1. Cover Page

Nature of views: On behalf of Environmental Education Unit – An Taisce

Organisation: Environmental Education Unit – An Taisce

Web-address: www.greenschoolsireland.org

2. The response should address some or all of the following questions:

How can Irish Aid support life-long learning and increase public understanding of and engagement with development and global citizenship issues as well as increasing awareness of the Irish Aid programme?

More engagement with other organisations. A more open dialogue, which has been evident in the past two years, will create an increased profile for Irish Aid. More collaboration with all formal educational institutions, from pre-primary through to higher education institutions to create clearer continuum of Global Citizenship Education Additionally it would be advantageous to enable more cross-departmental dialogue and information sharing.

Are there other groups or organisations we should seek to work with in order to build this awareness and engagement?

Seeking out a more diverse range of collaborations would be advantageous, not just NGO's within the sector but also large businesses through CSR schemes, civil servants other than teachers (Gardaí HSE etc.) and community groups such as Tidy Towns, scouting, sport clubs etc., as advocated by Bridge 47 project. Support from Irish Aid for individual NGO's working in the field in engaging with other players would be well received and strengthen GCE

What has changed in the external environment since 2017, both in the education sector and broader societal changes nationally and globally, and how should that be reflected in our priorities, our relationships and in our revised strategy?

- More emphasis in within education on system thinking and design thinking processes
- ESD strategy and plans for incorporation into primary curriculum
- Ongoing curriculum reform-senior cycle, primary review

- Greater importance of digital divide since Covid-19
- Increasing inequality due to Covid-19
- School Strikes for Climate movement has created new youth networks of active global citizens

What do you consider to be the key areas of progress made since 2017 in the implementation of the Irish Aid Strategic Planning process? Are there any key lessons learnt or gaps in the current response?

1. Output 2 of IA Strategy: Capacity Development (CD) of IDEA has been successful
    a. The development of the IDEA Code of Good Practice for Development Education has been a success for the DE sector.
2. Acknowledgement that Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Development Education (DE) should be considered one and the same and be seen as Global Citizenship Education is a positive development in considering education for social justice, equality and sustainability, and has been positive development, especially in the last two years in creating a more collaborative and complimentary approach including more organisations to work under the umbrella of Irish Aid
3. WWGS has been a strong success in deepening the engagement of post-primary schools in DE and strengthening the support of the DE sector for schools.
    a. Level of integration at post-primary is much stronger compared to a number of years ago.
    b. Mentioned as an adaptable template/model for primary level and possibly adult and community
4. There has been an improvement in the communications between Irish Aid and the organisations that are funded through annual grants . There appears to be more openness to working together to enhance the delivery of ESD within formal education.
5. Level of communication between of DFA and DES has increased, particularly in relation to the DES ESD strategy.
6. Greater cooperation and support between individually funded agencies and organisations through IDEA. Great supporting structures in place
7. Multiannual funding is very positive change

With reference to the five output areas of the current Irish Aid Development Education Strategic Plan, what do you consider the key priorities for 2021- 2024 should be?

- *Output 1 Policy Coherence : An enabling and coherent policy environment for development education at local, national and European levels*

Important that better connections are created between all educational institutions

Mention of alignment to SDG's

Measuring improvements on target 4.7

Mentioning of alignment to global climate agreements

- *Output 2 Capacity Building Maximised capacity, collaboration, partnership and coherence of development education partners to enhance the quality, delivery, impact and communication of development education*

Supporting of creation of effective methods of measuring the long-term impact of DE initiatives on students

CPD for both partners and teachers on system thinking and design thinking methodologies in creating meaningful, and measurable, skills, attitudinal and behavioural change

- *Output 3 Formal Education Further integration and mainstreaming of quality development education in formal education curricula, programmes and structures*

WWGS model should be replicated at primary level through a <u>new strategic partnership approach</u>. Could this in addition be replicated with pre-primary and higher education institutions? Creating a stronger link between these organisations and a more unified approach to GC education, and more unified approach to measuring of long term impact of GCE

- *Output 4 Non-Formal Education Increased integration, quality and spread of development education in non-formal education curricula, programmes and structures*

Working more with opportunities within <u>existing structures</u> (existing school programmes, scouting organisations, youth clubs etc.) rather than developing new structures and or programmes would be advantageous.

- *Output 5 Irish Aid Awareness Programme Increased awareness within the education sector of Ireland's development cooperation programme and the UN Sustainable Development Goals*

More needs to be done here. Still many people unaware. A stronger alignment in this strategy to the SDG's would be advantageous. This may be achieved by ensuring better cross departmental dialogues and sharing of information.

Irish Aid is considering changing the name of the programme and strategy to Global Citizenship Education, do you have any comments or concerns in relation to this suggestion?

Global Citizenship Education will encompass ESD and DE into the one name and will be much clearer for educators within the formal education sector.

What opportunities have arisen from the COVID-19 experience and how can we learn from it in order to reach a broader audience?

Digital learning seen as a positive by some, and many digital platforms are available. However there appears to be a huge digital divide. Both in terms of IT literacy with teachers and with platforms used and broadband capabilities. Approach here needs to be a more directed approach by creating CPD on IT and virtual platforms. Blended learning; face-to-face combined with digital content; can be very positive and create more opportunities. Needs funding to ensure digital divide reduced

How can technology and digital outreach help us?

As above

Submissions should not exceed 2,500 words and should be forwarded by close of business on Friday 19 March, 2021.

In addition, two half day public consultation workshops will be held in March and April 2021. Details to follow.