In April 2018 Ireland launched our *National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals.* This ambitious plan requires action from all government departments. It also requires all government departments to prioritise investment in the SDGs. To date, sufficient funding for the delivery of the SDG National Implementation Plan has not been made available. Budget 2020 must change this. IDEA joins with our colleagues across Irish civil society to call for the inclusion of a specific line in the 2020 budget providing dedicated resources for the national delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We have 10 years to tackle some of the world's biggest problems. We must act together now. Prioritising development education and the Sustainable Development Goals in the 2020 budget will take Ireland one step closer to a better world.

Department of Education and Skills: National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development 2014 – 2020.

A recent OECD report highlighted that critical thinking and complex problem solving are key skills required by any population in today's globalised, complex and fast-changing world.[10] In Ireland, the National Skills Strategy 2025 "recognises the role that skills can play in the betterment of all and supporting people here to grow as global citizens."[11]

In its Action Plan for Education 2019, the Department of Education and Skills notes that "a progressive and equitable education and training system has the power to transform lives - the transformation begins with the individual, and moves outward: to family, to community, to society."[12]

[10] OECD Skills Strategy 2019 – Skills to Shape a Better Future: 24 https://www.oecd.org/economy/oecd-skills-strategy-2019-9789264313835-en.htm
[11] Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025 https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub_national_skills_strategy_2025.pdf
[12] DES Action Plan for Education 2019 https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Corporate-Reports/Strategy-Statement/action-plan-for-education-2019.pdf

The development education sector contributes to transformational knowledge by exploring cultural, environmental, economic, political and social relationships, it strengthens values of equality, diversity and sustainability, whilst equipping people with skills to critically engage with local and global issues. This enables people to make connections between their own lives and global justice issues, and empowers them to make a positive difference in the world.

However, IDEA believes that adequate investment does not currently exist for the Department of Education and Skills *National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development,* with its key objective to support 'informed active citizens who take action for a more sustainable future'[13]. This national strategy underpins progress in Our Sustainable Future: the Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland and is another important component of achieving a whole of society approach to the achievement of the SDGs as well as a whole of government one. It is essential that this strategy, led by the Department of Education and Skills, is resourced adequately in the 2020 budget and that the Department of Education and Skills prioritises the funding needed to achieve the aims of integrating Education for Sustainable Development across lifelong learning in Ireland.

In summary, IDEA recognises that high quality, widely available and accessible development education is a prerequisite to the development of global citizens and an enabler for the achievement of the SDGs.

IDEA supports the call by Dóchas for Ireland to fulfil its promise to reach the UN target of spending 0.7% of Gross National Income on Official Development Assistance. The target should be reached by 2025.

IDEA urgently calls on the government to increase development education funding to 1% of ODA in Budget 2020, with a clear commitment to phased, annual increases to reach the target of 3% of ODA by 2025.

[13] https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/National-Strategy-on-Education-for-Sustainable-Development-in-Ireland-2014-2020.pdf: p. 3

IDEA joins with our colleagues across Irish civil society to call for the inclusion of a specific line in Budget 2020 with dedicated resources for Ireland's national implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Finally, IDEA asks that the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development, led by the Department of Education and Skills, is resourced adequately to enable the development education sector to guide the journey from transformation of individuals to transformation of society