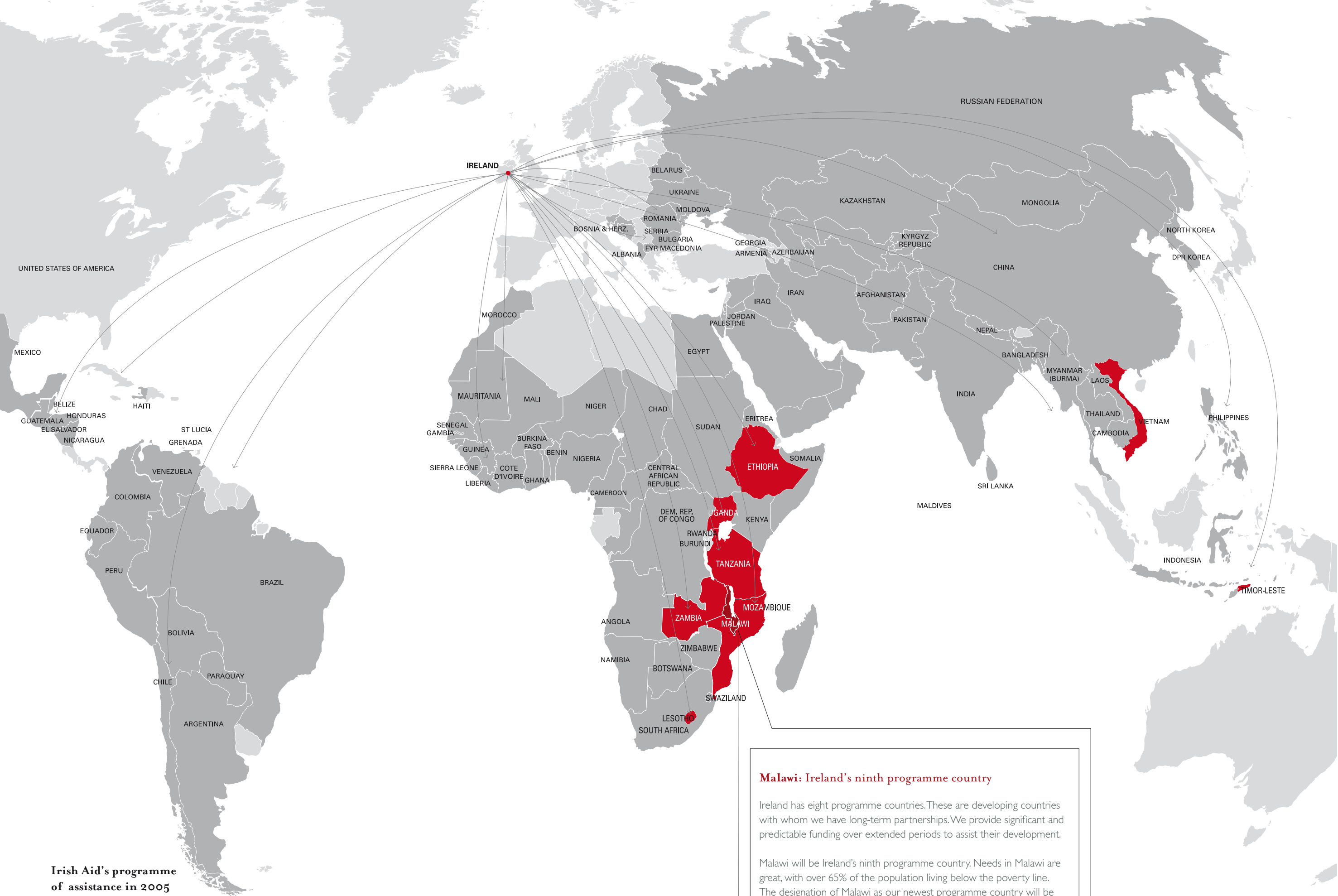


**First and foremost, we give aid because it is right that we help those in greatest need.** We are bound together by more than globalisation. We are bound together by a shared humanity. The fate of others is a matter of concern to us. From this shared humanity comes a responsibility to those in great need beyond the borders of our own state. For some, political and strategic motives may influence decisions on the allocation of development assistance. That is not the case for Ireland. For Ireland, the provision of assistance and our cooperation with developing countries is a reflection of our responsibility to others and of our vision of a fair global society.





**Malawi: Ireland's ninth programme country**

Ireland has eight programme countries. These are developing countries with whom we have long-term partnerships. We provide significant and predictable funding over extended periods to assist their development.

Malawi will be Ireland's ninth programme country. Needs in Malawi are great, with over 65% of the population living below the poverty line. The designation of Malawi as our newest programme country will be the beginning of a partnership which will enable us to focus and deepen our support for this country.

“It is an affront to our common humanity, five years after the Millennium Summit, that 30,000 children die each day from easily preventable diseases, or that 100 million people go to bed hungry, or that 100 million children are not receiving a basic education.”

An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern T.D.  
Speaking at the United Nations General Assembly  
14 September 2005

WHITE PAPER  
ON IRISH AID





# Foreword



“It is an affront to our common humanity, five years after the Millennium Summit, that 30,000 children die each day from easily preventable diseases, or that 100 million people go to bed hungry, or that 100 million children are not receiving a basic education.”

Speaking to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2005, I set out the challenges that face us today.

Because of our history, Ireland can rightly claim to empathise with those who are suffering from disease, poverty and hunger every day around the globe. But empathy is not enough. Our actions must speak louder than our words.

Ireland has seen much progress over the last ten years. By any measure, Ireland today is a wealthy and developed nation. Now, more than ever, we are in a position to help those in greatest need in some of the world's poorest countries.

Every day Ireland's official aid programme, Irish Aid, saves lives. Beyond that, we are working to bring about the positive and durable changes that are needed to to give people a fair chance to improve their own lives.

Irish Aid is an integral and increasingly important part of our foreign policy. I strongly believe our aid programme is a practical expression of the values that help define what it means to be Irish at the beginning of the 21st century.

I am proud to say that the generosity of the Irish people is manifest in the expenditure that the Government is making on their behalf.

In the three-year period to the end of 2007, we will have spent almost €2 billion on assistance to the world's poorest developing countries.

We have pledged to reach the UN target of 0.7% of our gross national income spent on official aid by 2012, well ahead of the EU target date of 2015. Based on current projections this will bring our annual expenditure on official aid to over €1.5 billion per year.

These huge increases in spending demand that we plan carefully for the future. In this White Paper we set out for the Irish people to see precisely where and how we propose to spend your money, and what we believe are the priorities on which it should be spent.

I hope that you will take the time to look at some of the areas where our contribution – on your behalf – will make a real difference in the global fight against poverty.

I also hope that you will continue to support the Government in allocating the substantial resources needed to help combat disease, hunger and poverty, that you as taxpayers have made available to us.

**Bertie Ahern T.D.**  
Taoiseach

## Preface



Every day the people of Ireland, through Irish Aid, are helping to meet the needs of the world's poorest people. This year alone, the Government will spend over €170 for every Irish man, woman and child to help bring about lasting change in the lives of marginalised and impoverished communities in developing countries – a total of €734 million in 2006.

It is both timely and necessary, therefore, to outline clearly for the Irish people and our development partners why, where and how this money is being spent.

Ireland's first ever White Paper on Irish Aid is a significant milestone in the thirty-two year history of our aid programme.

It underlines the high priority we, as a nation, place on the fight against world poverty and comes at a time of major increases in aid spending.

This White Paper emphasises the central importance of development cooperation to Ireland's wider foreign policy, expressing as it does our longstanding commitment to human rights and an overarching adherence to international justice.



More than that, Irish Aid is saving and improving the quality of peoples' lives on the ground – our principles brought to life. Irish Aid works in over 90 countries throughout the world assisting the most vulnerable and enabling them to realise the potential that circumstance and injustice constrain.

It is important, therefore, to highlight this key aspect of Ireland's foreign policy and to explain how we intend to build on this work into the future.

The White Paper articulates the guiding principles of our aid programme. We will work in partnership with the governments and peoples of the developing world, particularly in Africa, aware always that they must be in the driving seat of their own development. This relationship places obligations on both sides to ensure that assistance is used to maximum effect and gets to where it can make a real difference. We will honour that pledge.

Irish Aid will focus on the world's poorest countries where need is greatest. We will address the causes of poverty and not simply its symptoms. We aim to build systems that tackle poverty in a way that endures, long after our interventions have ceased. Our ultimate objective, as donors, is to make ourselves redundant.

The White Paper is not simply the product of internal dialogue; it represents the culmination of intensive public consultation. We invited submissions from interested people and organisations and travelled the country listening to Irish people's views on what they feel the Government should be doing on their behalf. We consulted with our partners here in Ireland and in the developing world. The White Paper, as the aid programme it describes, belongs to the Irish people.


The key decisions that will shape Irish Aid's work in the future are outlined clearly in this document. Some are innovations and represent new focus areas for Irish Aid and some are validating and building on existing successes. It is important to realise that we are not starting with a blank slate. Irish Aid, which has been in operation since 1974, has been very favourably reviewed by independent institutions and other international donors.

We have garnered an enviable international reputation for the quality of our aid and we aim to continue this high standard. Irish Aid will remain a learning organisation, building on success, open to change and new ways of being more effective.

Global inequality, which plays itself out in the shameful statistics of deprivation with which we are all too familiar, reflects on and affects all of us. It is our responsibility to do what we can to eliminate this inequality.

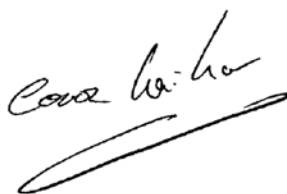
Every day Ireland, through our aid programme, is responding to humanitarian emergencies, ensuring children are afforded the basic right to education and funding the provision of basic health services to millions of the poor and vulnerable. Every day we are helping to build societies where governments listen to and have an increasing capacity to respond to the needs of their citizens.

We look forward to a world where children from the poorest countries can look forward to futures full of the possibilities and hope that are their birthright. With your continued support and this White Paper as a guide, we will work to achieve this.



**Mr. Dermot Ahern T.D.**

Minister for Foreign Affairs



**Mr. Conor Lenihan T.D.**

Minister of State for Development Cooperation and Human Rights



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## Ireland's Commitment

At the United Nations Millennium Review Summit in September 2005, the Taoiseach, Mr. Bertie Ahern T.D., committed Ireland to reaching the United Nations target for spending 0.7% of our GNP on Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2012.

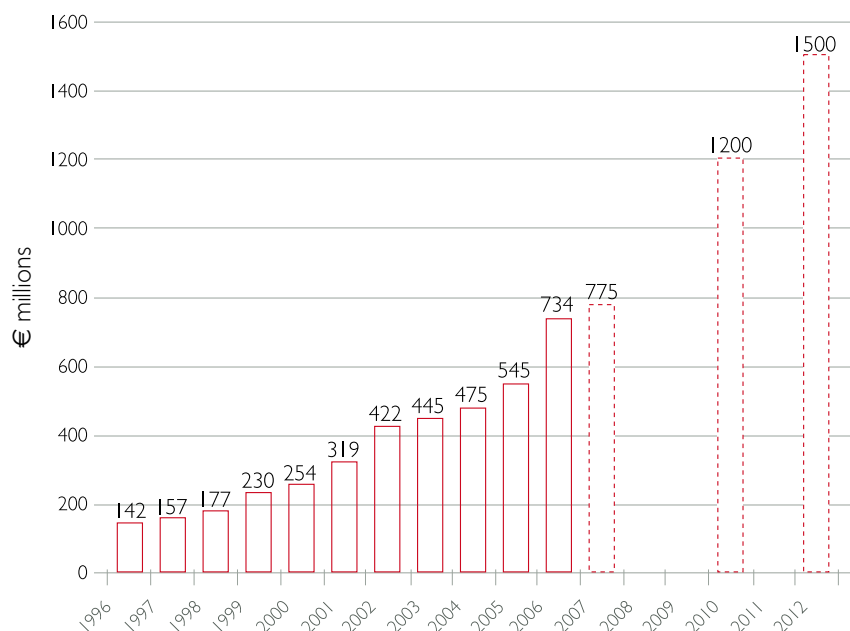
We have set interim targets to be reached before that date, against which our progress towards the target can be measured.

In 2007, our ODA will reach 0.5% of GNP.

In 2010, our ODA is expected to reach 0.6% of GNP. These resources will be used efficiently and effectively, on behalf of the Irish people.

This is a commitment by Ireland to the global effort required to achieve the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals.

Irish ODA Levels 1996 - 2012



 Based on current GNP growth projections

## Guiding Principles

Development cooperation is an integral part of Ireland's foreign policy.

Poverty reduction, to reduce vulnerability and increase opportunity, is the overarching objective of Irish Aid.

Ireland will support the promotion of human development, human security and justice, the building and strengthening of democracy, the promotion of gender equality and the promotion and protection of human rights.

We will be guided by the following principles:

### Partnership

Ireland's relationship with the developing world will be based on a spirit of partnership and equality. The governments and peoples of our partner countries are primarily responsible for their own development and will lead the development process. Ireland will offer advice, expertise and assistance but decisions on development planning must, to the greatest extent possible, be locally owned and led.

For their part, our partner countries must work to combat corruption, ensure effective and responsible government, promote democracy and protect human rights. We will also work in partnership with other donors and with international and non-governmental organisations which share our priorities.

### Public Ownership and Transparency

We will ensure greater public awareness and ownership of the programme. We will also encourage greater awareness of development issues. The programme will be delivered in an open, accountable and transparent manner. The bases for funding decisions will be transparent. We will consult with partners on major policy initiatives.

### Effectiveness and Quality Assurance

We will use public resources efficiently and effectively, providing value for money for the Irish taxpayer. To maximise effectiveness, we will ensure high quality in the planning and management of our projects and programmes. We will work in close coordination with other donors and the international community in order that development assistance is used to best effect at a global level. Ireland's assistance will not be tied to the use of Irish goods or services. Rigorous audit and evaluation will inform our work to ensure that resources are used to optimal effect to achieve value for money and that we learn from past experience.

### Coherence

We will work for a coherent approach to development across all Government Departments. Within Irish Aid itself, we will work to ensure coherence across the wide range of development assistance instruments employed and to minimise and eliminate inconsistencies and contradictions.

### Long-Term Sustainability

Our interventions will be durable and will bring real benefits over the long term. We will work towards sustainable improvements in the lives of ordinary people through building systems to address the causes of poverty rather than simply ameliorating the symptoms. Our development programme will integrate environmental concerns, to protect the interests of future generations.



## Key Decisions

## Key Decisions

Set out below are some of the key decisions taken in this White Paper. These decisions reinforce the good practice which already exists across the Irish Aid programme and set out new initiatives and areas of activity.

Key Decisions	Our Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <b>Africa</b> will remain the principal geographic focus for Irish Aid. (See p.88)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We have <b>simplified the funding mechanisms for non-governmental organisations (NGOs)</b>. This will make the funding mechanisms at once more user-friendly to the wide-ranging needs of these diverse organisations and rigorous and robust enough to ensure accountability for the taxpayer. (See p.75)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <b>We will increase the number of key partner countries in which we work.</b> In the medium-term, we will increase the number of partner countries from eight to ten. <b>Malawi will be the first country so designated.</b> (See p.73)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will deepen our focus on working in <b>fragile states</b>. Building on our existing activities, including our role in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations, we will focus our efforts on Sierra Leone and Liberia, both countries with hugely challenging operating environments. (See p.73)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will <b>intensify our cooperation with United Nations funds and programmes</b> to ensure accountability and value for money, as well as consistency with our approach to development assistance and with our support for UN reform. (See p.79)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; While Africa remains our main focus, we will respond to need in other parts of the world. To this end, we will build <b>a regional programme in South East Asia</b>; working from our most recently designated key partner country, <b>Vietnam</b>. (See p.90)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will work to <b>improve the quality of European Union (EU) aid</b> and the effectiveness of its delivery. (See p.81)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will develop <b>regional programmes in Southern Africa and in West Africa</b>, to address challenges which do not respect national borders, such as the spread of disease and food insecurity. (See p.89)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Irish Aid and the Department of Finance will work closely together to integrate a strong development perspective into the positions taken by Ireland in the <b>international financial institutions</b>. (See p.84)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will provide <b>assistance to the African Union and other regional organisations in Africa</b>, to support efforts to tackle the challenges facing the continent. (See p.88)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; In our partner countries, we will maintain a <b>mix of aid delivery methods</b>: we will work at local, regional and national levels, taking into account the particular circumstances of each country. (See p.72)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; The promotion of <b>human rights</b>, directly and indirectly, will continue to be central to Ireland's foreign policy and all the work of Irish Aid. (See p.59)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Where possible, we will move towards five-year funding cycles with our key partners, including governments, non-governmental organisations and multilateral organisations.</li> </ul>

Key Decisions	Preventing and Responding to Humanitarian Emergencies
<p>&gt; In order to respond more effectively to sudden-onset emergencies, we will develop a <b>Rapid Response Initiative</b> (See p.35), which will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The pre-positioning and transportation of humanitarian supplies to disaster areas, as appropriate</li> <li>• The availability of a roster of highly-skilled individuals, from the public and private sectors, including from the Defence Forces, for deployment at short notice to emergency situations</li> <li>• Enhancing the emergency capacities of international humanitarian response agencies and mechanisms</li> </ul> <p>The Rapid Response Initiative will complement our contribution to broader UN and EU initiatives.</p>	<p>&gt; We will support <b>the unique coordinating role of the UN</b> in responding to humanitarian crises. Our support for the new UN Central Emergency Response Fund is a strong signal of this support and we will continue to support the work of the new Fund. (See p.34)</p> <p>&gt; We will establish a <b>Hunger Task Force</b>, drawing together public and private sector expertise, to examine the particular contribution Ireland can make to tackling the root causes of food insecurity, particularly in Africa. The Hunger Task Force will be asked to report within six months of its establishment. (See p.52)</p> <p>&gt; We will assist developing countries in preparing to deal with the impact of humanitarian disasters. (See p.34-38)</p>



Key Decisions Building Government Capacity & Accountability	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will support institutions and organisations in developing countries that promote <b>governance, democracy and human rights</b> in order to ensure more responsible and effective government. (See p.59-61)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will <b>support the development of a diverse and independent civil society</b> in our programme countries and encourage governments there to facilitate greater civil society participation and partnership in development planning. (See p.41 &amp; 77)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will support our partners in the <b>fight against corruption</b> and will work with other donors, international organisations and civil society to ensure that our development assistance continues to reach the poor and those in greatest need. (See p. 39-42)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <b>We will actively support the development of free and independent media</b> in our partner countries as an important actor in the promotion of accountability and good governance. (See p.78)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will engage with the <b>African Union</b> about how best to support the <b>African Peer Review Mechanism</b>, which provides scrutiny of the economic and political governance of African countries by other African Governments. In particular, we will look at how to support the implementation of the recommendations of these reviews at the national level. (See p.40)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will increase our support for <b>gender equality measures, with a specific focus on preventing and responding to gender-based violence.</b> (See p.61-62)</li> </ul>

Key Decisions Trade and Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will continue to advocate a <b>better trade deal for Least Developed Countries.</b> (See p.55 &amp; 65)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will provide increased support for private sector development in our programme countries. <b>An independent not-for-profit business development organisation, Traidlinks, is being established with Irish Aid support,</b> to help promote business relationships between the Irish private sector and the private sector in developing countries. (See p.106)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will support multilateral '<b>Aid for Trade</b>' initiatives for Least Developed Countries to help build their capacity to trade and to take account of the impact of multilateral trade agreements. (See p.66)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will increase our financial support for initiatives which promote <b>fair and ethical trade, including support for efforts in Ireland to raise awareness of these issues.</b> (See p.66)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will explore the value and feasibility of creating <b>an Irish development bank.</b> (See p.115)</li> </ul>

Key Decisions	Investing in People – The Social and Productive Sectors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We are committed to developing programmes that <b>address the key causes of illness and poor health</b> among the poorest and most vulnerable people and to strengthening health systems in the poorest countries. (See p.45)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will support activities across the programme to increase access to <b>safe water and basic sanitation</b>. (See p.63)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will spend at least €100 million per year combating <b>HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases</b> in developing countries. (See p.48)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; In line with the national development plans of our key partner countries, we will look at funding <b>productive infrastructure projects</b>, where appropriate and sustainable, with the aim of facilitating economic growth. (See p.29)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will maintain our focus on <b>the provision of high-quality primary education</b>, situated within comprehensive national education plans. (See p.43)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Irish Aid currently provides fellowships to more than 100 students a year from developing countries to enable them to study in Ireland or in institutions in their home regions. We will conduct <b>a major review of the fellowship programme</b> to ensure that it continues to serve as a capacity-building tool for our partner countries. (See p.44)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will <b>fund health research</b> by Irish, international and developing country research institutions focussed on the specific health needs of the poorest countries. (See p.47)</li> </ul>	

Key Decisions	Cross-Cutting Issues: Gender, Environment, HIV/AIDS and Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Four issues cut across and inform all of the work of Irish Aid: Gender, Environment, HIV/AIDS and Governance. These issues will be mainstreamed into the work of Irish Aid. This means that they will be taken into account in the planning, implementation and evaluation of all of our interventions. This integration, or mainstreaming, is complementary to specific actions we take in each of the four areas.</li> </ul>	

Key Decisions	Peace, Security and Development
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will work to develop a distinctive role for Ireland in the areas of <b>conflict-prevention and resolution and peace-building</b>, drawing from our political, diplomatic and aid experience and resources. (See p.58)</li> <li>• A dedicated Unit for Conflict Analysis and Resolution will be established in the Department of Foreign Affairs</li> <li>• The Unit will be tasked with investigating and reporting on selected conflicts. It will analyse and draw lessons from conflict-resolution processes elsewhere, offer authoritative information on the Irish peace process to others and, where appropriate, the unit will assist the Government to play a direct role in facilitating peace processes and supporting reconstruction</li> <li>• The Unit will also work with civil society and academic institutions, with a view to ensuring that Ireland's reserves of knowledge and experience in conflict issues are drawn on and further developed</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We have provided financial support to the newly-established UN <b>Peace Building Commission</b>. We will support the evolving work and role of the Commission in the post-conflict reconstruction of states and societies. (See p.57)</li> <li>&gt; We will continue to play our part in UN-approved <b>peace-support operations</b> around the world, including in Africa. (See p.57)</li> </ul> |
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Key Decisions	Irish Aid and the Irish Public
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will invite the <b>Oireachtas to establish a new Joint Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Irish Aid</b>, replacing the previous Committee on Foreign Affairs. (See p.105)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will continue to provide support for <b>development education</b> at primary, secondary and tertiary level in Ireland and through informal channels of education. (See p.107)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will establish a <b>new Inter-Departmental Committee on Development</b>, 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. (See p.96)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will launch a new scheme to help <b>build strong links between schools</b> in Ireland and schools in developing countries. This will help young people in Ireland to understand more fully the nature and scale of global development challenges. Applications for funding under this new scheme will be invited towards the end of 2006. (See p.106)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will invite the Oireachtas to put in place the necessary arrangements for <b>regular development debates in the Dáil and in the Seanad</b>. Such debates will promote more political discussion about international development cooperation and the important role Ireland can play. (See p.105)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; 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 <b>public information activities</b>, to strengthen public ownership and awareness of the programme, including through the launch of a major public information campaign. (See p.107)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will open an <b>Irish Aid Information and Volunteering Centre</b> to make more and better information available to the public about volunteering opportunities for <b>individuals, institutions and communities</b> across Ireland. (See p.105) The Volunteering Centre will also manage those volunteering opportunities for which Irish Aid has direct responsibility, including <b>internships</b> within Irish Aid and placements through the <b>UN Volunteers</b> programme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will develop a programme for more strategic engagement between Irish Aid and <b>higher education and research institutes</b> in Ireland. Rollout of the programme will begin in 2007. (See p.106)</li> <li>&gt; We will provide financial support for <b>events to mark Africa Day, 25 May</b>, in order to promote a more positive and comprehensive understanding of Africa in Ireland. (See p.89)</li> </ul>



# Introduction

Development cooperation is about reducing poverty, helping children to survive their first years and to go to school and giving people enough food to eat and clean water to drink.

It is about enabling people to take control of their own lives and providing hope for the future.

# Introduction

## Why Give Aid?

This year, 2006, the Government will spend more than €730 million in assistance to developing countries. Spending will continue to grow in line with the commitment to reach the UN target of spending 0.7% of GNP on Official Development Assistance (ODA).

This is public money. It is essential that the Irish public understand and support the Government's reasons for providing this assistance.

### Need

We help those in greatest need: the world's poorest people in the world's poorest countries.

The level of need in these countries is not comparable to anything in Ireland. Living on less than \$1 a day, as more than 1 billion people worldwide do, disempowers and marginalises people.

Poverty destroys human potential, increases vulnerability and limits opportunities. Poverty can make rights unattainable and weakens governments and societies. Poverty can turn environmental and economic shocks into humanitarian disasters.

Development cooperation is about reducing poverty, helping children to survive their first years and to go to school and giving people enough food to eat and clean water to drink. It is about enabling people to take control of their own lives and providing hope for the future.

Aid is not the entire answer to the problems of underdevelopment, but it is an essential part of the equation.

Our response must be on a scale to match the scale of the problems faced. Increased aid flows are necessary and that aid must be well managed.

### Capacity

We have an unprecedented capacity to provide assistance.

At the beginning of the 21st century, Ireland is one of the world's wealthiest and most successful trading nations. Our remarkable economic success over the last decade means that now, more than ever, we are in a position to help. We in Government can do more to build upon Ireland's strong tradition of giving and of solidarity with the world's poorest countries.

Our success means that we can devote much greater resources to development. Twenty-five years ago, in 1981, the total official aid budget was just €22.65 million. By 1996, this had grown to €142 million. In a few years, the aid budget will reach the €1 billion mark.

### Aid Works

Botswana and Uganda are examples of countries where aid has had a real impact on the quality of people's lives and on the countries' capacity to lead their own development.

Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) is an example of aid wasted. There are less dramatic failures also: projects or approaches which have been unsustainable or did not help those they were intended to help.

There is no doubt that mistakes have been made in the past. Equally, there is also no doubt that aid can have a transformational effect. It has delivered real change and can continue to do so.

Enormous success has been achieved in increasing the number of children in schools, in providing immunisation against childhood diseases and in the provision of clean water, basic healthcare and improved economic opportunities to many millions of people.

### Irish Aid Works

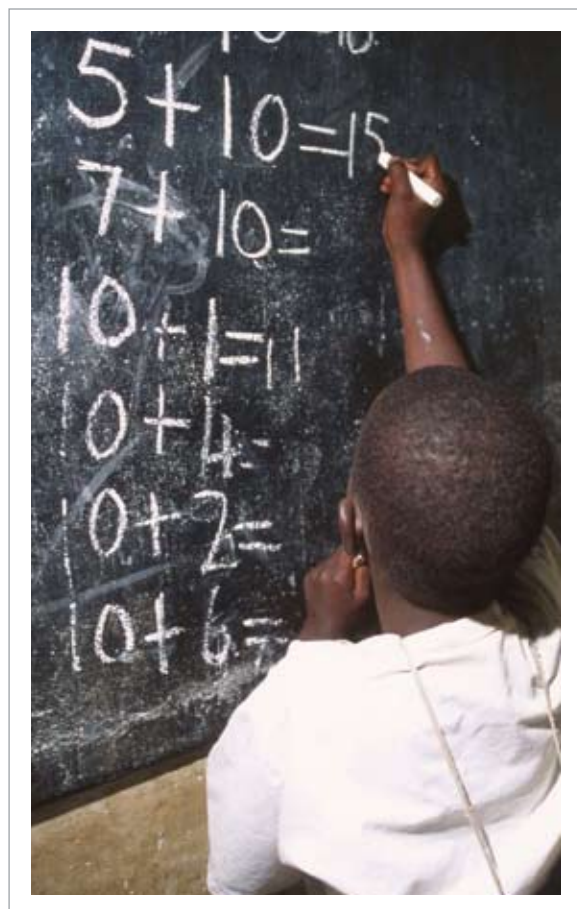
With Ireland's support, Tanzania has made major strides towards universal primary education. Net primary school enrolment rates of children aged seven to thirteen have increased dramatically from 50% in the late 1990s to around 95% in 2005.

With Ireland's support, the Government of Mozambique and the Clinton Foundation are currently providing anti-retroviral treatment to more than 20,000 people suffering from HIV/AIDS.

With Ireland's support, a new welfare system has been put in place in Ethiopia which keeps hunger at bay for six million of the poorest people in that country each year.

Every day, Irish Aid is improving and saving lives.

With Ireland's support, Tanzania has made major strides towards universal primary education. Net primary school enrolment rates have increased dramatically from 50% in the late 1990s to around 95% in 2005.



*Pupil in Tanzania's Mbwade Primary School.  
The school and teachers' houses were constructed with Irish Aid support.*



### An Increasingly Interconnected World

The fortunes of all peoples and states are increasingly bound together through the process of globalisation.

Security, development and human rights are mutually reinforcing: advances in one area require and reinforce progress in the others. Threats to security and threats to development do not respect national borders. Supporting development, security and the realisation of rights for people in developing countries ultimately has global benefits, including in Ireland.

Our efforts to help create a more prosperous and equitable world will also help bring about a safer and more stable world.

### The Case for Aid

While the promotion of a more secure world must be a goal of Ireland's foreign policy, the case for aid is not simply a practical one, it is a moral one.

First and foremost, we give aid because it is right that we help those in greatest need.

We are bound together by more than globalisation. We are bound together by a shared humanity. The fate of others is a matter of concern to us.

From this shared humanity comes a responsibility to those in great need beyond the borders of our own state.

For some, political and strategic motives may influence decisions on the allocation of development assistance. That is not the case for Ireland. For Ireland, the provision of assistance and our cooperation with developing countries are a reflection of our responsibility to others and of our vision of a fair global society.



*South Africa 2004.*

With the abolition of apartheid in 1994, Irish Aid increased its assistance to South Africa, providing over €50 million since 2000 to support the country's transition to democracy.

In adopting and publishing this White Paper, we are underlining that development cooperation policy is an integral part of Ireland's foreign policy and of Government policy as a whole.

## Why a White Paper?

This is Ireland's first ever White Paper devoted to development cooperation policy.

In adopting and publishing this White Paper, we are underlining that development cooperation policy is an integral part of Ireland's foreign policy and of Government policy as a whole.

The White Paper combines the best practice that has given Ireland a first-rate aid programme with the ideas of experts and of the public, which were gathered through a wide-ranging consultation process.

The White Paper will provide a framework for expenditure into the future and provide a clear benchmark against which our partners in Ireland and internationally can measure our performance. It has been prepared at a time of enormous increases in aid spending by Ireland and by donors worldwide.

It is timely to reflect on achievements to date, lessons learned and to plan for the future.

In looking to the future of the aid programme, it is important to remember that we are not starting with a blank slate. The quality of the Irish Aid programme is recognised internationally by other donors and by non-governmental organisations. The challenge is to maintain and build on that quality as the programme expands.

The resources now available mean that the Government can do more and can respond to the clear wish of Irish people that Ireland be a leader and an innovator in international development, both in terms of our own official programme and in terms of influencing the international development agenda.

Irish Aid has been independently evaluated as among the most effective aid programmes in the world. The expansion of the programme presents opportunities for Ireland to do more, but it is essential that quality is maintained.

A high-quality aid programme strengthens Ireland's voice in the world and is an expression of our own values.

A high-quality aid programme is demanded, and deserved, by the Irish public.


A high-quality aid programme can make a real difference to the world's most marginalised, poor and vulnerable people.

## The Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals will guide Ireland's development cooperation policy.

A high-quality aid programme strengthens Ireland's voice in the world and is an expression of our own values.

The Goals	Targets for 2015 (unless otherwise stated)
 <p>1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halve the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day</li> <li>• Halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger</li> </ul>
<p>2 Achieve universal primary education</p>	<p>Ensure that all boys and girls complete primary school</p>
<p>3 Promote gender equality and empower women</p>	<p>Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015</p>
<p>4 Reduce child mortality</p>	<p>Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five</p>
<p>5 Improve maternal health</p>	<p>Reduce by three-quarters the number of women dying in childbirth</p>
<p>6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</p>	<p>Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases</p>

The Goals	Targets for 2015 (unless otherwise stated)
 <p>7 Ensure environmental sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources</li> <li>• Halve the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation</li> <li>• By 2020, achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers</li> </ul>
<p>8 Develop a global partnership for development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop further an open trading and financial system that includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction – nationally and internationally</li> <li>• Address the least developed countries' special needs, and the special needs of landlocked and small island developing states</li> <li>• Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems</li> <li>• Develop decent and productive work for youth</li> <li>• In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries</li> <li>• In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies – especially information and communications technologies</li> </ul>



## Ireland's Vision for Development

Ireland's approach to development reflects our commitment to international justice and fairness and mirrors the ideals and hopes of the Irish people.

Irish Aid will be there, on behalf of the Irish people, as we work to heal wounds of poverty and injustice in a world divided in two parts: those who have and those who want only a fair chance for a fair life.

## Ireland's Vision for Development

Poverty reduction, to reduce vulnerability and increase opportunity, is the overarching objective of Irish Aid.

People everywhere have the same basic needs. At the most fundamental level, people need sufficient food to eat and enough clean water to drink. They need to feel safe and to be safe.

As in Ireland, people everywhere wish to provide for their families and children and to have access to education and health services. They want to live with dignity and to contribute to shaping their own futures.

Development cooperation can help make this possible.

There is no one cause of poverty and there is no one path to poverty reduction. The challenges presented by poverty and the responses to those challenges are complex and interrelated. For example, some of the best prevention interventions for HIV lie in the education of girls and the performance of children in school is greatly increased by better nutrition. Effective development cooperation requires a broad approach and sustained progress across a range of areas.

We recognise that complexity, within the Irish Aid programme and in our cooperation with others: donors, NGOs and our partner governments.

Developing countries must lead their own development. The most important actors in development are the individuals, communities and countries we are trying to assist. As a donor, ours is a supporting and facilitating role, but a no less important one.

### **The Millennium Development Goals**

To provide a focus for global aid efforts, world leaders from developed and developing countries adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000. The Goals are an agreed set of clear and measurable targets to be achieved by 2015, through concerted international action.

The Millennium Development Goals are the roadmap for international development cooperation up to 2015 and they continue to inform Ireland's approach to development.

The Goals are not a mystery. They are timebound, measurable targets against which the success of international development cooperation efforts can be measured.

### **Africa**

Africa will remain the principal geographic focus for Irish Aid.

Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals has been slowest in Africa. Global economic progress in the last 50 years has left Africa trailing. Sub-Saharan Africa currently attracts less than 3% of global foreign direct investment. Two-thirds of the world's poorest countries are in Africa. This economic marginalisation impacts upon Africa's political weight in the world. Africa is, in some respects, adrift.

**People everywhere have the same basic needs. At the most fundamental level, people need sufficient food to eat and enough clean water to drink. They need to feel safe and to be safe.**

There are many reasons for the problems facing Africa; the specific reasons vary from country to country and from region to region. The distorting and corrupting legacies of colonialism and the Cold War must be understood as important factors. Africa has also suffered from poor leadership, conflict and weak governance leading to maladministration.

This is not to ignore what Africa has to offer and the good news coming out of Africa. Africa is vast and diverse. African people and African governments are taking more control of their future but they continue to need our solidarity and our assistance.

### **Focus of the Programme**

If we are to be effective, our efforts must be focussed. Recognising that we are part of a wider international effort, we know that our impact will be greater if we work well in a limited number of areas and coordinate and cooperate with others.

Ireland will continue to focus primarily on basic needs, including in the key social sectors of health and education, and in the fight against HIV/AIDS, which at once exacerbates and is exacerbated by poverty. Investment in these sectors is an investment in people, allowing them to contribute more fully to the development of their societies. People are at the heart of the programme.

We will also focus on the productive sectors, such as rural development, to give people the means to lift themselves from severe poverty.

The role of the private sector is demanding increased donor attention. We already provide support for the private sector and for livelihoods in our programme countries and this will increase. In this context, we will look at funding productive infrastructure projects, where appropriate and sustainable, with the aim of facilitating economic growth.

While our focus is on long-term development, enhancing our capacity and the capacity of our partners to respond to humanitarian disasters is an important feature of the programme.

### **Governance and Corruption**

There is an increasing focus on governance in international development cooperation. This focus is shared by developing countries, donors and civil society organisations, and it is a recognition that without good governance development cannot be sustained.

Over the last 30 years, the political systems in many of the world's poorest countries have failed to deliver the conditions necessary for economic and social development. Many governments simply do not have the resources or the capacity to meet the needs of their citizens.





*Meeting in Mabote, Mozambique 2005.*

Ireland established a bilateral aid partnership with Mozambique in 1996. It is now Ireland's largest country programme with a budget of €43 million for 2006.

We will help build government systems. We will build capacity to plan, deliver, manage and monitor services. We will support efforts to combat corruption and help make governments more responsive to the needs of their citizens. Working with civil society, we will help citizens articulate those needs.

While there is a responsibility on wealthy countries, such as Ireland, to provide assistance, our partner countries have a responsibility to use that assistance well and to combine it with other resources for the public good. Our partner countries must work to combat corruption and ensure effective and responsible government.

Effective cooperation for development must be a compact between donor and recipient countries, and there are responsibilities on both sides.

An increased emphasis on governance is required by our responsibility to the taxpayers who fund the programme and our responsibility to those people we are trying to assist.

## Global Governance

While we, rightly, demand good governance in our partner countries, we must contribute to good governance at a global level.

Every country has the right and the responsibility to pursue its own national interest. However, there is also a collective international good which is the responsibility of all countries, big and small, rich and poor.

The poorest people in the world's poorest countries are those least able to adapt to the impacts of globalisation, increased trade liberalisation and climate change and those who gain least from global progress.

Every country has the right and the responsibility to pursue its own national interest. However, there is also a collective international good which is the responsibility of all countries, big and small, rich and poor.

Increasing globalisation presents enormous opportunities. In our actions in international fora, we will help ensure that globalisation brings benefits to those in greatest need.

Effective international cooperation is crucial to tackling global challenges such as conflict, terrorism, environmental degradation, human trafficking, the trade in illicit drugs and the spread of diseases. These challenges are beyond the capacity of any one nation to solve.

Ireland will be an advocate for collective and coherent solutions to the most pressing global problems of poverty, instability and conflict. We will provide substantial financial support for multilateral institutions leading global responses to global challenges. We will continue to contribute to UN peace-support and peace-building efforts, particularly in Africa.

### The Changing Face of Development

Development cooperation is not static. It is constantly evolving, both as a result of lessons learned and in response to new challenges.

For example, there is increasing interest in the role of the private sector in development, including from the private sector here in Ireland. We will continue to support efforts to strengthen private sector involvement.

New actors are also becoming involved in development cooperation. For example, we are witnessing the advent of new partnerships between governments, the private sector and affected communities in response to the threat of HIV/AIDS and other diseases. We are supporting such new partnerships.

As international development cooperation evolves, so too will the role and work of Irish Aid, in line with the principles set down in this White Paper.



*Wedding procession at Lumasi refugee camp in Tanzania for those displaced by the Rwandan genocide of 1994. Irish Aid supported NGOs working with the displaced and facilitating their return home.*



## The Challenge

Ireland is committed to an integrated approach to development.

We will support parallel, coordinated and sustained improvements across a range of areas to allow communities and people to better protect themselves, to understand and respond more quickly to threats and difficulties and to enjoy enhanced social and economic wellbeing.

# Preventing and Responding to Humanitarian Emergencies

## Humanitarian Relief

### Context

Each year natural disasters and complex emergencies bring suffering to millions of people across the world. Hurricanes, earthquakes and other natural disasters alone claim an average of 60,000 lives each year. In 2005, on account of both the Asian tsunami and the earthquake in Pakistan, this figure rose to over 350,000.

At a time of great global wealth, when rapid technological advances demonstrate mankind's capacity to innovate and solve previously insoluble problems, people are demanding better global responses to humanitarian emergencies.

The underlying causes of humanitarian emergencies and the capacity of communities to recover after such events are closely related to overall levels of development. It is in the least developed countries that humanitarian emergencies have the greatest impact and these are the countries that are least able to respond and recover.

Poor people are not unaware of the risks they face, living along seismic fault lines, in semi-arid desert, on flood plains or close to conflict. These people are acutely aware of the risks they face every day, but they are trapped by poverty into living with these risks.

### Ireland's Response

The primary goals of humanitarian action are to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and in the aftermath of humanitarian crises. We will strive to uphold the application of international humanitarian law and we are committed to the internationally-recognised humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. We are also committed to the principles and practice of

Good Humanitarian Donorship, which set the highest standards for the delivery of humanitarian relief.

### Partners

In responding to emergencies, we will work with a variety of partners that can respond effectively to people's real needs on the ground. These partners will include governments and local organisations in the countries affected, Irish and international NGOs, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, and multilateral organisations such as the UN.

*We will provide flexible and timely funding to local, Irish and international organisations that demonstrate a clear capacity to provide effective humanitarian assistance in a manner that is responsive to local needs and adheres to humanitarian principles.*

We will ensure good practice, lesson-learning and value for money through rigorous evaluation.

### Coordination

Adequate coordination of the response to emergencies is central to avoiding duplication and making humanitarian action effective. At the global level, the UN is uniquely placed to provide this leadership in coordination.

In any country the government is primarily responsible for the wellbeing and protection of its own citizens. With the exception of complex humanitarian emergencies caused by conflict within fragile or failed states, the government of the affected country must be centrally involved in all decisions relating to the provision and coordination of humanitarian relief to its own citizens.

*We will support the unique coordinating role of the UN and, where possible, the government of the affected country.*

The primary goals of humanitarian action are to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and in the aftermath of humanitarian crises.

### Rapid Response Initiative

In recent years, Ireland has been scaling up its response to humanitarian emergencies. Traditionally, our response to such emergencies has been through the funding of, among others, UN agencies, non-governmental humanitarian organisations and the Red Cross family.

With the increasing aid budget, there is now an opportunity to create our own specific operational capabilities: the Rapid Response Initiative (RRI).

The RRI will include:

- The pre-positioning and transportation of humanitarian supplies to disaster areas
- The availability of a roster of highly-skilled individuals, from the public and private sectors, including from the Defence Forces, for deployment at short notice to emergency situations
- Enhancing the emergency capacities of international humanitarian response agencies and mechanisms

The RRI meets a number of needs. It is a response to the UN's own identification of gaps in its emergency response capacities. It is a response to the importance the Irish public places on our ability to respond rapidly and effectively to emergencies and disasters. It creates a mechanism to deepen our skills and experience when it comes to responding effectively to humanitarian crises.

The RRI enhances our ability to help those in most need of help.

It will harness the skills, experience and resources at our disposal as a nation to respond to humanitarian emergencies. This distinctively Irish mechanism, which increases the effectiveness of our humanitarian assistance, is an important new dimension of our work.

### The Role of the Defence Forces

We are proud of the role played by the Defence Forces. Members of the Irish Defence Forces played a key role in the provision of logistics support in the aftermath of the 2005 tsunami in Sri Lanka. Through the Irish battalion in Liberia and the Irish presence in Kosovo, Irish Aid is supporting micro-projects to assist some of the most vulnerable in these post-conflict societies.

The provision of such assistance is a regular and significant element of Ireland's participation in peace support operations.

We are fully conscious of the need to utilise the Defence Forces in a way which respects the principles and practice of good and appropriate humanitarian assistance.

### Food Aid

Food aid is a key part of the international community's response to humanitarian emergencies. In 2005, more than 70 million people received food aid in international emergency operations.

While the Department of Foreign Affairs has primary responsibility for the Government's overall international humanitarian response, the Department of Agriculture has a key role in national food aid policy through the provision of untied cash donations to the UN World Food Programme.

As part of our broader approach to humanitarian and recovery relief, and as a signatory to the Food Aid Convention, we are committed to funding the provision of food aid in food crises and post-emergency recovery programmes.

*We are committed to the provision of untied cash donations for the purchase of emergency food aid and we are opposed to the use of food aid as a tool for domestic agricultural support or for the dumping of agricultural surpluses.*

These practices have a negative affect on local markets and can significantly affect the livelihood of local farmers in developing countries.

## Linking Relief and Development

### Context

Linking relief and development is based on the understanding that effective development assistance reduces the need for emergency relief and that effective emergency relief can help build the foundations for sustainable development and reduce vulnerability.

Development gains can be eroded or lost due to recurring emergencies. For example recurring conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan has set back generations of development gains.

Poverty makes people more vulnerable to crises and disasters. While only 11% of those exposed to hazards worldwide live in developing countries, they account for 53% of disaster-related deaths.

The recovery and rebuilding process after any large-scale or protracted humanitarian disaster poses enormous challenges for developing countries. In addition, there may be real risks of regression.

The specific recovery challenges will vary from one country to another; but humanitarian disasters, regardless of their cause, can often dramatically alter the long-term development challenge. Access to education and employment is impeded or prevented, infrastructure is destroyed, large numbers of people can become displaced and the rule of law and adherence to human rights can disintegrate.

It is estimated that every €7 spent on responding to a natural disaster could be offset by €1 spent on preparedness and early warning.

Often the institutions required to lead recovery and reconstruction are themselves destroyed or severely weakened, and it is not possible for countries to simply resume business as usual once a humanitarian disaster ends.

The international community, through a range of different supports, can provide much-needed assistance to help countries prepare for and mitigate the impacts of crises and recover following disasters.

### Ireland's Response

Central to all humanitarian crises is vulnerability. The primary cause of vulnerability in developing countries is poverty, and all of our efforts are focussed on the overarching goal of poverty reduction. In order to maximise effectiveness and increase resilience to crises, governments and development agencies must address the linkages between poverty and vulnerability.

Whether a natural disaster or a conflict situation, it is more cost effective to prevent and prepare for a crisis than to provide emergency relief once it happens. It is estimated that every €7 spent on responding to a natural disaster could be offset by €1 spent on preparedness and early warning.

### Disaster Risk Reduction & Preparation

Preparation and planning for crises are central to limiting their human impact.

*We will support developing countries in implementing measures to reduce the risk and minimise the human cost of humanitarian disasters.*

These measures will include early warning systems, training in disaster management and stockpiling of supplies, together with more long-term measures such as social-protection mechanisms.

Humanitarian organisations must also enhance their preparedness. We have supported the establishment of the Central Emergency Response Fund to enable UN agencies to respond more quickly and better coordinate humanitarian relief, and we will continue to do so.

*We will support initiatives to improve the capacity of developing countries, Irish and international NGOs, and international and multilateral organisations to prepare for and respond to humanitarian crises.*

Disasters can fundamentally change the nature of challenges facing developing countries. In countries where Ireland has well-established longer-term development programmes, we will ensure that our development programmes have the flexibility to incorporate strategies for prevention and mitigation of disasters. In practice, this assistance will be provided in parallel with longer-term development initiatives.

*We are committed to linking disaster-prevention, mitigation and longer-term development.*

### Recovery and Transition

Post-crisis situations, while difficult, can offer a chance for a new beginning. Real opportunities exist to build better and new institutions, improved infrastructure and a stronger civil society, all of which can help forge more equitable and durable governments and societies.



Given the heavy toll that large scale or protracted humanitarian crises place on people, institutions and infrastructure, it can take time and effort to build accountable and durable systems of government that can deliver services and lift people out of poverty. We recognise that recovery after large scale or protracted humanitarian crises requires significant sustained engagement and financial commitment.

It makes sense to build on the experience, relationships and unique knowledge gained through the provision of humanitarian relief when designing medium-term recovery programmes in a region or country. Without proper planning and coordination, recovery programmes can be more destructive than helpful.

Reconstruction and recovery efforts should be led by the government or authority in question and coordinated in conjunction with local civil society and international humanitarian organisations.

If successful transition is to be achieved and owned by developing country governments, weakened institutions will require significant support from international donors. Similarly, international institutions, particularly in the area of transitional justice, such as 'Special Courts', will need significant donor support if they are to carry out their agreed mandate.

*We are committed to supporting the recovery and successful transition of countries emerging from conflict or significant and protracted humanitarian crises.*

In the aftermath of protracted humanitarian emergencies, the capacity of national or local government to deliver basic services, in areas such as education, health and basic sanitation, can be severely weakened.

*We are committed to supporting newly-created and, where appropriate, existing local, national and international organisations and institutions that have primary responsibility for the delivery of basic social services, equitable economic growth and the justice system in countries emerging from humanitarian emergencies.*

We will help build or rebuild the institutions of state and the capacities of communities to build sustainable livelihoods.

Many factors act as an impediment to developing sustainable livelihoods after humanitarian emergencies, but the sooner people can get back to work, the sooner normal life and recovery can begin.

*We will work with partners to help assist in the rebuilding of crucial infrastructure and the provision of appropriate training to help build and rebuild livelihoods.*

# Building Better Government and Combating Corruption

## Context

Governance relates to the exercise of power in the management of a country's economic and social resources. It is the political and institutional capacity of a country to elect accountable government, create and uphold laws, promote and protect people's rights, meet people's needs and effectively and fairly manage the resources of the state.

Governance also relates to the capacity to finance, plan and deliver key social services. In the health service in Malawi for example, there is only one GP doctor for every 100,000 people; while in Ireland there are 237. In Niger, only 16% of births are attended by skilled health personnel; in Ireland it is 100%. These countries have neither the institutional capacity to train enough healthcare professionals and doctors nor the systems to adequately determine the true health needs of their populations. They need assistance to build that capacity.

Poor governance is a problem in many developing countries, including some of Ireland's programme countries.

The problems of governance in developing countries must be understood in context. In Europe it has taken time to build societies with political systems that are accountable and effectively meet the needs of most of their citizens. Many of the poorest states in Africa achieved independence little more than 30 years ago and emerged in difficult circumstances. The evolution of fully accountable and responsive government in these countries will take time and is primarily the responsibility of the countries themselves.

Corruption is the abuse of power, often public power, for private gain. Political corruption thrives in countries where systems are weak. Weak governance does not always mean that there are high levels of corruption but it does make it more possible.

Corruption exists in both the public and private sectors, however; in the poorest developing countries where the state controls access to most of the country's resources, corruption tends to be most obvious in the public and political sphere. Public procurement is particularly open to corruption.

Weak governance and corruption greatly hinder development and reduce the effectiveness and impact of development assistance. They erode local and international confidence in government and in state institutions. The harmful effects of corruption are especially severe on the poorest who are the most reliant on public services and the least capable of paying the extra costs associated with bribery and fraud.

Increasingly, improving governance and tackling corruption are central features of international donor approaches to development assistance.

Without good governance, long-term sustainable development is not possible.

## Ireland's Response

Improving governance, reducing corruption and building democracy and accountability must be integral parts of Irish Aid's work.

## Improving governance, reducing corruption and building democracy and accountability must be integral parts of Irish Aid's work.

Ownership of efforts to combat corruption must rest with the governments and people of the countries concerned. Donors can and must support their efforts, if we are to demand and see progress.

### Democracy and the Rule of Law

Accountability is at the centre of improved governance. Governments must be accountable to their own citizens. In free and fair elections the choices made by governments are judged by their own people.

*Democracy is the best framework for equitable and sustainable development and we are committed to supporting transparent and accountable democratic systems in developing countries.*

Donors must assist poorer countries develop robust and independent legal and judicial systems and oversight institutions. Our priorities include support for free and fair democratic elections (e.g. through the provision of election monitors and support for electoral commissions), support for parliaments and parliamentary reform and empowered and independent regulatory offices, such as ombudsman's offices.

*We will support state institutions and independent organisations that promote governance, democracy and human rights in developing countries, particularly in our programme countries.*

### United Nations Convention Against Corruption

Ireland is a signatory to the UN Convention Against Corruption. The Convention has the potential to make a significant contribution to the international fight against corruption. Work is underway to identify and

put in place any domestic legislative requirements that may be required to allow Ireland to ratify the Convention.

### Working with African Institutions

At the regional level, we will support the emerging pan-African political institutions, such as the African Union (AU) and the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), which collectively seek to improve the accountability and effectiveness of national governments and reduce levels of corruption.

An important initiative in this regard is the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). The APRM is a voluntary mechanism to promote better economic and political governance through reviews of the policies and actions of governments by other African governments. An important aspect of the review process will be how to ensure that follow-up reforms triggered by the APRM process are implemented.

*We will engage with the African Union about how best to support the Peer Review Mechanism and how to support the implementation of recommendations at the national level.*

### Public Sector Reform & Economic Governance

Central to the role of government and the pursuit of good governance are the provision of services and equitable and effective economic management.

Weak institutional and management capacity in the public sector significantly impact on the provision of services in developing countries. Improved service delivery in core areas such as health and education will not be achieved without significant organisational investment and the political will to implement reform.

**An empowered local civil society can, over time, be the most effective driver of political reform and accountability in developing democracies.**

The regulatory environment created by developing country governments is critical if the private sector is to grow and jobs are to be created. If enterprise is to flourish, it requires predictability, stability and a legal and administrative framework that is fair and is enforced. To be effective in combating poverty, pro-poor economic activity must be encouraged. This will only happen if the poor are involved in economic activity as producers, processors and employers.

*We will support public sector reform initiatives that deliver effective, equitable and accountable services, as well as sound economic management in our programme countries.*

While economic growth is crucial for development, the distribution of the benefits is central to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Governments have a crucial role in deciding where economic efforts are focussed and how to distribute the benefits of national resources and wealth.

### **Civil Society and Government**

Citizens, advocacy groups, civil society organisations, human rights groups, private sector organisations and the media all have key roles to play in articulating the needs of citizens and in holding governments to account.

An empowered local civil society can, over time, be the most effective driver of political reform and accountability in developing democracies.

As we know from Ireland's own development experience, strong, sustained and equitable economic growth requires stable and accountable government, substantial sustained investment in education and health, a dynamic and innovative private sector and a strong and vocal civil society. The social partnership

model in Ireland has attracted considerable international interest among developing countries as a vehicle for more inclusive policy development and is something we could share.

*We will support the development of a diverse and independent civil society and encourage governments in our programme countries to facilitate greater civil society participation and partnership in development planning. Where appropriate, we will look at supporting efforts to share the experience of Ireland's economic success and our social partnership process.*

### **Protecting taxpayers' money**

We will safeguard Irish taxpayers' money. We will take steps to ensure that resources are not misappropriated, that risks are minimised and ensure that funds channelled through the state in developing countries, effectively improve state capacity to benefit the poorest.

Government spending on development assistance is currently subject to extensive oversight by the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Oireachtas Public Accounts Committee, the Oireachtas Foreign Affairs Committee, the Advisory Board to Irish Aid, the Department of Foreign Affairs Audit Committee and the Department's Evaluation and Audit Unit.

Continued investment in personnel and in management systems is also essential to the planning, implementation and oversight of the Irish Aid programme.

In our programme countries, spending is subject to audit by independent firms. We also engage in joint evaluations of expenditure with other donor countries. The staff of our missions in our programme countries include accountants and auditors.



Election materials stockpiled in the warehouse of the Independent Electoral Commission, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) 2006. This year, the DRC held its first multi-party elections since independence in 1960. Irish Aid provided €1.3 million to assist the electoral process.

As the aid budget increases over the coming years, so too will the need for rigorous oversight and evaluation. We are committed to further enhancing the audit and evaluation function of the Department of Foreign Affairs and other mechanisms to ensure public funds continue to be safeguarded and effectively spent on alleviating poverty and sustainable development.

*We will ensure that robust oversight systems are in place to protect and account for the spending of Irish Exchequer funds in developing countries.*

We are acutely aware of the need to ensure that public funds are not wasted or lost through corruption.

*We will establish a new Governance Unit within Irish Aid, which will be the focal point for all of our activities in this area so that governance and corruption issues are taken into account across the work of the programme.*

We must be satisfied that the administrative and financial systems of our partners, including partner governments, are adequate to protect Irish taxpayers' money and we will work with partners to strengthen them.

If we are not satisfied with these systems, we will look at other ways of providing assistance. In so doing, we are taking care to protect and assist those in greatest need, as well as the interests of Irish taxpayers.

# Investing in People – The Social Sectors

## Education

### Context

The right to education is a fundamental human right and is essential and indispensable to the understanding of all other human rights.

Education is central to development. It is the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalised adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty, better understand and improve their health, create sustainable livelihoods and obtain the means to participate more fully in their communities.

Raising the level of education can have a significant impact on governance and on economic growth. Education creates more discerning voters and more effective workers. Increased levels of education allow for a more complete understanding of and participation in society. Investment in education is a crucial investment in the future.

In the last decade, global efforts to ensure that all children complete primary school have greatly increased. The central place of education within the Millennium Development Goals reflects this commitment. Particular emphasis has been placed on achieving equality of access and opportunity for both girls and boys.

While the number of out-of-school children is declining, 100 million children still do not receive a primary education. If current trends continue, the world net enrolment ratio will reach only 87% in 2015, failing to meet the MDG target. A particular effort is needed in Sub-Saharan Africa, which will have to find 88 million additional primary school places.

Completion of primary schooling and the quality of that schooling remain major concerns.

Delayed enrolment is widespread, completion rates through to the end of the primary cycle are low and grade repetition is frequent. In addition, the achievement of higher enrolment rates in primary education will be devalued if the quality of education is poor; if teachers are not properly trained, if the curriculum is not developed and if the students are not regularly tested for progress.

### Ireland's Response

Education has been central to Ireland's own economic and social development. We know from our own experience that key policy decisions and sustained investment in education take time to translate into economic and social progress. Education has been one of the key drivers of our economic success and we are well placed to be an advocate of sustained and planned investment in education.

### Universal Primary Education

We will work with international donors, developing country governments and international organisations to help increase collective efforts to achieve the goal of universal primary education by 2015.

While access remains a challenge, efforts to achieve primary education for all will lose their value without a strong focus on quality. The issue is not alone how many children get into or even complete basic education, but the level of core functional life skills (including literacy and numeracy), knowledge and attitudes that they have acquired.

While achieving the targets for primary education will remain our priority, success in this area is creating a growing demand for increased access and better

Education is the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalised adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty.

quality secondary education. In the coming decades, investment in secondary, tertiary and lifelong learning will be critical, if the gains made in primary schooling are to be built upon.

*The principal focus of our support for education in developing countries, particularly our programme countries, will remain the provision of high-quality primary education, situated within comprehensive national education plans.*

### Public Education Systems

At all levels of the education system in developing countries, from central government through to regions, districts, sub-districts and school-level, there is a shortage of capacity to plan, manage and implement the financing, monitoring, and evaluation of education systems. This is reflected in poorly-trained and poorly-paid teachers, low teacher morale and absenteeism, inadequate facilities, limited availability and use of new technologies and little say for parents and communities in the running of schools.

The strengthening of public education systems at all levels is critical. While focusing principally on primary level, it must extend to the whole education system and aim to reflect the economic and social needs of the communities and countries in question.

*We are committed to strengthening the capacity of national, district and local authorities to plan, implement and monitor public education, particularly in our programme countries.*

Sustainable improvements in educational systems will require long-term commitment of resources by national governments and by the international community. We are committed to providing predictable, long-term funding for education.

### Equality in Education

In developing countries the majority of those currently excluded from access to education are girls. In addition to being a right, increasing the education level of girls has many positive social and economic impacts. Education, particularly of girls, is one of the most important weapons against the spread of HIV/AIDS. It is a social vaccine that will help change behaviour and alert young people to the risks of the pandemic. Educating girls provides additional benefits in terms of improved infant and child survival rates and increased status and participation in society by females.

*We are committed to supporting initiatives in developing countries that will increase access to education for girls and increase the participation of women at local, district and national level education planning.*

### Fellowships

For much of the history of the Irish Aid programme, we have provided scholarships to enable postgraduate students from developing countries to complete their training.

The aim of this Fellowship Training Programme is to help address specific capacity deficits in our programme countries. This will continue to be the core aim of the programme. Fellowship recipients are committed, on completion of their training, to returning home to put their acquired skills into practice for the benefit of the wider community.

*We will conduct a major review of the Fellowship Programme, to ensure that it serves its purpose as a capacity-building tool for our partner countries.*



## Health

### Context

The entitlement of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health is a fundamental human right.

While the state of health globally is improving, there is still an unacceptable level of preventable illness and death. In 2005, more than 12 million children died before their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday and 500,000 women died from complications of pregnancy and childbirth.

The health of the population of any country is determined by much more than the provision of healthcare services. Issues such as nutrition, sanitation, access to clean water, education and social and cultural factors all affect public health. Significant and lasting improvements in the health of a population can only be achieved in the context of a broad-based approach to tackling underdevelopment and poverty.

In recent years, renewed efforts have been made by developing country governments, donors and multilateral organisations to rapidly scale up healthcare provision, particularly in response to specific problems such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

Strong responses to these threats are, of course, needed. However, without considerable reform of and investment in health systems, many of the high-profile interventions against specific diseases could be unsustainable, or at worst do more harm than good. For example, HIV anti-retroviral treatment is a complex process requiring a range of back-up services to maintain treatment for life. If there are not adequate drugs, health personnel and laboratory

facilities, treatment will end in failure and could lead to drug-resistant strains of the virus.

To bring about real change in the health of the majority of people in the poorest countries, governments and donors must view spending on health not as a cost but as an investment in the future and a critical part of their overall approach to poverty reduction.

As with many sectors, health both contributes to and is determined by underdevelopment and poverty. It makes sense that for children to perform better in school they must be well fed and free from disease and that for agricultural yields to increase farm workers must be healthy.

Ultimately, improved health is critical if the poorest countries are to develop economically and socially.

### Health and Life Expectancy

A baby girl born in Ireland today can expect to live for about 80 years. A girl born at the same moment in Sierra Leone can expect to live for about 40 years.

The girl in Sierra Leone has a low chance of receiving immunisations and a high probability of being underweight throughout childhood. She will probably marry in adolescence and go on to give birth to six or more children without the assistance of a trained birth attendant. One or more of her babies will die in infancy, and she herself will be at high risk of death in childbirth. If she falls ill, she can expect, on average, medicines worth about US\$ 3 per year. If she survives middle age, she will develop chronic diseases but, without access to adequate treatment, she will die prematurely.



## Ireland's Response

We are committed to developing programmes that address the key causes of illness and poor health among the poorest and most vulnerable people and to strengthening health systems in the poorest countries.

Our needs-based programmes will include increased support for improved access to clean water, basic sanitation, nutrition, food production, more effective safety net programmes and holistic approaches to disease prevention.

Some specific causes of ill health can only be addressed on an international and regional basis. Communicable diseases do not respect borders. We are committed to supporting multilateral organisations and regional institutions in response to specific threats to health through regional approaches.

Multilateral organisations and global health partnerships provide vital resources and expertise to country health programmes. We will support these organisations to deliver their assistance as effectively as possible.

### Healthcare Systems

Our commitment to combating communicable diseases will be complemented by a strong focus on and investment in healthcare institutions and systems.

In many developing countries healthcare is provided by a wide range of different organisations divided broadly between government (national, regional and local), the private sector and NGOs. It is critical that governments have the capacity to regulate and coordinate all healthcare provision.

We will provide predictable long-term funding to national healthcare systems in developing countries through support in a range of areas including human and material resources, training, health information systems, regulation and policy development, budgeting and planning.

We will also assist non-state healthcare provision through support for non-governmental service provision aligned with national healthcare priorities. This support is essential where national systems are very weak.

*As part of our overall approach to poverty reduction, we are committed to investing in and assisting the building and reform of public healthcare institutions and systems in each of our programme countries.*

### Maternal and Reproductive Health

Every minute a woman dies in childbirth in developing countries. For every woman who dies, about 20 more are injured or disabled.

Women bear a disproportionate share of the burden of ill-health. Healthcare planning has too often neglected this reality. This is evident in lack of access to information and education, greater exposure to health risks and poor access to basic healthcare, including reproductive health services. In addition to the specific needs of women, the health of women has a very significant impact on the health and welfare of young children and the family as a whole.

Addressing women's health needs, particularly in the areas of basic healthcare and maternal and reproductive health must lie at the heart of an effective overall response to improving health in developing countries.

In 2005, more than 12 million children died before their fifth birthday.

*We are committed to supporting the specific health needs of women within our overall approach to health in developing countries.*

### Research

Research is critical to developing better public health systems, better ways of combating disease and to determining key causes of ill health. We are committed to increasing funding to health research that addresses the specific health needs of the poorest and most

vulnerable people in developing countries. We will also ensure that the benefits of this research are applied across all our efforts to improve global health.

*We will increase funding to health research by Irish, international and developing country research institutions focussed on the specific health needs of the poorest countries.*

## HIV/AIDS and Poverty

The HIV/AIDS crisis has far-reaching implications for poverty reduction and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. It is a disease of poverty.

Those who are most disadvantaged through lack of access to social services, education, healthcare, nutrition and income and employment opportunities are most vulnerable, in particular women, children and the elderly.

HIV/AIDS also exacerbates poverty. It erodes the capacity of many families to be productive and earn an income. Killing adults in the prime of their lives, AIDS is depriving families, communities and countries of their young and most productive people. It creates extraordinary care needs and puts pressure on household expenditure for medical and other related costs.

Women are particularly badly affected. They outnumber men living with the disease. Women and girls make up almost 57% of adults living with HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa and 11 million children in this region have lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS. With traditional support systems in these countries already under severe pressure, many extended families are overwhelmed and in greater need of external support.

We have prioritised the fight against HIV as fundamental to poverty and vulnerability reduction.

We are giving greater prominence to HIV/AIDS throughout the organisation, including the re-orientation of the programme and staff to be responsive to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

# HIV/AIDS and Communicable Diseases

## Context

Over the past 25 years, HIV/AIDS has emerged as a new and massive threat to human development in Africa.

Globally, more than 40 million people are currently infected with HIV. Two thirds of these are living in Sub-Saharan Africa. Over three million people died from AIDS in 2005, and 2.4 million of these lived in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Lesotho, one of Ireland's programme countries, the rate of HIV prevalence among adults is close to 30%.

In addition to the enormous human cost, HIV/AIDS is devastating the productive sectors and the education systems of developing countries and overwhelming already weak health systems.

There is also a resurgence of 'old' diseases such as tuberculosis (TB) and malaria. Malaria now kills over one million people every year, more than it did three decades ago. The increase in TB, mainly as a consequence of HIV infection, accounts for two million deaths annually.

Children in the poorest countries are particularly vulnerable to disease. Many of the diseases that are no longer a threat to children in developed countries continue to be a significant threat to children in developing countries, where immunisation and vaccination levels remain incomplete and sanitation and water quality poor. More than seven million child deaths each year are caused by communicable diseases.

All of these diseases are both preventable and treatable.

HIV/AIDS has orphaned millions of children over the past decade. The worst affected region is Sub-Saharan Africa, where an estimated 12.3 million children have been orphaned by AIDS. This orphan population will increase in the next decade.

Tackling communicable diseases, especially HIV/AIDS, represents both an emergency and an enduring challenge for developing countries, particularly in Africa. Prevention is difficult. There is currently no vaccine for HIV and the nature of the primary means of transmission makes preventative interventions sensitive. Treatment and care are both complex and expensive, and wholly ineffective without sustainable systems to support provision.

Recent years have seen a significant increase in the response to tackling HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases at global, regional and national levels. While there has been considerable progress in some Sub-Saharan African countries, such as Uganda, a much greater sustained response is required if the spread of HIV is to be slowed and those living with HIV are to be treated.

## Ireland's Response

Ireland's political leadership and financial commitment to the fight against HIV/AIDS is recognised internationally. We have a strong track record in tackling global communicable diseases at international, regional and country levels. Building on earlier political and financial commitments, in 2005 the Taoiseach announced *that Ireland will spend at least €100 million per year combating HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases in developing countries.*

Tackling communicable diseases is much more than a health challenge. It is a key part of the overall development challenge.

In addition to the enormous human cost, HIV/AIDS is devastating the productive sectors and the education systems of developing countries and overwhelming already weak health systems.

We are committed to a broad-based approach to tackling communicable diseases. Our response will also take account of the far-reaching impact of communicable diseases across all aspects of society and of the economy, and help governments plan to deal with that impact.

We will continue to work towards achieving universal access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care.

### **Supporting National Responses**

Developing country governments must take account of the medium and long-term impact of communicable diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS, in their overall economic and development planning. We will assist governments in our programme countries in that planning.

Communicable diseases dramatically increase the pressure on already very weak state systems in developing countries. In our programme countries, the foundation of our response will be assisting in building institutional capacity and strengthening national systems, particularly in the health sector. Where state capacity is particularly weak, we will support prevention, treatment and care programmes by local and international civil society organisations, aligned to national responses.

### **Supporting Global and Regional Partnerships**

Global and regional HIV/AIDS and health partnerships bring together donor and recipient governments, NGOs, the UN and the private sector. These partnerships offer considerable opportunities for Irish Aid to effectively and significantly contribute to combating communicable diseases.

We will seek to ensure that global approaches to combating communicable diseases are coherent with the Millennium Development Goals, aligned with country priorities, accountable to both funding partners and beneficiaries, and address the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable (particularly women and children).

In addition, we will seek to support Irish research institutes in developing competence in Ireland to deal with global communicable diseases.

We have established a Technical Advisory Group to advise on the use of the additional resources available to combat HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases. This group draws on wide-ranging and valuable expertise and experience available in Ireland.

### **Children**

Children, particularly young children from poor families, are directly and indirectly vulnerable to communicable diseases in developing countries.

A range of factors including lack of immunisations, a shortage of treated mosquito nets, poor access to clean water, poor sanitation and nutrition, and mother-to-child HIV transmissions, directly increase the risks for children of different communicable diseases.

*We are committed to supporting integrated programmes that reduce the risk of infection and disease among children and care for those infected.*

After losing parents, children have an even greater need for care and protection. Families – whether the head of household is a widowed parent, an elderly grandparent, or a young person – represent the single most important factor in building a protective and stable environment for children who have been orphaned by AIDS.

*We are committed to increasing our support for programmes that address the needs of orphans and vulnerable children, and that assist families and communities who care for children who have lost parents. We will allocate up to 20% of the additional resources for HIV and other communicable diseases to support vulnerable children.*

### The world can successfully combat communicable diseases

In 1988, polio paralysed more than 350,000 children worldwide. In 2003, fewer than 800 children were paralysed by this disease, with polio remaining in just six countries in the world.

Since 1988, some two billion children around the world have been immunised against polio thanks to the unprecedented cooperation of more than 200 countries and 20 million volunteers, backed by an international investment of US\$ 3 billion.

It is anticipated that all countries will be free of polio by 2007.



Lichinga, Mozambique.

16% of Mozambique's adult population are HIV positive. Since 2003, through our partnership with the Clinton Foundation, over 250,000 people have received HIV counselling/testing and 83 facilities are offering services for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission.

# Hunger, Food Security and Rural Development

Everyone has the fundamental right to be free from hunger and have access to adequate, safe and nutritious food. Yet, today, over 800 million people, including 300 million children, do not get enough food to lead a healthy and active life.

Hunger can be classified into two broad types: acute and chronic.

Famines, or situations where a population experiences acute hunger resulting in starvation, contribute to approximately 8% of the global population affected by hunger each year. This is the hunger which makes the headlines.

The vast majority of those suffering from lack of food are chronically hungry: people who are persistently malnourished due to a lack of access to adequate quantities and quality of food. Chronic hunger and the resulting malnutrition stunts growth in children, affects concentration, mental awareness and performance of children at school, increases the risks of disease by weakening the immune system, and makes the effects of certain diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, far worse.

Poverty is the principal cause of chronic hunger and malnutrition. Halving the proportion of people living in hunger and extreme poverty by 2015 is the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG). Food insecurity is still prevalent worldwide, slowing progress towards the other MDGs, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa.

A key challenge for the poorest developing countries, and for the donors and development agencies working in co-operation with them, is ensuring their people are food secure through ensuring their ability to produce or to purchase sufficient food for a healthy diet.

## Food Security

### Context

At the 1996 World Food Summit, governments agreed a definition of food security: "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life".

Food insecurity can range from temporary, localised food shortages to protracted and large-scale famine. Chronic food insecurity translates into a high degree of vulnerability to famine; food security ensures reduction of that vulnerability.

### Ireland's Response

We will respond both to acute needs and to the underlying causes of hunger. Our overall aim is to contribute towards food security through a range of interventions, including rural development, agricultural research and building livelihoods. Our focus on poverty reduction is the most comprehensive way of addressing hunger.

### Food Security and Famine Prevention

Many regions in the world, particularly the Horn of Africa and southern Africa, are vulnerable to food scarcity each year. Millions of people are permanently vulnerable to famine, largely because of chronic poverty. These people cannot wait for longer term development programmes to bring them out of poverty.

We are committed to working closely with our partner governments, multilateral agencies and humanitarian organisations to develop effective mechanisms and supports that, in parallel longer

The vast majority of those suffering from lack of food are chronically hungry: people who are persistently malnourished due to a lack of access to adequate quantities and quality of food.

term development programmes, proactively prevent persistent food shortages becoming famines.

*In regions and countries particularly vulnerable to food shortages and famine, we will support disaster risk reduction programmes to diminish the effects of persistent food shortages and to prevent widespread famine, while trying to address the root causes of vulnerability.*

### Hunger Task Force

Ireland has an excellent track record of responding to the problems of hunger, food and livelihood insecurity in poorer countries.

In his address to the United Nations in September 2005, the Taoiseach announced that substantial new resources would be made available through the Irish Aid programme for famine relief and for tackling the root causes of hunger.

*We will establish a Hunger Task Force to examine the particular contribution we can make to tackling the root causes of food insecurity, particularly in Africa.*

The Hunger Task Force will bring together leading figures from international organisations, the NGO sector, third-level institutions, Government and the private sector. The Task Force will work closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and other Government Departments and will be asked to report within six months of its establishment.

### Social Protection

Most of the world's poorest countries do not have the social welfare systems and support entitlements that exist in most developed countries. The absence of any meaningful social protection mechanisms and supports places large numbers of very poor people with little or no livelihoods at huge risk from economic and natural shocks each year.

In desperate times, poor people and communities will do what they can to survive, including selling off precious assets such as land, livestock and tools, choosing low-risk, low-yield crops for food, and sending their children to work rather than to school.

This has the effect of both increasing the suffering of people and the death toll during a crisis, but it also dramatically reduces the capacity of those who survive such an event to return to productive activity once the crisis has passed.

Social protection programmes consist of public interventions to assist individuals, households and communities in better managing vulnerability and risk. Examples of such programmes include: social insurance programmes, including safety nets and pensions, to cushion the risks associated with unemployment, ill health, disability, work-related injury and old age. Crucially, social welfare systems provide a vital safety net for communities attempting to break away from unsustainable livelihood patterns.

*We will identify new and innovative ways to reduce vulnerability, provide social protection and build productive capacity.*



### Social Protection: Ethiopia Safety Nets Programme

Each year the threat of famine in Ethiopia is widespread. During 2002/3, the number of people needing emergency relief exceeded 14 million (21% of total population). Although 2002/3 was an exceptional crisis, Ethiopia needs emergency aid every year.

Over the last decade, the number of people requiring relief has not dropped below five million. These are the chronically food insecure.

Meeting chronic food needs with emergency assistance every year does not prevent destitution, nor does it help households rebuild lost assets that would help them back onto the ladder of productivity.

In Ethiopia, this persistently vulnerable group of people continues to grow due to a combination of population growth, diminishing individual and community land holdings, dependency on rain-fed agriculture and a lack of asset-building opportunities.

The 2003 humanitarian crisis prompted a transition away from meeting the needs of the chronically food insecure with emergency relief towards a social protection system: the National Productive Safety Nets Programme.

This programme represents a strategic and planned response by the Ethiopian government and the international community to the cycles of drought, famine and chronic food insecurity that have beset Ethiopia for decades.

Currently the programme provides some seven million of the poorest Ethiopians with cash or food in exchange for labour. It is administered by a trust fund overseen by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and supported by a range of international donors.

It is estimated that between five and seven million people in Ethiopia would face starvation each year without the Safety Nets Programme. The initiative also contributes to the development of irrigation projects and the building and maintenance of rural roads, schools and other public infrastructure.

Ireland provided five million to the fund in 2005 and will continue to support the programme.



## Rural Development and Agriculture

### Context

Three quarters of the world's poorest people live in rural areas and their livelihoods depend on agriculture. Agriculture dominates Africa's economy, accounting for over 70% of the continent's labour force and over 40% of its exports. Agriculture is the largest private sector activity in Africa.

The current trends in agricultural performance in Sub-Saharan Africa are poor. Between 1980 and 2001, overall agricultural output in the region declined by 5%, while the population expanded. The result is that the number of people who are chronically hungry increased by 50%.

A fall in global commodity prices, poor planning and low investment by governments and donors, limited technology and training, difficulties related to land ownership and tenure, as well as new threats, such as climate change, environmental degradation and HIV/AIDS, have all had a significant impact on agricultural performance in Africa.

Land ownership and tenure is one of the most important and contentious structural issues facing developing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa today. Farming is the primary means of generating a livelihood and land is the main vehicle for accumulating wealth and for transferring it between generations.

The issue of property and land is central to the culture of many developing countries, including in the relationship between individual and communal rights and laws. Currently in many developing countries in

Sub-Saharan Africa very few landowners are women despite women producing between 60% and 80% of the continent's food. This reality has become all the more problematic in recent years in the context of HIV/AIDS, where many women, having lost their husbands, also face losing tenure to their homes.

Careful, equitable and well-managed land reform can contribute to a broad approach to developing rural areas and agricultural output in Africa. This process can only be led by African governments, but donors can assist and support reform efforts.

### Ireland's Response

Enabling and assisting sustainable pro-poor economic growth through support for rural development and agriculture are central to the broader fight against poverty in the poorest countries, particularly in Africa.

### Rural Development and Agriculture

Support for rural development and agriculture must be integrated and sustainable.

*We will support measures to improve the production and efficiency of African agriculture through additional funding for rural infrastructure, water management and sustainable land management initiatives.*

The protection of the environment is central to sustainable rural development. The Government is committed to sustainable rural development that balances improvements in agricultural productivity with social equity and long-term environmental sustainability.

Increasingly, international markets will offer export opportunities for African farm produce. While much needs to be done locally and regionally to help Least

Developed Countries (LDCs) compete globally, we will continue to advocate for complete quota and duty-free access to developed country markets and measures to compensate against existing preference erosion for LDCs at the World Trade Organisation. If agricultural products are to be traded internationally, producers will also need assistance in meeting the increasingly exacting standards of the international marketplace.

### **Agricultural Research and Extension Services**

Appropriate research will play a crucial role in improving the performance and sustainability of agriculture in some of the world's poorest countries, where many depend on small-scale agriculture to survive. 'Extension services' are the practical application of research to farming methods.

Ireland already provides support for pro-poor agricultural research to benefit developing countries, for example through the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research. We will increase such funding, in particular that focussed on increasing crop yields through sustainable improvements. As part of a more coherent approach to development policy, the Department of Agriculture and Food, in cooperation with the Department of Foreign Affairs, will contribute further to efforts in agricultural research for development through enhanced cooperation with a range of global, regional and Irish research centres.

*We are committed to providing increased assistance to rural development and agriculture, including to agricultural research and extension services through effective partnerships.*



*Cattle herder in the Gergera watershed in Tigray, North Ethiopia.*

As this region had become degraded and arid over time, Irish Aid established a regeneration project, re-foresting the hills and building micro-dams to restore fertility to the area and sustain local livelihoods.

### **Land Ownership and Tenure**

The issue of land ownership and tenure is complex. It presents different challenges in different countries and progress can be difficult to achieve. However, the potential sustainable benefits to the rural poor and overall economy can be very significant.

As a donor, we can be advocates of the benefits of land reform and we can support national and multilateral efforts to address this fundamental issue.

*We will support multilateral and national equitable land reform programmes and, where appropriate, will advocate their long-term benefits in our programme countries.*

## Peace, Security and Development

Armed conflicts pose a huge challenge to development. Over the last four decades, more than one third of African countries have experienced conflict. The cost of this, in terms of lives lost and injuries and in terms of economic and social devastation, has been enormous. Conflict destroys livelihoods and infrastructure, diverts valuable resources and reverses development gains.

Security and stability are essential for development, and development is essential for security and stability. Poverty and underdevelopment can be at once a cause and a consequence of conflict.

In recent years, the international community has recognised more explicitly the relationship between security and development. The relationship between these two areas must be taken into account if we are to be effective in promoting both development and security.

Conflict has been a reality in the recent past for many of the countries in which we work, including Uganda, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste and Mozambique. Dealing with the impact of conflict, post-conflict reconstruction and efforts to secure long-term peace constitutes an important part of the work of the Irish Aid programme.

We support specific actions which contribute to peace-building and conflict prevention. More broadly, most of the work of Irish Aid can be seen as removing or reducing the causes of conflict: providing livelihoods, healthcare and education, and strengthening democratic institutions should contribute to making conflict more remote.

### Effective Multilateralism

Our work in the development arena must be matched by political and diplomatic activity in the European

Union (EU), the United Nations (UN) and in other multilateral fora.

Underpinning our efforts in relation to conflict prevention and resolution is Ireland's overarching commitment to effective multilateralism. This is a recognition that global security requires collective action by the international community as a whole, with the UN at the centre. Strengthening the UN and equipping it to fulfil its responsibilities and to act effectively are priorities for Ireland and for the European Union. EU-UN cooperation on crisis management and peacekeeping, particularly in Africa, were recognised and supported by the UN 2005 Millennium Review Summit.

Our multilateral approach has yielded results. Ireland oversaw the establishment of the African Peace Facility during our presidency of the European Union. The Peace Facility, funded by the EU, supports African led, operated and staffed peacekeeping operations on the continent. Established at the request of the African Union (AU), it is an important advance towards providing African solutions to African security problems. It is an acknowledgment that African capacity in this area needs to be financed, supported and developed.

The UN increasingly authorises regional organisations, such as the EU and the AU, to undertake peace support operations on its behalf. The civilian and military crisis management capabilities being developed under the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) allow the EU to respond in a holistic fashion to crises around the globe. The AU and African sub-regional organisations must take a lead role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflict in Africa. We will provide support to the work of these organisations, such as our financial support for the African Union Mission in Sudan, and we will help these institutions develop their own capacity.

Approximately half of all countries that emerge from war lapse back into violence within five years.

- Kofi Annan

## Peace Support Operations

External military intervention in accordance with international law may, at times, be necessary to preserve fragile peace. *Ireland will continue to play its part in UN-approved peace support operations around the world*, continuing the long and proud tradition which began with our first participation in such a mission in 1958. Ireland is currently engaged in UN-approved peace support operations, including in Liberia, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which are helping to provide the stability necessary for the work of post-conflict reconstruction.

In the countries and communities where they work, Irish peacekeepers often also undertake projects to contribute directly to local development. Where appropriate, we will provide financial support for these activities.

## Civilian Crisis Management

Civilian peace support operations are increasingly important in societies where conflict has destroyed the basic civilian infrastructure; police, the justice system, civil service and local administration. Ireland has had wide experience in civilian support operations and will continue to take a holistic needs-driven approach to peace support.

## Delivering Assistance in Situations of Conflict

In situations of conflict, effective development cooperation is difficult. Poorly functioning, or non-functioning, state systems make assistance for long-term development difficult or impossible to deliver. Delivering humanitarian assistance in situations of conflict is challenging. Among the humanitarian organisations, the International Committee of the Red

Cross is uniquely placed to act in conflict situations and will be a key partner for Ireland in this regard.

## Securing Peace

Approximately half of all countries that emerge from war lapse back into violence within five years. Sustained efforts are required to ensure lasting peace. These must be comprehensive, addressing issues such as the rule of law, security sector reform, disarming ex-combatants and child soldiers and assisting their re-integration into society, mine clearance and assisting displaced persons. It is necessary to create real economic opportunities which can offer viable livelihoods for people.

The UN Peacebuilding Commission was established at the end of 2005. The Peacebuilding Commission will play a significant role in laying the foundation for sustainable development in post-conflict societies. Ireland has already committed financial support to its operations.

## New Areas of Development Cooperation

International development practice is evolving in recognition of these challenges. The OECD's Development Assistance Committee, of which Ireland is a member, has added new areas of spending to the agreed definition of what counts as official development assistance.

These include measures in the areas of preventing the recruitment of child soldiers, civilian activities for peace-building, conflict prevention and conflict resolution and controlling, and preventing and reducing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The OECD decision offers opportunities for new areas of work in countries emerging from conflict for Ireland and for other donors.

### Conflict Prevention and Resolution: A Role for Ireland

Ireland is well placed to play a more active role in international conflict prevention and resolution. Our own history, and the positions we have traditionally taken on issues such as decolonisation, disarmament and the Middle East, have resulted in considerable international goodwill, including throughout the developing world. Our professional performances and achievements in the EU Presidency and on the UN Security Council have enhanced our credibility. So too have our economic success, our peacekeeping role and our firm commitment to meeting the 0.7% target.

In addition, the very substantial success of our own peace process has added a distinctive element to the mix. Where once we were internationally known for conflict, we are now known for its absence.

A further positive element is that the expansion of our aid budget means that we have the financial capacity to fund a greater level of activity in this area – at a time when the linkages between security, conflict resolution and development are more apparent and more accepted than ever before.

We now have a close and developing involvement with, and knowledge of, significant regions of Sub-Saharan Africa in particular. Because of the presence, the impact and the growing size of our aid programme there, this would appear to be the most likely location for our involvement, although we should not exclude other options.

We are committed to seeking to play a greater role, where appropriate and possible, in facilitating or assisting peace processes and in supporting

countries or regions emerging from conflict. It has accordingly been decided to establish a dedicated Unit for Conflict Analysis and Resolution in the Department of Foreign Affairs. The Unit will initially be tasked:

- to investigate and report on selected conflicts;
- to analyse and draw lessons from conflict resolution processes elsewhere
- to keep abreast of relevant research work
- to develop links, through our Permanent Mission to the UN, with the UN Peacebuilding Commission
- to offer authoritative information on the Irish peace process to others
- to work with academic institutions, civil society organisations and other potential partner, to ensure that all of Ireland's reserves of experience and expertise in this area are drawn from and developed

The Unit will also assist the Government in playing a more active role, where appropriate and possible, in specific conflict and post-conflict situations

The Unit will be based in the Political Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs, working closely with Irish Aid. It will also benefit from the support of the Department's Anglo-Irish Division.

The Department of Foreign Affairs will also seek to secure the secondment of more Irish personnel to appropriate relevant posts in the EU, UN, Organisation for Securing and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other organisations.

# Human Rights and Development

Human Rights are universal and indivisible. The implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of other international human rights instruments is of paramount importance in order that the universal nature of the rights set down in these can become a reality. While there is a specific debate about the right to development, the enjoyment of all human rights, civil, cultural, economic, political and social, is essential for development. Equally, development is essential to enable the full enjoyment of those rights.

*Irish Aid programmes and projects should further the realisation of human rights.*

It is the duty of all states to protect and promote human rights. International human rights standards, as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other instruments, apply to both donor and recipient countries. Under these international obligations, governments are primarily responsible both for creating the conditions in which rights can be realised and for ensuring that rights are not violated.

No part of the world is totally free from human rights abuses. However, the risk of rights violations is greater where political, economic and administrative systems are weak. Our assistance is helping to strengthen those systems and complements Ireland's efforts to ensure the prevention and punishment of mass human rights atrocities via the international criminal justice system and, in particular, the International Criminal Court. In so doing, we are working to promote and protect human rights.

Spending on development is spending on human rights. In providing access to education, health services, clean water, housing and better government, Irish Aid is helping some of the most marginalised people in some of the most marginalised societies in the world to realise their rights every day. Our assistance is bringing to life, in a practical way, the language of rights.

We also support specific actions designed to promote human rights, including by strengthening government systems and in-country human rights institutions, in particular through legal training. We provide support for Africa-wide efforts in this area, including through the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).

*We have provided significant financial support to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights since its establishment. Ireland will continue to be a strong supporter, including financially, of the UN's human rights machinery.*

At the Millennium Review Summit in September 2005, UN members committed themselves to replacing the Commission on Human Rights with a new Human Rights Council, and on 15 March 2006 the General Assembly adopted the resolution establishing the Council. Ireland, along with our EU partners, will work to ensure that this new body offers an effective new framework for the promotion and protection of human rights.



It is essential to end any perception among those responsible for human rights violations that these crimes will go unpunished.



*Kotido District, Uganda.*

A programme country since 1994, Irish Aid supports a range of human rights and better-governance projects in Uganda, including the Directorate of Ethics and Integrity and the office of the Inspectorate of Government.

Many of the worst violations of human rights take place in the context of violent conflict and civil strife. It is essential to end any perception among those responsible for such violations that these crimes will go unpunished. In Sierra Leone, a country emerging from conflict, we support the UN Special Court, which is mandated to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law during that country's civil war. More widely, we will continue to offer our firm support to the International Criminal Court and we will urge other states to do likewise.

## Civil Society

While governments bear primary responsibility for protecting the human rights of their peoples, NGOs also have an important role to play, including in public education, awareness raising and, in some cases, in documenting the actions of governments and seeking redress for abuses. We will continue our strong partnerships with NGOs and other civil society groups involved in protecting human rights and promoting democracy. The Department of Foreign Affairs will seek to develop a role in the provision of legal training of officials from developing countries.

It is essential to strengthen the voices of individuals, communities and civil society in articulating their rights and needs.

## Human Rights Defenders

The Government has taken a lead in relation to the particular role of human rights defenders. In 2004, during Ireland's EU Presidency, we achieved agreement on the first EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders. These Guidelines enhance the Union's role in the protection and support of those on the front line of efforts to promote and defend human rights. Ireland continues to raise the cases of individual human rights defenders at the multilateral level and directly with the countries concerned.

*We will continue to provide political and financial support to the work of human rights defenders.*

## Encountering difficulties

The promotion of human rights, directly and indirectly, will continue to be central to the aid programme. From time to time, occasions will arise when we must consider how to respond to the failure of partner governments to uphold human rights norms and values. Based on the partnership model, which underlies our development programmes, we will communicate frankly, strongly and clearly with governments in relation to such failures. We will also work closely with other member states of the EU and the international community to press for the necessary remedies and changes. Such cooperation enhances our leverage and strengthens our position. We will, if necessary, reduce or redirect our assistance should progress prove impossible.

Irish Aid is delivering assistance in some of the most difficult operating environments in the world. We recognise that problems will be encountered. To be most effective, our assistance must be reliable and predictable and we will not lightly move towards reducing the level of our assistance. Our programmes are, inter alia, building schools, training teachers, improving curricula and providing vital learning materials. We must think very carefully before taking decisions which may adversely affect the education and health prospects of those in need. It is important not to punish the very people we are trying to assist – the poorest and most vulnerable – by having them bear the burden of the response to the actions of their governments.

## Gender-Based Violence

Promoting gender equality is about helping women to realise their human rights. These rights are set out in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. There is no valid exemption from the basic principles enshrined in those instruments through special provisions based on national, cultural or religious considerations.

Together with a number of Irish development and human rights NGOs, the Government has taken a joint initiative to highlight the issue of gender-based violence and to work towards a more systematic response internationally.

Gender-based violence includes sexual violence, sex trafficking, female genital mutilation and forced prostitution. While such violence is not limited to conflict situations, it is in conflicts that it becomes most widespread and the statistics most shocking: it is estimated that up to 75% of women in Liberia were raped during that country's 14 year civil war.

An essential first step has been to raise the profile of gender-based violence as a distinct and important issue. Building on this, *we will continue to advocate internationally for greater attention and resources to be devoted to the prevention of gender-based violence.*



## Gender and Development

*We will promote gender equality throughout the programme.*

Addressing gender inequality is about implementing the fundamental human right to equality. It is also essential to effective poverty reduction.

During the past two decades, there has been some progress in gender equality with more women in politics and the public sphere and better access to education and employment. Women have become more vocal, more organised and more aware of their human rights.

However, gender inequality remains a central development challenge. Women bear an intolerable burden of care for people living with HIV/AIDS. Women are suffering an increased number of incidents of violence and rape. The terms of their employment are often exploitative and the conditions dangerous. Women account for two thirds of the world's poor. In developing countries, rural women are responsible for 60-80% of food production, but have limited control over land and other necessary assets.

Gender equality must be at the heart of efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. While Millennium Development Goal 3 commits the international community specifically to "Promote gender equality and empower women", the issue impacts on the achievement of all eight Goals.

A range of international commitments underpin Ireland's commitment to gender equality, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (ratified by Ireland in 1985) and the Platform for Action agreed at the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995.

We are translating these commitments into action through the work of Irish Aid.

We do this by undertaking specific actions to improve the position and status of women. We will increase funding to women's organisations to ensure that women's needs and interests remain on the development and human rights agenda. With partners, we will promote women's economic empowerment, ensure greater access to quality education for both boys and girls and support community-based health programmes that enable women's access to reproductive and other health services.

We will mainstream gender considerations into all of our development cooperation activities. 'Mainstreaming' means that gender considerations will be taken into account in the planning, implementation and evaluation of all of our programmes and projects. It is a simple but challenging concept. It will be applied across the programme in, for example, our private sector development work, in livelihood security and in social protection programmes.

We will work against gender-based violence with all our partners internationally. In humanitarian and conflict situations, we are committed to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security which recognised the need for women to participate on equal terms with men at all levels and in all roles to promote peace and security.

The impact of our actions will be greater if issues of gender equality are taken into account at the outset and if the realisation of the human rights of women informs everything we do.

# Environment and Development

Poverty and the environment are inextricably linked. In developing countries, it is the poorest people who rely most heavily on their immediate environment for their livelihoods, who are disproportionately affected by climate change and who suffer most from environmental degradation and biodiversity loss.

Increasingly the poor, in particular the rural poor, are depending more on less.

More and more of the world's poorest people are living in marginal environments. As crucial natural resources, such as clean water, wood for cooking and fertile land become more scarce to an ever-growing population, vulnerability to food shortages will continue and is likely to increase. Resource shortages can be a source of conflict which can, in turn, lead to further environmental degradation.

Global environmental threats, such as climate change and biodiversity loss, compound local environmental problems such as pollution and soil erosion. The earth's biological resources provide us with food, clean water, fuel, shelter and medicines. The current rate of loss of this biodiversity, primarily plants and animals, has direct negative impact on human wellbeing.

Health is closely linked to the quality of the environment. Indoor air pollution, lack of clean water and lack of safe waste disposal place people in both rural and urban settings at risk.

## Environmental Health, Water and Sanitation

Water-related diseases kill more than five million people each year. Currently, 2.3 billion people suffer from diseases linked to dirty water. Young children are particularly vulnerable. In 2001, of the 1.96 million people who died from infectious diarrhoeas, 1.3 million were children under five.

The World Health Organisation estimates that every €1 invested in water and sanitation realises an economic return of between €3 and €34, depending on the region.

Women and girls are particularly affected by the burden of collecting water, often walking long distances, which limits their opportunities for education or paid work.

*We will support activities to increase access to safe water and basic sanitation across the programme.*

The World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002, reminded the world that sustainable development is essential for enduring poverty reduction. This was confirmed by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment which showed that ecosystems are being degraded with dramatic effects on human wellbeing. Only with a balance between the social, economic and environmental aspects of development can long-term solutions to poverty be achieved.

Increasingly the poor, in particular the rural poor, are depending more on less.

*We are committed to reducing poverty through environmentally sustainable development. We recognise the role of the environment in assuring the livelihoods and well being of the majority of the world's poor people.*

We will integrate the principles of sustainable development into our policies and programmes, particularly in rural development programmes.

Developing countries themselves must take the lead in managing their own natural resources and protecting their environments.

*We will assist our developing country partners in integrating environmental considerations into national development policy and planning.*

*We will continue to play our part in multilateral efforts to resolve global environmental problems. We will continue to play an active part in the relevant UN bodies, so as to influence global efforts at ensuring sustainable development.*

We are committed to supporting international agreements, such as the Rio Conventions on Biological Diversity, Desertification and Climate Change.

*The Department of the Environment and Local Government and Irish Aid will work closely together to honour Ireland's commitments to help the poorest nations of the world to safeguard their resources and adapt to changing environmental conditions.*

## Climate Change

Although the causes of climate change largely originate in the developed world, those living in developing countries will be most severely affected.

Climate change poses serious threats to development. The increased severity and frequency of droughts, floods and cyclones risk reversing our efforts to improve food security, reduce disease and safeguard livelihoods.

Developing countries lack the financial resources, skills, technology and expertise to adapt to a rapidly changing climate. Those countries that will be most affected by climate change are the same countries that are least able to manage that change.

As a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Ireland has obligations to help developing countries address climate change. We recognise the principle of *common but differentiated responsibilities* and our obligation to assist the countries that will bear the brunt of the negative effects of climate change.

We are committed to the EU Action Plan on Climate Change in the Context of Development Cooperation which sets out activities to raise the policy profile of climate change, adapt to climate change, promote low carbon development and help build capacity to plan for climate change in developing countries.

We will continue to support specific actions in this area, such as training for key decision makers in developing countries to help them plan for the effects of climate change.

# Trade and Development

## Context

Sub-Saharan Africa attracts less than 3% of global foreign direct investment. Least developed countries' share in global exports has fallen steadily from 3% in the 1950s to a current figure of around 0.5%.

Increased trade, regionally and globally, is central to sustained economic growth for the world's Least Developed Countries. Africa has the potential to earn from trade many times what it obtains in Official Development Assistance.

While access for traded goods tends to be the main focus of public discussion of the trade needs of developing countries, increased trade is about more than access. Improved capacity is essential, including more efficient ports, smoother customs administration and processes and better road and communication networks. Meeting international legal and market standards also brings significant challenges.

Developing countries need assistance to enhance their capacity to produce, deliver and sell goods and services.

The ability of a country to benefit from more liberalised trade depends on the strength and productivity of its domestic economy. Developing countries can be more vulnerable and may need more protection.

To be effective in combating poverty, pro-poor economic activity should be encouraged.

## Ireland's Response

Ireland responds to the trade needs of developing countries primarily through the EU and the WTO. It is the European Commission that negotiates at the WTO on behalf of all EU member states.

The creation of the WTO is the response of the international community to both the threats and opportunities of increasing globalisation. It offers members a forum to negotiate trade agreements, settle trade disputes and operate a system of trade rules.

The current WTO round of negotiations, the Doha Development Round, offers considerable opportunities for developing countries to truly benefit from global trade. A strong rules-based international trading system is in the interest of all small and developing countries.

## Ireland's Trade Policy and the WTO

As stated in the 2005 National Trade Policy Statement "Trading for Economic and Social Development", we are committed to fulfilling the development dimension of the Doha Round. The current WTO negotiations offer an opportunity for Ireland to help ensure that the poorest and weakest countries are not overwhelmed and marginalised but instead are able to put forward and defend their own interests, so that the outcome is a trading system that is just and equitable and provides the greatest opportunities for those most in need.

Africa has the potential to earn from trade many times what it obtains in Official Development Assistance.

#### Aid for Trade

The aim of 'Aid for Trade' is to help developing countries, particularly the Least Developed Countries, to build their capacity to trade, to promote and protect their own interests in WTO negotiations, and to implement the WTO agreements reached. Aid for Trade should also help developing countries cope with the erosion of their preferential access to developed country markets, and it should be used to build the trade-related infrastructure necessary to compete successfully on global markets. We will increase our funding for multilateral 'Aid for Trade' initiatives.

#### Fair and Ethical Trade

Ireland has played an important role in supporting capacity-building for small coffee producers in Central America through its funding for Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International (FLO).

The programme generated an immediate impact by stabilising small producers' incomes, during the most recent collapse of international coffee prices. It helped by changing the focus of the producers from marketing a product on a commodity basis to one of improving quality, producing specialist coffees, segmenting their market, identifying niche markets and converting to organic production. This integrated approach contributed to an increase in local employment and family welfare.

*We will increase our financial support for initiatives which promote fair and ethical trade*

#### Support for the Private Sector in our Programme Countries

Ireland already provides direct support for private sector development in our programme countries, and through multilateral organisations including the World Bank and the International Labour Organisation. Examples include support for business development in the food processing sector in Mozambique and support for commercial law reform in Uganda.

With the expanding programme, it is necessary that this support becomes more focussed and targeted.

#### Regional Economic Integration

In Ireland, we have benefited enormously from European regional integration and so we have a particular understanding of its potential benefits.

Regional integration is an explicit aim of the African Union. Across the range of existing regional economic communities in Africa, the level of integration varies and there is some overlapping membership between communities.

Regional economic integration can offer significant opportunities to developing countries, both in terms of increased trading opportunities and improved capacity. We will support the development of closer regional cooperation between developing countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa.

### Economic Partnership Agreements

The EU is currently negotiating Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with six regional groupings of countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP). The EPAs are provided for in the Cotonou Agreement between the EU and the ACP states and are the trade part of the Union's relations with these countries.

They are scheduled to enter into force by 1 January 2008. By promoting free trade within regions, EPAs will foster closer economic integration between developing countries and help their integration into the global economy. We believe that the EPA negotiations must result in agreements that are supportive of ACP countries' development needs and their poverty reduction efforts.



*Cashew processing factory in Cumbana, Mozambique.*

Mozambique was once a global leader in cashew production, however, production collapsed in the 1970s. This factory was re-opened in 2006 with Irish Aid support.



## Partnership: Who We Work With and Why

Ireland is one voice in global development. We must work with partners, including developing country governments, other donors, multilateral organisations and NGOs in our efforts to respond to the needs of the poorest people in the world.



### The OECD Development Assistance Committee

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is a forum for consultation among 22 bilateral donor countries and the European Commission. It encourages donors to increase the level and the effectiveness of aid flows to developing countries.

The DAC determines how much of a government's spending can be counted as Official Development Assistance.

The DAC offers policy guidance for members in the performance of their development cooperation programmes. These guidelines reflect the views and experience of the members and benefit from input by multilateral institutions and individual experts, including experts from developing countries.

The DAC also organises and conducts Peer Reviews, which hold members to account for the management of their development assistance programmes, as part of the overall effort to expand the quantity and improve the quality and effectiveness of development assistance.

The last Peer Review of Ireland took place in 2003 and commended Ireland's achievements to date, noting that the "programme distinguishes itself by its sharp focus on poverty reduction and its commitment to partnership principles".

The next Peer Review of Ireland is scheduled to take place in 2008.



*Mother and child in Mozambique.*

Gender inequality remains pervasive worldwide. It is exacerbated by poverty and is a key factor in its persistence. Irish Aid supports a range of projects throughout the developing world aimed at empowering women and eliminating this inequality.

# Working with Governments

Working with and through government systems in our partner countries is essential if the improvements put in place are to be sustainable and the Millennium Development Goals are to be realised. This can present difficulties in terms of weak administrative capacity, but our cooperation is helping to enhance that capacity.

Primary responsibility for promoting and fostering development rests with governments. Developing country governments must be our most important partners in promoting long-term development.

We have entered into structured partnerships with a limited number of key partner countries; these are our 'programme countries'. In designating partners as programme countries, we are committing to providing significant, predictable resources over extended periods to assist their development. Assisting a number of programme countries in a focussed and long-term manner will be the central plank of the bilateral aid programme.

These partnerships also place obligations on the recipient governments, including commitment to democratic principles, respect for human rights and the rule of law and a willingness to combat corruption.

In reality, across the range of Ireland's programme countries, there are difficulties in all of these areas. These difficulties are symptomatic of the level of underdevelopment in these countries and contribute to that underdevelopment. Our approach aims to strengthen the government systems of these countries, to make them more responsive to and better equipped to meet the needs of their citizens.

Strategies for engagement will be based on the particular circumstances in each country. We will be responsive to changes in those circumstances, taking action to modify this engagement if and when required.

The methods of aid delivery have evolved considerably in the last 10 years. Ireland and other donors have moved away from a project-centred approach towards a more programmatic approach led by partner governments. Our cooperation with these governments is aligned with their national planning and takes three main forms:

## Area-Based Programmes

We engage with regional authorities on pre-agreed priorities to build official capacity to deliver improved and efficient services across a number of sectors. Area-based programmes also act as an important barometer of realities on the ground, as they inform our understanding of issues at national level.

## Sector-Wide Approaches

This is engagement, together with other donors, in assisting in particular sectors, such as health and education, at the national level. Money provided to governments is ring-fenced for agreed activities in the sector(s) chosen. Increasingly, our engagement will be on the basis of an agreed division of labour between donors, where particular countries take the lead in sectors where they have specific strengths.

## General Budget Support

This is a transfer of funds from a number of donors directly into the budget of the government of a partner country. Among the advantages of this approach are that it allows governments to take the lead in planning their own development and it helps ensure the long-term sustainability of progress made.

**Primary responsibility for promoting and fostering development rests with governments. Developing country governments must be our most important partners in promoting long-term development.**

Ireland may continue to support individual projects in the programme countries where the policy or institutional environment is not suitable for using more programmatic assistance. Projects can be invaluable as sources of innovation in development methods, through which donors can learn how people are themselves addressing the problems they face.

Each of these approaches, or modalities, has its own advantages and disadvantages. No single approach can meet all of the needs of Ireland, as donor, or of the partner governments, as recipients.

General Budget Support presents particular challenges. It can be an effective means of aid delivery if the conditions are right. It requires that donors have confidence in the financial and administrative systems of recipient countries. Rigorous analysis and monitoring will inform our decisions on General Budget Support and other aid modalities.

*We will maintain a mix of complementary modalities in each of our programme countries.* In each case, the mix will be determined taking into account the particular circumstances of each country, in line with international best practice.

While working with and through governments, it is important to ensure that these governments are accountable to their populations.

### **Coordination and Harmonisation**

Accountability to donors is important to ensure that money is well spent. However, the number of donors and the variation in their reporting requirements can place an enormous administrative burden on host governments and hinder them in the primary task of effectively administering their countries. Increasingly, donors are moving towards greater coordination and

harmonisation of their efforts, in order to make these efforts more effective and to reduce this burden. In 2005, donor and recipient governments together agreed the Paris Declaration setting out specific measures in this area.

As donors move towards increased specialisation in sectors, Irish Aid will play its part in those areas where it has particular strengths and experience, and will recognise and support the lead role of other donors in particular sectors.

This will help reduce transaction costs and wasteful duplication. On the other hand, it may result in less visibility for Ireland's contribution. This will present particular challenges for presenting the programme to the public, but these challenges will be addressed.

### **New Programme Countries**

The continuing expansion of the programme means that we will increase the number of programme countries. Selecting additional countries as our long-term partners will provide an important platform to translate our increased expenditure into efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goals. In selecting new partners, we will be guided by the following key considerations:

#### **Poverty**

New programme countries will be chosen from the Least Developed Countries and our activities will be poverty-focussed.

#### **Scope for Ireland to make a development impact**

There must be scope for Ireland to be of real assistance, taking into account our track record, skills and experience.

### Governance

Governance and corruption must be key considerations in selecting new programme countries. In those countries where need is greatest, it can be expected that there may be difficulties with standards of governance. Nevertheless, the overall trend must be positive. The government(s) in question must also have the demonstrated capacity to take ownership of the development process, leading the work of donors, in line with their own priorities.

### Security and Stability

Irish Aid staff should be able to operate freely and safely. The political environment should be sufficiently stable so that the basic conditions for the delivery of an aid programme are available.

### Regional Dimension

The possibility of working on a regional basis, using the programme country as a base, will be an advantage.

### Other Donors

The presence of other donors with which Ireland works in existing programme countries is desirable.

*In light of the opportunities created by the additional available resources, we will increase the number of programme countries in which we work. In the medium-term, we will increase the number of programme countries from eight to ten. Malawi will be the first country so designated. (see Box p.74)*

In any new country programme, it is essential to have solid foundations upon which to build long-term cooperation. Our ways of working in new programme countries must be appropriate to the needs of those countries and must also meet the needs and goals of

the aid programme. We may need to innovate and develop new ways of working in new programme countries, with a particular emphasis on political and economic governance, as well as the provision of basic services. We must support and strengthen administrative systems, in order that our cooperation can be as effective and efficient as possible and make best use of taxpayers' money.

### Fragile States

Increasingly, we are seeing the long-term impact of conflict and instability on countries, particularly in Africa. Even where a peace process is in place and is progressing, countries can continue to experience fragility across the entire spectrum of their activities: from fragility in the institutions of government and the public sector to fragility of infrastructure.

We know the implications of such fragility. The human needs in these countries are staggering. People who live in fragile states constitute one third of those living on less than \$1 a day, and include half of all children dying before the age of five and one third of those without drinking water.

There are also risks of instability and violent conflict spilling across regions. State failure can have global ramifications for security and for prosperity. We are looking in a more comprehensive manner at these types of situations and how Ireland can best assist these countries to get back on their feet.

Our engagement in such situations clearly demands new ways of working. In countries emerging from conflict or where the government systems are very weak, we will invest in the structures and mechanisms of government, including in areas such as policing, capacity building within the public service and justice systems.

We will also respond to need in areas such as education and health and we will support the provision of livelihoods. Where it is not possible to deliver services effectively through government systems, we will support other forms of service provision and delivery, including through NGOs and international organisations.

*We will deepen our focus on working in fragile states. Building on our existing activities, including our role in UN peacekeeping operations, we will focus our efforts on Sierra Leone and Liberia, both countries with hugely challenging operating environments.*

In both countries the programme of assistance will be tailored to fit post-conflict situations where institutions of state are weak or absent. There will be a strong emphasis on governance and the scale of our assistance will be dependent on our being satisfied as to their capacity to absorb aid and to combat corruption.



Local villagers welcome UN peacekeepers arriving in Barclayville, Liberia. Irish Aid supports reconstruction efforts in Liberia, including the disarmament and demobilisation of soldiers following the country's 14-year civil war.

### Malawi: Ireland's 9th Programme Country

Malawi is one of the world's poorest countries, with over 65% of its population living below the poverty line. It is ranked 165<sup>th</sup> on the United Nations' Human Development Index.

Malawi has enormous needs. With nearly 90% of the population engaged in subsistence farming, it has suffered persistent food shortages since 2002. 700,000 of its 1 million orphans have lost their parents through AIDS. In Malawi, life expectancy at birth is 39.7 years; in Ireland it is 77.7 years.

With very limited government capacity to deliver services, poor infrastructure, chronic food insecurity and high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, Malawi is heavily dependent on external assistance.

Ireland began to provide significant assistance to Malawi during the food security crisis of 2002. Since then, we have pursued a two-pronged approach of providing emergency relief and a planned recovery programme. We have also provided support to non-governmental organisations working in Malawi, in particular in the areas of health, education and agriculture.

Overall, since 2002, we have provided more than €18 million in assistance to Malawi.

The designation of Malawi as Ireland's newest programme country is the beginning of a partnership which will enable us to focus and deepen our support for the country.

# Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organisations

Civil society is a broad term, encompassing organisations outside the government sector, including community groups, educational institutions, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trade unions, employers' groups, the media and advocacy groups. While they may vary hugely in terms of structures and goals, such organisations are a vital component of healthy democracy in both developed and developing countries.

Governments must be responsive to the needs of their citizens and civil society organisations can help citizens voice those needs. Civil society organisations can make an important contribution to better government through appealing to, and bringing pressure to bear on, governments to perform better. Civil society organisations can also play a vital role in delivering essential services to people, where state systems are incapable of doing so.

Irish development NGOs and missionaries have been working in developing countries since before the establishment of the Government's aid programme. Other types of organisations, including unions, institutions of education and media organisations are increasingly engaging with the issue of development and looking to play a part.

## **Irish Non-Governmental Development Organisations: Key Partners**

The Irish non-governmental sector will continue to be a key partner for the Irish Aid programme. Poverty reduction is our shared goal; we can work towards it in separate and complementary ways.

Irish NGOs enjoy an excellent reputation domestically and internationally. Our relationship with NGOs goes beyond funding arrangements and includes policy dialogue across a range of areas. Both the Government and NGOs benefit from this relationship.

Working with the NGO sector can have clear advantages. NGOs can deploy quickly in emergency situations. They can operate at community and local levels, helping to strengthen local civil society, and they can work with particularly vulnerable or excluded groups. NGOs can be a valuable alternative vehicle for assistance when the circumstances in a country make structured inter-governmental relationships difficult. Their work can also complement such structured relationships.

Development NGOs also play an important role helping to keep development issues on the public policy and media agenda.

## **Funding for Non-Governmental Organisations**

As the programme has expanded, so too has the funding available to NGOs. Our funding to NGOs was approximately €48 million in 2001 and had risen to over €100 million by 2005. Compared to other donors, the proportion of funding provided to NGOs is high, in the region of 15-20% per year. This is a reflection of the importance of NGOs not just to the official aid programme, but to the approach to development of the country as a whole. It is a distinctive and important feature of the programme.



## The Irish non-governmental sector will continue to be a key partner for the Irish Aid programme.

Funding available for NGOs can be increased as the programme expands. Increased funding will present management and accountability challenges for the NGO sector, as it will across the programme. We are ready to provide assistance to organisations to build their capacity to operate effectively and make best use of the extra resources available.

We recognise that NGOs need multi-annual, predictable funding to support their long-term activities. However, there is also a need to provide opportunities and assistance to newer and smaller NGOs, who are beginning their work. Following consultation with the NGO community in Ireland, the mechanisms for providing assistance to NGOs have been rationalised, resulting in three schemes to meet the needs of this diverse sector:

### **Multi-Annual Programme Scheme (MAPS)**

This provides for strategic partnerships between the Government and a small number of NGOs (currently Christian Aid Ireland, Concern, GOAL, Self Help Development International and Trócaire). It provides significant and predictable funding over 5 years in support of agreed objectives. NGOs participating in the MAPS have developed a strong relationship with Irish Aid and over time demonstrated adequate procedures and systems, as well as strong financial management capacity. The extension of the scheme to other organisations will be considered.

### **Civil Society Fund**

This new fund, drawing together a number of previous funds, will be flexible enough to meet a broad range of needs. Eligibility for funding will not be limited to traditional NGOs; applications will also be considered from other organisations, such as institutes of higher education. Funds will

be provided for poverty reduction activities in the poorer developing countries. Organisations will need to demonstrate capacity to implement planned actions, financial integrity, adherence to good development practice and financial sustainability.

### **Micro Projects Scheme**

This scheme will be of particular assistance to newer and smaller organisations, with grants of up to €20,000. Key criteria in the funding decisions will be: relevance to local needs and poverty focus, sustainability of projects, the impact on gender equality, and effectiveness and efficiency.

Funding for emergency and recovery schemes will continue to be available outside these schemes.

## **Visibility of our Cooperation**

In line with the goal of enhancing the visibility of the official aid programme, NGOs will be expected to acknowledge appropriately the financial assistance given by Irish Aid.

## **Supporting the Development of the Non-Governmental Sector**

Recent years have seen considerable growth in the number of development NGOs. In this context, it is essential that the professionalism and high quality of work for which Irish NGOs have become known is preserved. We will work with our NGO partners to ensure that this quality is maintained.

We are committed to comprehensively reforming the law to ensure accountability and to protect against fraud and abuse of charitable status. The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs has been given responsibility to deliver on this commitment. The Government approved a General Scheme for

**Citizens have a right and a responsibility to participate in and influence political decisions that affect their lives. Our aim is to build better functioning societies.**

the Charities Regulation Bill 2006 and legislation is being drafted.

We want to create an enabling environment and strengthen public confidence in the sector through the enhancement of the high standards of transparency and accountability that exist and are necessary in this area.

### **Missionaries**

Irish missionary organisations have been pioneers in the area of development cooperation. Their work predates that of the Government's development programme and, in some respects, we have followed their lead.

Missionary organisations have built up considerable expertise and have extensive networks through which they can deliver assistance. The role and work of missionaries also continues to have a strong resonance with the Irish people and enjoys considerable support. Their work may be less visible than it has been in the past but it remains hugely valuable.

We have placed our cooperation with missionaries on a stronger footing with the establishment of the Irish Missionary Resource Service. We will support the efforts of missionary organisations to plan for the future and adapt to the changing development environment.

The increasing aid budget will mean that we can scale up our funding of missionary organisations that have the capacity to deliver assistance on the ground. The Irish Missionary Resource Service will be the main channel for this funding.

### **Civil Society in Developing Countries**

All groups in society must play their part in the development process. Citizens have a right and a responsibility to participate in and influence political decisions that affect their lives. These rights and responsibilities can be exercised through formal structures (e.g. voting in elections), and by organising themselves to demand better services from their governments. More broadly, they can demand more responsive and more accountable government. The range of groups, in type and in number, is enormous.

Working with governments in our programme countries, we are trying to improve the supply of basic services, including in the areas of healthcare and education. Groups within these countries can organise and demand better services in these and other areas. They can articulate needs and monitor the performance of governments in relation to human rights and more. That is civil society in action.

If, through the programme country approach, we are placing primary responsibility for development in the hands of our partner governments, with our support for civil society we are placing a corresponding responsibility in the hands of their citizens. Our aim is to help build better-functioning societies.

In the programme countries, we support government-led development strategies aimed at poverty reduction. We also encourage greater civil society participation in the consultation and planning processes that inform these strategies. In particular, we will encourage effective civil society participation in planning and monitoring processes, such as the development of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. Irish NGOs do a lot of work through local partners.



This is a key channel for our assistance to local civil society. *We will continue to encourage Irish NGOs to develop and strengthen partnerships with organisations in developing countries.*

Support for civil society must be appropriate to the particular circumstances of a country. Care must be taken not to undermine or distort the role of democratic institutions.

Ideally, civil society organisations should not be encouraged to build up parallel services, such as in the area of health, but should create incentives or pressure for improved performance from the state. However, in reality, because of the scale of need, they will continue to play an important part in the direct supply of these services.

### Freedom of speech and the role of the media in developing countries

Freedom of speech and the freedom of the press can be powerful forces for better governance and for sustainable development. Openness is one of the most important checks on the abuse of human rights and of fiduciary responsibilities.

A critical, well-informed media can be a key player in civil society in developing countries.

The connection between the state and the media is an innately political and, therefore, sensitive one. State ownership of newspapers and television is significantly high in African countries and the Middle East. On average, African governments control 61% of the top five daily newspapers and reach 85% of the audience for the top five television stations. In Western Europe, in contrast, none of the top five daily newspapers is owned by the state.

Despite state dominance in the national media, recent years have seen significant growth in the number of private local and community radio stations and independent newspapers across many African countries, including most of our partner

programme countries. Already this is proving to have a cohesive effect on communities and has led to increased understanding of complex issues, such as HIV/AIDS.

For donors, working with the media in developing countries can be a sensitive area of activity. However, given its importance, it is critical that donors increasingly advocate greater openness, more diverse ownership and increased freedom for the press in our collective discussions with partner governments and do so in an open and transparent manner.

*We will actively support the development of free and independent media in our programme countries through negotiations with governments and through support for media capacity-building initiatives, such as journalist training programmes and equipment upgrading. In addition, we will support initiatives and programmes that encourage greater cooperation between the media and other civil society and human rights organisations.*

# Ireland, the United Nations and Development

Our membership of the UN has been a cornerstone of Ireland's foreign policy since we joined the organisation in 1955. Both the recent two-year term on the Security Council (2001-2002) and the role of the Minister for Foreign Affairs as Envoy of the Secretary-General on UN Reform in the run-up to the 2005 World Summit demonstrated the good standing which Ireland enjoys within the UN system. Ireland is a consistent supporter of and participant in UN peacekeeping activities, including in Africa.

At the United Nations Millennium Review Summit in September 2005, world leaders underlined the strong linkages between security, development and human rights and the need to make progress in all three areas. Our engagement with the development activities of the UN is, accordingly, an integral part of our engagement with the UN system as a whole.

The organisation plays an important role in building international consensus on key development challenges. In this normative role, it helps set the agenda for international development policy. The UN has played a vital role in formulating the Millennium Development Goals and placing them at the centre of the international development agenda.

The United Nations has a number of key strengths in the development area. Channelling assistance through the UN can help avoid fragmentation and duplication of donor effort and provide economies of scale. UN funds and programmes are important partners for Ireland in the countries in which we work.

Through our partnership with the UN we can provide assistance and respond to need in a far wider range of countries than we can through our bilateral programme alone.

## Reform

Reform must remain high on the agenda of the UN and of its members. Our wish is to see greater coherence throughout the UN system and to ensure value for money in our cooperation with the organisation. We will support steps to enhance such coherence in the organisation's development, humanitarian and environmental activities, while maintaining the link between the normative and operational responsibilities of the UN organs.

Through the process of reform, the UN agencies, funds and programmes should become more focussed and effective in meeting the common challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and should make more efficient use of the resources provided by the member states. Reform will strengthen the UN and make it more relevant to development needs.

## Ireland's Engagement

In recent years, Ireland has rationalised its engagement with the UN funds and programmes, concentrating support on a number of funds and programmes with which strategic partnerships have been established. This concentration has been accompanied by significant increases in the overall volume of funding provided. As a result, Ireland has a stronger voice in engaging with these bodies. Three of the largest recipients of assistance from Irish Aid are the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

In addition, other Government Departments engage with and contribute financially to a wide range of UN funds and programmes, such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organisation

Through our partnership with the UN we can provide assistance and respond to need in a far wider range of countries than we can through our bilateral programme alone.

(WHO) and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). A considerable part of the funding provided in this way is devoted to development cooperation. In funding activities in areas such as education, health and livelihoods, these engagements are an important part of the aid programme.

With the increased sums of public money being made available to the UN, we have an increased responsibility to contribute to defining the policy objectives of the funds and programmes and to monitor and assess their work.

We will engage in more robust audit and evaluation of our engagements with the UN; this will include direct contact between Irish Aid's Evaluation and Audit Unit and UN funds and programmes.

Annual consultations with our strategic UN partners and active participation in the 12 Executive Boards are particularly important. In monitoring and assessing their work, we are informed also by consultation with other donors and by reports from our missions on their performance in the field. This monitoring and assessment will influence future decisions on funding.

The following broad criteria will guide our future engagement with UN agencies:

**Coherence with Ireland's overall development objectives**, in particular our focus on poverty reduction;

**Effective and efficient management**, including a clear focus by each fund or agency on its specific mandate, and coordination within the UN family, in order to ensure maximum impact;

**Commitment to reform**, which must be an ongoing process, being essential both to the effectiveness of the organisation and to keeping the confidence of the donors and the public;

**Working in partnership with developing country governments** and in coordination with the World Bank and other multilateral and bilateral donors.

Most of our contributions to UN agencies go to their core funds, allowing the agencies flexibility to determine their priorities, within agreed mandates. In the case of the larger agencies, funding will be provided on the basis of an indicative multi-annual commitment, to give the stability and predictability necessary for effective planning. This will continue to be the case, subject to satisfactory performance. However, earmarking is still important in emergency situations. Earmarking of funds may be considered in the case of some funds while we are building up a relationship of trust and confidence.

As the programme continues to expand rapidly, increased resources will be made available for cooperation with the UN. It can be expected that this will result both in increased support to existing UN activities and in support for new activities. One example is the UN Peacebuilding Fund, which was established following the 2005 World Summit, and to which we have committed funding.

*We will intensify our cooperation with UN funds and programmes to ensure accountability and value for money, as well as consistency with our approach to development assistance and with our support for UN reform.*

# Ireland, the EU and Development

EU development assistance is an integral part of the Irish Aid programme and we will work to improve the quality of that aid and the effectiveness of its delivery.

The EU, taking the Community and the member states together, is the world's largest donor, providing more than half of the world's Overseas Development Aid (ODA). The EU is also the most important economic and trading partner for developing countries.

Within the EU, development cooperation is a shared competence between the European Community on the one hand, and the member states on the other.

The European Commission manages development assistance delivered through the Community Budget and the European Development Fund. In 2004, approximately 15% of Ireland's total ODA was disbursed through these channels. The volume of assistance is set to grow. Ireland's assessed contribution to the 10<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund, through which the Community helps the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, will grow as a proportion of the Fund, totalling more than €200 million over a six year period.

EU development assistance is, therefore, an integral part of the Irish Aid programme. It is important that Ireland can effectively monitor this assistance and can input at the policy level, with the aim of improving the quality of Community aid and the effectiveness of its delivery.

The Union also has a norm-setting role: common policy approaches to development challenges are agreed and followed by both the member states and the Community.

The European Consensus on Development, agreed by the European Council in 2005, sets poverty eradication as "the primary and overarching objective of EU development cooperation". Agreement on this objective was a key concern for Ireland in the negotiation of the text.

As a donor delivering increasing volumes of high-quality assistance, Ireland is well-placed to bring some influence to bear on EU development policy. Working with like-minded EU donors we can increase that influence. In keeping with Ireland's own development priorities and practices, Ireland will:

Seek to ensure that a greater proportion of EU assistance goes to the Least Developed Countries

Encourage other EU donors to move towards 100% untied aid

Seek to strengthen coherence at EU level, in order that policies in all relevant areas reinforce the Union's development objectives

## Coordination and Harmonisation

Increased coordination and harmonisation among donors is essential to enhancing the effectiveness of assistance and increasing local ownership of development.

The EU is the world's largest donor, providing more than half of the world's Official Development Assistance.



*Woman with umbrella donated by the EU in Karen refugee camp, Mae La Oon, Thailand.*

In 2004, the EU provided over €10 billion in development aid.

The EU already has strong mechanisms and structures in place to promote cooperation between member states and, therefore, the EU is ideally placed to make a major contribution in this respect, while respecting the OECD's lead role and without undermining the key principle that development be locally-led.

### **Mentoring of New EU Member States**

Drawing upon the experience of more than 30 years, *we will continue our programme of mentoring for the new member states*, assisting them to quickly develop their capacity in the area of development policy formulation and implementation.

### **Coherence between the Union's Instruments**

The EU is the largest donor and largest trade bloc in the world. It has structured relationships around the globe and exerts considerable influence on world events. We will work to ensure that the policies and actions of the Union are in line with the principles set out in this White Paper and, where possible, benefit the world's poorest people.

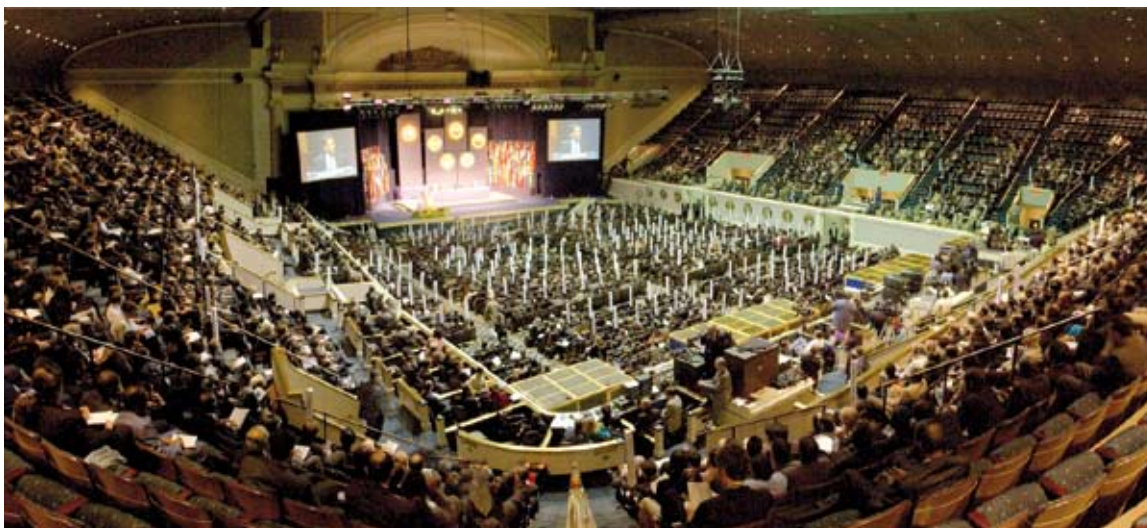
# Ireland, the World Bank and Development

The World Bank, through its concessional lending and grant assistance arm the International Development Association (IDA), is one of the largest sources of external development assistance for Low Income Countries (countries whose per capita income was less than \$965 in 2005). The current IDA programme will make US\$33 billion available in loans and grants to the 81 poorest countries between 2005 and 2008.

The IDA is financed by contributions from its members and a share of revenue from other World Bank operations. Ireland has been a member of IDA since 1960 and by mid-2005 had contributed a total of \$206,690,000 to its capital. The Minister for Finance is empowered to make such contributions under the Bretton Woods Agreements Acts and the Development Banks Acts and is required to report

annually to the Oireachtas on Ireland's participation in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Under the present IDA programme, Ireland is contributing a further €70 million and, in addition, will provide IDA with €59 million in 2006 to help finance debt cancellation. IDA is thus a significant channel for the delivery of Irish Official Development Assistance (ODA).

In developing countries, the volume of its aid, its capacity in analytical work and its close relationship with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) give the World Bank significant and frequently decisive weight in policy decisions and in the allocation of resources. The IMF is not a major provider of development finance, but it too plays an important role in shaping those countries' macroeconomic policies.



*Plenary Session of the IMF/World Bank Annual Meetings.*



The policy and institutional environment in Ireland's programme countries has a direct impact on the effectiveness of our development assistance. We will seek to ensure that World Bank and IMF interventions in developing countries promote a favourable environment conducive to the effectiveness of our bilateral assistance and to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Ireland is represented on the Board of Governors of the World Bank by the Minister for Finance as Governor and the Secretary-General of the Department of Finance as Alternate Governor.

The Minister for Finance is also a Governor of the IMF and the Governor of the Central Bank of Ireland is Alternate Governor. The Boards of Governors meet once a year.

The day-to-day business of the World Bank and the IMF is managed by Executive Boards, where Ireland is a member of a constituency led by Canada<sup>1</sup>.

There will be close cooperation between the Department of Finance, which has principal responsibility for the Bretton Woods Institutions, and the Department of Foreign Affairs, which is responsible for the planning and delivery of Ireland's official programme of development cooperation.

The working contacts which already take place between the two Departments will be built on so that Ireland's development objectives are furthered in the most effective way possible and the full range of resources and expertise are brought to bear on our engagement with the international financial institutions.

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1. The constituency also includes Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines.

## Debt Relief

Ireland has a strong record on the issue of debt relief for developing countries. Having always given our assistance as grants rather than loans, Ireland is not a bilateral creditor. We took a lead in advocating 100% debt relief for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), becoming the first government of a developed country to do so.

In 2006, Ireland has committed €59 million for multilateral debt relief through the World Bank.

It is important to recognise that debt relief is not an end in itself. It is about mobilising additional resources to fund development. In the World Bank and in other international fora, we will seek to ensure that funding for debt relief is additional to resources already committed for development cooperation and that the relief provided results in more resources being made available in LDCs for poverty reduction activities.



*Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo.*

Through our work on debt relief and as advocates for developing countries on the world stage, Irish Aid aims to build functioning societies and ensure that the globalisation brings benefits to those in greatest need.





## Where We Work

## Africa

*Africa will remain the principal geographic focus for Irish Aid.*

The main reason for this focus is need: 34 of the world's 50 Least Developed Countries are in Africa. In Sub-Saharan Africa the number of poor continues to rise and the average income of the poorest is declining. More than one-third of children have not enrolled in primary school. Overall, progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals is slowest in Africa. Approximately 80% of Ireland's Overseas Development Aid goes to Africa.

Ireland's relations with Africa consist of more than the provision of aid. Ireland's trade with the continent is worth hundreds of millions of euro every year. Increasing numbers of African-born people are living and working in Ireland and we have a network of diplomatic missions in Africa. We have been involved in UN-approved peacekeeping and crisis management operations across the continent and Africa will continue to be a focus for our peace support efforts. However, the Irish Aid programme remains the Government's main engagement with Africa.

Six of Ireland's programme countries are in Sub-Saharan Africa: **Ethiopia, Lesotho, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia**. In addition, we have significant programmes in Liberia, Sierra Leone and South Africa. A limited expansion in the number of programme countries is being considered. This expansion will focus on Africa.

Within the EU there is an increased focus on Africa. In December 2005, the Heads of State and Government of all EU member states, including the Taoiseach, adopted a strategy for the Union's relations with Africa. The EU-Africa Strategy represents a

step forward in relations with Africa. It deals with development, security, human rights, governance and economic growth.

The Strategy emphasises African ownership, and partnership, and working through African institutions. It sets clear priorities and measurable targets and represents engagement at the highest political level in Europe with the challenges Africa faces.

### Support for African Institutions

Recent years have seen a growth in regional and continent-wide initiatives to tackle the challenges facing Africa. New institutions have come into being and existing ones are being revitalised. Working with these institutions offers an opportunity to address political, development and security issues on a regional basis.

The African Union (AU), established in 2002, represents the paramount regional organisation addressing the security and developmental challenges confronting the African continent. The AU has taken the lead role in responding to the current conflict in Darfur, Sudan. The AU has also mounted successful peace-support operations in Burundi and the Central African Republic. The EU has served as a model for the AU in its aim of accelerating political and socio-economic integration on the continent. The AU has adopted as its socio-economic programme the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative which is intended to provide a framework for the continent's development, emphasising African ownership and leadership.

The AU's development has given rise to a number of important pan-African institutions, such as the AU Peace and Security Council, the Pan-African Parliament and the African Commission on People's and Human Rights.

It is important that the commonplace, negative images of Africa are balanced with an understanding of the positives that the continent has to offer.

The AU is also collaborating closely with sub-regional organisations in Africa, particularly those, such as the Economic Community of West African States, which are making an important contribution to regional peacekeeping efforts.

These institutions and initiatives represent a strong political commitment by African leaders to take the lead in tackling the continent's problems – and they deserve support. How successful they will be in the long term remains to be seen. A key test of their credibility will be their handling of intractable governance problems in some African countries. Continent-wide progress will take time. It will require external support and Ireland will play its part.

*We will provide assistance to the African Union and to other regional organisations in Africa to support efforts to tackle the challenges facing the continent.*

## Regional Development Programmes

Action at a regional level is necessary to address problems which do not respect national borders.

With the extra financial resources now available to the programme, it is timely to explore the possibility of supporting regional approaches to development, to complement what we are doing at the country level.

Four of Ireland's programme countries are members of one of these regional organisations, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and we provide significant assistance to a fifth member, South Africa. This provides us with the knowledge and experience as well as the political and administrative grounding necessary to begin to build a regional programme in Southern Africa.

Regional integration is relatively well advanced in West Africa and may offer further opportunities.

*We will explore the possibilities for the development of regional programmes in Southern Africa and in West Africa to bring added value to our ongoing work within individual countries.*

## Africa in Ireland

The image and understanding of Africa in Ireland continue to be dominated by the nature and scale of the problems of underdevelopment. This is beginning to change, not least because of increased immigration from Africa, and we are beginning to see a more comprehensive and complex picture.

It is important that the commonplace, negative images of Africa are balanced with an understanding of the positives that the continent has to offer; including in terms of history, culture and art, as well as economic and political success stories. The diversity between and even within countries should be highlighted. African leadership of efforts to address African problems should be highlighted.

*The Department of Foreign Affairs will provide financial support for events to mark Africa Day, 25 May, in order to promote a more positive and comprehensive understanding of Africa in Ireland.*

## Other Global Engagements

While Africa remains the main focus of our efforts, we will also respond to need in other parts of the world. The increased resources available in recent years have allowed us to expand our cooperation, in particular in Asia, where two of our programme countries are located.

### Asia

The pace of development in Asia over the last 50 years has been spectacular, but it has been uneven. Some of the world's largest and fastest growing economies are side by side with some of the world's poorest people.



*Rice cultivator in Vietnam.*

Irish Aid's support in Vietnam is focussed on governance, health and developing the private sector, with the overall aim of assisting Vietnam to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The range of Ireland's relations with Asia reflects that diversity, including growing trade links and political dialogue bilaterally and as part of the EU, including though the ASEM and ASEAN process. Given the great need which exists in much of Asia, development cooperation is an essential part of the relationship.

Two of Ireland's programme countries are in Asia: **Timor-Leste (East Timor) and Vietnam.**

Timor-Leste is the least developed country in Asia. Ireland has been engaged in Timor-Leste since before the country achieved independence in 2002. This engagement has moved from the provision of emergency and humanitarian assistance to long-term development cooperation. Ireland also provided troops and members of the Garda Síochána, operating under a UN mandate, to help stabilise the country after independence. The main focus of our assistance will continue to be capacity-building for the government, aimed towards more effective, efficient and accountable service delivery.

The increasing instability in Timor-Leste will not diminish our commitment to helping its people. In Vietnam, we are combining a clear focus on poverty reduction with support for the growth of the private sector. Given Vietnam's economic growth, the role of the development cooperation programme there will be time-bound. Some of Vietnam's neighbours are at a much lower stage of economic development. Vietnam will provide a base from which we can develop a **regional programme covering Laos and Cambodia.**

Recent years have seen enormous and immediate humanitarian need in Asia, following the conflict in Afghanistan, the earthquake in Pakistan and the South Asian tsunami. We have responded to these emergencies and we will engage further in supporting recovery operations in the affected countries.

## Latin America

Development cooperation with Latin America should follow a differentiated approach based on that region's own needs. While Central America will remain the focus of our bilateral assistance, we will continue to fund projects across Latin America and to support appropriate EU assistance to the countries of the region.

Central America is the poorest region in Latin America. While none of the countries of Central America is characterised as Least Developed, there are very high rates of relative and absolute poverty, particularly in rural areas. The impact of Tropical Storm Stan in 2005 and of Hurricane Mitch in 1998 highlighted the vulnerability of the poorest people to the effects of natural disasters.

The Irish Aid programme of cooperation in Central America is currently concentrated mainly in three countries: **El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua.**

While our assistance is delivered primarily through civil society organisations, our activities are planned in close cooperation with the governments of these countries. Our assistance to Central America will be targeted on:

- > Supporting citizen participation in public policy engagement for poverty reduction, including through continued support for civil society capacity-building
- > Assisting people build their own livelihoods, including through support for fair trade, and promoting market access for women and other small producers

Civil society organisations will continue to be the main channel of our assistance. We are building links with Irish organisations, including NGOs and universities. We will ensure that the activities we support in these areas continue to be in line with the national poverty reduction and development plans of these countries.

The volume of assistance allocated for Central America will grow as the overall programme grows.



*Harvesting organic coffee in Guatemala.*

Through Irish Aid's support for capacity-building for small coffee producers in Central America, there has been a significant increase in the number of producers, workers and families benefiting from fair trade and ethically certified sales.



## Palestine

Ireland has been a long-standing supporter of efforts to assist the Palestinian people. Palestine is not inherently a very poor country but it is exceptionally aid-dependent because of the continuing territorial conflict. The operating environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territories has become increasingly difficult because of restrictions on access and movement and, without a political resolution, aid can be seen as a palliative rather than a solution.

Ireland's programme in Palestine has been responding to the changing needs of the Palestinian people.

Irish Aid provides support to programmes in education and local rural development as well as supporting human rights and democratisation through our funding to civil society organisations. We strive to alleviate suffering through our partnership with UN agencies which provide humanitarian services on the ground.

We will continue to work to ensure that Ireland's assistance is delivered to those who are most in need and to ensure that our humanitarian response is effective within the context of longer term development.



*Children arrive at Asharka school, Qalqilya, West Bank.*  
Irish Aid has provided funds to assist the education sector in Palestine, including fellowships in Bethlehem University, as well as humanitarian support.

## Europe and Central Asia

The transition to democracy in the Balkans and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) proved difficult and gave rise to significant increases in poverty in many countries. There were also major humanitarian consequences of conflicts within the Balkans, the South Caucasus and Central Asia, resulting in increased flows of refugees and economic migrants, people trafficking and the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Even though the political situation in the West Balkans has stabilised, it is still one of Europe's most crisis-vulnerable areas and there is a concentration of Irish Aid funding in that region. Outside of the Balkans, the Partnership Programme also seeks to contribute to stability, security and democratic transition in countries bordering the expanding EU.

Much of Ireland's aid to countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia consists of its share of multilateral programme funding, especially through the EU, UN and World Bank.

In addition, Irish Aid provides bilateral funding for a Partnership Programme for Europe and Central Asia (PPECA). The programme seeks to address poverty reduction and support democratic transition in the region.

We work in partnership with a number of international organisations and agencies with proven track records on the ground. Ireland also has specific funding obligations in the region arising from the Stability Pact for Eastern Europe and expectations linked to our Council of Europe and OSCE membership and support for the European Neighbourhood policy. In addition, the Partnership Programme seeks to support the fundraising and advocacy work of Irish NGOs in the region.

*Our priorities will include civil society capacity-building, human rights and democratisation and support for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.*



War-damaged building in Sarajevo city centre, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Irish Aid has supported efforts to formally identify casualties of civil war in the Balkans and is involved in the construction of court houses in Bosnia to serve a new justice system in that country.





## 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.

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

### 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.





# Outline of the Consultative Process

## Consultation process

The preparation of this White Paper offered an opportunity for extensive consultation with the Irish public and our development partners. Written submissions were invited from interested parties and 137 were received.

Public meetings were held at various locations throughout the country.

Date	Location
13 April 2005	Limerick
27 April 2005	Waterford
3 May 2005	Athlone
4 May 2005	Galway
10 May 2005	Cork
17 May 2005	Tralee
24 May 2005	Dublin (Helix)
7 July 2005	Dundalk
8 July 2005	Letterkenny
4 Oct 2005	Carrick on Shannon
27 Feb 2006	Dublin (Tallaght)

In addition, aid agencies and other stakeholders were invited to a consultative forum in Dublin Castle in October 2005.

Consultations were also held with UN agencies and with our partners in the developing world.

## Submissions from organisations

Action Aid Ireland	Humanist Association of Ireland
Advisory Board for Irish Aid	Institute of International Integration Studies
AIDS Partnership with Africa	International AIDS Vaccine Initiative
Association of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Ireland	International Alert
Banúlacht	Irish Coalition for the Global Campaign for Education
Bóthar	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Cáirde	Irish Council for International Students
Centre for Development Studies UCD	Irish Development Education Association
Centre for Global Education	Irish Family Planning Association
Centre for Global Health TCD	Irish Forum for Global Health
Christian Aid Ireland	Irish League of Credit Unions International
Christian Blind Mission Ireland	Development Foundation Ltd.
Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal	Irish Methodist World Development and
Church of Scientology Mission	Relief Committee
Clare Women's Network	Irish Missionary Resource Service
Columban Missionaries	Irish Missionary Union
Comhar	Irish Red Cross
Comhlámh	Irish Redemptorists
Community Workers Co-Operative	Just Forests
Concern	KADE
Connolly Corporate Finance	Kimmage Manor Development Studies Centre
Cori Justice Commission	Leixlip Group for Justice and Peace
DCI at DCU	Missionaries of the Sacred Heart
DCU Centre for International Studies	National Collective of Community based
Defence Forces	Women's Networks
Department of Communications, Marine and Natural	National Youth Council of Ireland
Resources	Network Ireland
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment	NUI Galway-Dev Education and Research Network
Dóchas	Oxfam Ireland
ECO-UNESCO	Peace Brigades International
Foróige	Plan Ireland
Global Campaign for Education	Presentation Justice Network
GOAL	Refugee Trust International
Gorta	Self Help Development International
Green Party	Sightsavers International
Health and Development Networks	Skillshare International Ireland
Hope Foundation	Southwest Kerry Women's Association

St. Patrick's Society  
TCD Students Union  
Teak 21 (International Federation of Quality Tropical  
Hardware Association Ltd.)  
Tearfund  
The Leprosy Mission  
Transparency International  
Trócaire  
UNICEF  
University College Dublin World Aid Society  
University of Limerick, Presidents Office  
Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice  
War on Want Northern Ireland/  
Fighting World Poverty  
West Clare Women's Forum  
Wingspread International  
WITH/Cúram  
Women's Human Rights Project  
World Vision Ireland  
Youth Advisory Group to the National Youth  
Development Education Programme

## Submissions from individuals

Barrow, Edmund G.	Murphy, Anthony
Bourke, Mick	Murphy, Paul
Brennan, Fionnuala	Murphy, Phillip
Brock, Rose Tuelo	Nkuba, Michael
Cass, Eamon	O'Brien, Denis
Counihan Family	O'Brien, Sr. Miriam
Cryan, Columba	O'Donovan, Ena
Daly, Bernard	O'Duffy, Isobel
Devon, Aidan	O'Neill, Nick
Dwan, Martin	O'Sullivan, Paul
Evans, Herbert	Redmond, Nick
Fitzpatrick, Garret	Richards, Niambi
Grehan Michael	Roche, Niall
Hume, Mo	Sharer, Melissa
Jackson, John A.	Soffe, David
Kenny, James	Spillane, Dr. Charles
Kevlihan, Rob	Standish, Ann
Kitt, Tom T.D., Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach	Jackson, Professor John
Kyomuhendo, Diana	Tighe, Eamon
Lennon, Seamus	Crowley, Tom
Groarke, Maria	Van Rijn, John
McGinly, John	Walsh, Kathy
Miley, Kevin	Wyse, Garrett
Mulcahy, Máire	Zietsman, Shiela



# Acronyms



## Acronyms

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
ACPHR	African Commission on People's and Human Rights
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEM	Asia Europe Meeting
AU	African Union
AU PSC	African Union Peace and Security Council
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CSF	Civil Society Fund
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DEAC	Development Education Advisory Committee
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDF	European Development Fund
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FLO	Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International
GeSCI	Global e-Schools and Communications Initiative
GNP	Gross National Product
HDI	Human Development Index
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDA	International Development Association
IDP	Internally Displaced Person

ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMRS	Irish Missionary Resource Service
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LDC	Least Developed Country
MAPS	Multi Annual Programme Scheme
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NCCA	National Council of Curriculum Assessment
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PPECA	Partnership Programme for Europe and Central Asia
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RRI	Rapid Response Initiative
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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