

# Synthesis Paper: Thematic Reviews of Development Education within primary, post-primary, higher education, youth, adult and community sectors

## Introduction

In April 2011 the Development Education Unit within Irish Aid commissioned five focused reviews, to consider the extent to which development education had been successfully integrated within the primary, post-primary, higher education, youth and adult and community learning sectors. The aim of these reviews was to support Irish Aid to focus its activities and future funding on the key priorities needed to deliver the objectives set out in their strategic plan, and to inform the development of a performance framework against which progress could be monitored. The specific focus of the reviews has been on objective three from Irish Aid's development education strategy – *to support the further integration of development education in formal and non-formal education programmes in Ireland*. To that end, the reviews have all addressed five key questions:

- How well integrated is development education in the formal and non-formal education sectors?
- Is the balance of support funded by Irish Aid coherent and strategic?
- Are there gaps in the support available?
- How effectively is best practice shared within sectors?
- What are the priorities for Irish Aid in the future?

As a result of the tight focus of these reviews on objective three of the strategy, the review team has not attempted to cover a number of issues which, while in themselves important considerations, do not fall directly within the scope of the objective. In particular the reviews have not addressed the question of whether the awareness and understanding of development issues among the general public has increased, which is covered in the strategy under objective four, or capacity building of the development education sector more broadly, which is covered by objective two.

The following report aims to highlight the key issues that have emerged across the five reviews, to identify areas of consistency and difference across the sectors, and to set out a clear and consolidated list of priorities for Irish Aid to consider taking forward. The report does not seek to replicate in detail the evidence drawn together in each of the separate reviews, but draws its conclusions from the analysis carried out in each sector.

Although the reviews were undertaken on a sectoral basis it is clear that a number of common issues and themes arose through the review process and these are identified in this paper. The implementation strategy that Irish Aid adopts in relation to these reviews will need to be based on a holistic vision for development education, which will in turn inform the performance framework against which future progress will be measured.

## Methodology

The five reviews all followed a common format and methodology, which consisted of:

- **Desk Research** – including a review of the documentation relating to grant applications and decisions, project reports, evaluations where available, and existing research pertaining to each sector
- **Field Work** – including a mix of semi-structured one to one interviews, telephone interviews, focus group with providers, and visits to learning institutions in which development education was taking place and return of questionnaires.

This information was gathered during April and May 2011, and in total the fieldwork across the five reviews engaged over 120 stakeholders. The review team used a process of triangulation to test and corroborate evidence arising from both the desk-based and fieldwork phases, to build up a thorough and robust picture of development education in Ireland. Emerging issues and considerations were analysed at key points and further tested for refinement, and a stakeholder day was held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2011 during which the outcomes of the review were scrutinised further. This paper has been further refined in light of the many constructive observations and comments that arose from the stakeholder day.

All five reviews were designed to be short, sharp and action focused. They do not, therefore, represent an in-depth analysis of all aspects of funding and engagement with each sector. Measurements of engagement, impact and levels of integration are not established and therefore it has not been possible to draw on a systematic information base. Thus, much of the evidence for the collation of this paper is based on qualitative information emerging from individuals' observations and perceptions of what is happening within the sector. These observations, however, have been tested in light of the written documentation available and through extensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, both individually and in groups. This provides confidence that although the reviews have been focused and fast-paced they provide a reliable evidence base on which to construct future priorities.

## Context

Irish Aid has published a strategy for development education which sets the priorities and objectives for the period 2007-11. The overarching strategic aim is to ensure that development education reaches a wide audience in Ireland, which will be realised through four main objectives. These focus on achieving coherence at the national level, strengthening support for development education, supporting integration within the formal and non-formal education sectors, and raising public awareness and understanding of the underlying causes of global poverty and inequality and Ireland's role in tackling these issues. These reviews have focused in particular on the third objective – supporting integration of development education within the formal and non-formal education sectors. In this context, the review looks not only at the extent of the reach of development education, but also the extent to which structures within the formal and non-formal sectors are utilised to increase the quality of development education. Specific actions are set out in the strategy for each sector and these broadly cover:

- Maximising current and prospective curriculum and policy opportunities to integrate development education in the formal and non-formal sectors
- Building the capacity of educators to teach development education
- Promoting models of effective practice for delivery of development education
- Ensuring the provision of good quality educational resources

These themes are returned to throughout this report.

The European Commission has played a key role in facilitating the exchange of ideas and good practice in relation to development education between European partners. The recently published *DEAR in Europe* report makes recommendations for how the impact of this role can be strengthened.<sup>1</sup> There is a great deal that Ireland can both contribute to and gain from the pan-Europe dialogue on development education. Based on a mapping exercise carried out for the European Development Education Monitoring Report, published in 2010, Ireland scored the highest possible marks for governmental and NGDO commitment to development education. This clearly provides a strong basis on which to build.

Nonetheless, the context in which Irish Aid, learning institutions, and providers of support for development education are operating is challenging. Across all five sectors funding constraints have been identified as an important issue. On the one hand, core funding for schools, higher education institutions, youth organisations, and adult and community learning providers is reducing as part of a tighter public spending settlement. This has a number of implications. In schools, for example, it means that it is difficult to fund release time for teachers to undertake training and development. In the adult and community learning sector it is leading to organisations focusing much more on building skills for employment and reduces the available time for development education. In the youth sector the reductions in funding are having an impact on the basic viability of some organisations and a growth in part-time and volunteer youth workers. Funding constraints also make it difficult for higher education institutions to offer courses in interactive ways including small group tutorials.

In addition to reductions in core funding, there has also been a decrease in the total investment Irish Aid has made in development education, since the peak of funding in 2008/09. However, during this period the percentage of Ireland's total ODA expenditure devoted to development education overall has actually increased slightly. Over the same period funding by the larger Irish NGDOs for development education has also reduced. These combined reductions in funding are proving extremely challenging for a number of development education providers. Indeed, in some parts of the development education sector the almost total dependence on Irish Aid funding, and the issues associated with NGDO co-financing, are leading to serious challenges in relation to sustainability. This is a theme returned to later in this report.

In both the formal and non-formal sectors competing priorities also limit the extent to which development education can be fully integrated. The range of demands on schools, higher education organisations, youth groups and adult and community learning providers always risk limiting the time available for development education. In post-primary schools, for example, choices about

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<sup>1</sup> DEAR In Europe - Recommendations for future interventions by the European Commission, November 2010

where to focus valuable class-time will often be driven by the demands of examinations, and similarly difficult choices are made on a daily basis in all sectors.

A further contextual challenge for integrating development education in the non-formal sector is that key structures and mechanisms for engaging with the sector are often not well defined or established. In the youth sector, for example, there is no national curriculum in youth work which makes it much more challenging to find a specific “hook” on which to hang development education. In the adult and community learning sector, policy leadership and funding responsibilities are distributed across a number of government departments. This means that it is difficult to find clear points of entry for Irish Aid and its partners to use to promote development education within the sector.

Within these contextual constraints, it is a credit to Irish Aid and its partners that development education continues to have an established presence in schools, youth groups and other learning providers up and down the country. A significant achievement of the development education sector as a whole has been the way in which obstacles to the integration of development education have been recognised and tackled, both at the level of the individual institution and on a sectoral basis. However, the reviews have also identified a range of ways in which the integration of development education might be strengthened which are explored throughout the remainder of this report.

## Overview of support

Irish Aid’s role is to promote and contribute to the strategic policy direction for development education in Ireland, as well as fund high quality support for development education in both formal and non-formal education settings. The table below sets out the total Irish Aid investment in development education for the last four years, and roughly how that is broken down across each of the five sectors based on broad categorisations:

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Total*	5,235,000	5,456,000	4,765,000	4,385,000
Primary**	9%	12%	10%	12%
Post-primary**	30%	29%	31%	30%
Higher Education	16%	13%	10%	11%
Youth	9%	12%	11%	9%
Adult & Community	28%	25%	30%	29%
Capacity building	9%	10%	8%	9%

\*Totals rounded to the nearest €1,000

\*\*Totals for primary and post-primary include expenditure on initial teacher education in higher education institutions

This shows that the distribution of funding between sectors has remained relatively stable over the last four years. The highest proportion of funding, at just under one third, has been made in support

for the post-primary sector (although some of this also impacts on the primary sector where projects are cross-phase in scope). This is closely followed by the adult and community learning sector which attracts just over one quarter of the overall investment made. Primary, and higher education funding is very similar at around 10-12% per sector, and funding for the youth sector has fluctuated between 9% and 12%. Just under 10% of the investment overall is allocated to capacity building and awareness raising programmes. However, these categorisations must be treated with caution. There are a number of organisations whose work does not sit comfortably within a single sector, many of which for the purposes of the current review were categorised within the adult and community learning sector. One of the recommendations of this review is that Irish Aid reconsiders some of the current categorisation when looking in future at the balance of funding between sectors.

These overarching totals disguise some significant variations within sectors in the focus of Irish Aid's investment:

**In the primary sector** over two thirds of the funding has been allocated to integrate development education into initial teacher education for trainee primary teachers, through the DICE programme plus a grant to Hibernia College. The remaining investment has been made in support for school linking, support for school to school networks, the development of education resources, capacity building for teachers, research, and workshops or events delivered directly to students. Annual investment is also made, from Irish Aid's public information budget, in the Our World Awards.

**In the post-primary sector** the most significant area of investment, at 37% of the total funding, is support for school linking, twinning and immersion programmes mainly through the Worldwise programme, although some other linking projects are also funded. This is then followed by investment in the Ubuntu network which provides training and support for action research for teacher educators within education departments at 13 Higher Education Institutions, which constitutes around 18% of the total investment. The remaining funding, as in the primary sector, has supported school to school networks, the development of education resources, capacity building for teachers, and workshops or events delivered directly to students.

**In the higher education sector** around 40% of the funding has supported the production and delivery of development education modules within a range of different graduate undergraduate courses, including faculties of education, law, economics, social studies, nursing, art, human rights and equality studies in higher education institutions. A further 40% of funding has supported research into development education.

**In the youth sector** 51% of the funding allocated supports a strategic partnership with the National Youth Council of Ireland which has facilitated the inclusion and integration of development education in over 40 youth organisations nationally. The funding for NYCI and more broadly in the youth sector has supported staff capacity building in development education; the design and development of FETAC approved modules; exchange programmes (between youth workers in Ireland and the global south); the delivery of peer education interventions and the promotion of networking and co-operation within the sector (including working with and supporting migrant organisations).

This funding has also supported youth organisations around the country to engage young people in a programme of events and learning which lead up to and include One World Week for which,

between 2004 and 2010, the NYCI Development Education Programme produced 8 activity-based education resources and between 160,000 and 204,000 young people (under 25) participated in sessions using the resources. In addition to the partnership with the NYCI, the funding for development education activities in the youth sector has supported staff capacity building; the design and development of FETAC approved modules; exchange programmes; the delivery of peer education interventions and the promotion of networking and co-operation within the sector. In addition to support for NYCI, two youth organisations, ECO UNESCO and the National Council of YMCAs, have received multiannual funding.

**In the adult and community learning sector** around three quarters of the overall funding is allocated to development organisations and One World Centres. Development organisations, many with a national focus, typically use the investment to create and deliver themed development education training to particular target interest groups, for example, women's groups, returned development workers, and volunteers. Ethnic minority led development education organisations also play an important role in the adult and community sector. A vibrant immigrant population in Ireland has added value and increased the debate around development, not least by contributing a southern perspective to development issues. Four One World Centres provide a regional hub for development education in their community, which is cross-sectoral, providing a mix of training and capacity building, workshops, research and development of resources. Around a quarter of the funding available is allocated to community based organisations operating in the non-formal sector. Only around 1% of funding is allocated to statutory organisations, which is primarily targeted at integrating development education into existing adult education programmes through the provision of supplementary training support to adult education tutors.

There are strong synergies between development education and human rights education, intercultural education, and education for sustainable development and a number of the projects funded by Irish Aid focus primarily on one of these related disciplines. To some extent, therefore, the achievements and challenges captured in this report in relation to development education may equally apply to human rights education, intercultural education and education for sustainable development. However, it is development education which has been the specific focus of these reviews.

Overall Irish Aid's investment and support has led to some important strengths in the integration of development education across both the formal and non-formal sectors:

- In the primary sector there is a strategic and comprehensive approach to development education within initial teacher education, which is leading to more newly qualified teachers entering the classroom with the skills and confidence to teach development education
- In the post-primary sector there is a strategic approach to school linking and immersion, which engages around 1 in 10 post primary schools
- Across both primary and post-primary schools there are strong school networks emerging which provides opportunities for whole-school engagement with development education, support the sharing of good practice, and empower both teachers and pupils
- Development education award programmes in schools provide high profile opportunities to showcase development education work and promote innovation in the field. They also

attract schools and students to development education who may have no history of engagement with the issues.

- Extra-curricular activities within schools, for example the Loreto Justice and Peace Groups or the Concern debates, also provide an important opportunity to enthuse and empower young people on global issues
- Through the UBUNTU network, the DICE programme, and the individual research commissions supported in the higher education sector there is an increasingly robust evidence base for what is effective in development education
- The support for pre and post overseas volunteering experiences for students in higher education is enriching their experience and understanding. In excess of 300 third level students each year from a wide range of faculties and backgrounds participate in extra mural courses on global development issues offered by SUAS in seven higher education institutions. These courses are also offered to students with an interest in development education who have not taken part in overseas volunteering, and encourage them to take informed action.
- In the higher education sector, nine undergraduate modules and five graduate modules on aspects of development have been supported in universities and two Institutes of Technology
- In the youth sector there has been an increase in the number of key youth organisations recognising the relevance and value of development education within their agendas, structures and programmes of activity. For example ECO UNESCO has developed a quality mark for development education as part of their ECO flag. This has created a robust platform upon which further development can be based.
- The partnership with the NYCI remains pivotal to activity in the youth sector and has generated important outcomes including the delivery of FETAC courses on development education issues to youth workers; supporting youth organisations and youth workers to implement development education initiatives in their own organisations and within the sector; the ongoing engagement of young people, youth workers, and youth organisations in an annual programme of development education activity culminating in One World Week; advocating for a strong global dimension in national youth work policy; and, most recently, promoting the principles of development education through the national quality standards framework for youth work.
- In the adult and community sector, through the provision of support for the non-formal sectors, a wide range of learners have been reached and are engaging with global development issues, who might otherwise be marginalised from more formal or mainstream education opportunities
- The support provided through programmes for future and returning volunteers provides for continued engagement with a critical cohort of interested and experienced development practitioners. This provides opportunity and potential to further leverage their experience and knowledge to develop awareness and understanding across a range of target groups and in a broad range of settings.

- Engagement and funding of one VEC provides a successful model for future engagement with the sector. It has focused on building capacity among adult education tutors in development education, the ongoing tutor support for implementation of learning and the successful integration of development education in their existing adult education modules.
- Up to 20 FETAC accredited courses from level 3 to 6, and with direct relevance to development education, are on offer to learners and educators in the youth, adult and community learning sectors.

## How integrated is development education in the formal and non-formal sectors?

The brief summary of the support provided, and some of the key successes emanating from that support, is testament to the volume of development education activity taking place across both the formal and non-formal education sectors. It is clear that this activity is often of high quality and is reaching out to learners of all ages and from a variety of backgrounds.

Irish Aid's ambition, as stated in the White Paper (2006), is that *'every person in Ireland will have access to educational opportunities to understand their rights and responsibilities as global citizens as well as their potential to affect change for a more just and equal world'*. As currently stated this ambition, with its universal aspiration, may not be realistic, particularly given the difficult current economic climate. However, the assumption underpinning the reviews that Irish Aid's ambition is to significantly increase access to quality development education is still valid, albeit not at the scale foreseen in the White Paper, and to do so requires development education to be integrated within mainstream and non-formal education in Ireland.

Across all sectors the creation of tools and processes to measure the impact and reach of development education is in its infancy, both at a national and at a project level. This makes it very difficult to chart the progress being made in integrating development education. If Irish Aid is committed to reaching out to new audiences it will be important to find a way of tracking more closely the formal and non-formal learning organisations that are receiving support, to ensure that separate interventions and projects are not all targeting the same pool of learners. It will also be important to gain greater insight into the depth or levels of learning being provided – which might currently be anything from a one-off workshop to a fully integrated learning programme conducted over several weeks or months. The mechanisms put in place to support the performance framework should facilitate this.

Overall the five reviews identified a very mixed picture of the extent of integration of development education. In the next section, four common issues which have the capacity to either limit or support the integration of development education in both the formal and non-formal sectors are examined. Two of these relate to the leadership for development education provided by Irish Aid and other key stakeholders, and two relate more explicitly to conditions in the formal and non-formal education sectors. The four issues addressed in this section are:

- a) The clarity of Irish Aid's strategy and ambition for development education
- b) National level strategic partnerships for development education
- c) Existing and new opportunities for development education in the curriculum



- d) The confidence and skills of educators to deliver development education

### ***The clarity of Irish Aid's strategy and ambition for development education***

Across all five reviews a consistent finding has been that Irish Aid has not communicated clear and specific enough expectations to the individual sectors about its ambitions for development education. Across all five sectors there is a need to make clear:

- What are the minimum expectations for development education, and conversely what does good practice look like?
- What are Irish Aid's ambitions for the coverage of development education, either in terms of the percentage of the population reached or the percentage of learning institutions engaged?
- Who and where are the key target groups for support within the sector?
- What standard or experience of development education does Irish Aid want these groups to achieve?

Without these clearly defined aims there is a danger that sector based organisations – schools, youth organisations, higher education institutions or adult learning providers – do not have a sufficient understanding of what they are being asked to do, and it becomes very difficult for Irish Aid to measure progress or the impact of the support they fund. There is also a risk that activities become atomised and fragmented, and that valuable expertise and funding is not concentrated in the areas in which it can add most value. Setting out these goals should provide a helpful framework for development education in terms of defining ambitions for reach and quality. However, they should not limit the scope for individual providers to be innovative in creating their own unique approach to development education. They will also need to be developed in dialogue and partnership with the development education sector and key partners in the formal and non-formal education systems.

Setting out a clearer ambition for development education may also help to alleviate some of the tensions identified by the reviews around what good development education is. The most prevalent tensions relate to the place of fundraising and campaigning in development education, in particular within Irish Aid funded activities. A further tension in higher education is the relationship between development education and development studies. Resolving these tensions will require a wide-ranging dialogue with the sector but the process of setting out clear ambitions may provide the basis for resolution of some of these issues.

### ***National level strategic partnerships for development education***

The lack of clarity about what, specifically, Irish Aid is looking to achieve through its support for development education is compounded by the need to strengthen strategic engagement with key stakeholders with a national educational remit. Irish Aid is but one of a number of such stakeholders required to ensure that development education is integrated. A stronger partnership approach which includes government departments and other nationally based organisations which have responsibility for education, along with the active engagement and support of the wider development education and development community, including the NGOs is required. Achieving such a partnership approach is challenging.

In the adult and community sector responsibility for funding and policy is spread across a number of government departments, with whom stronger strategic alliances are needed to drive development education more effectively through the system. In the youth sector, key responsibility for policy on youth work lies with the newly established Department of Children and Youth Affairs, though funding for the sector also involves the Departments of Justice and Health. Engagement on youth work and youth work policy has been largely driven by NYCI with support from Irish Aid. Given the changes in policy landscape around youth work Irish Aid may need to reconsider a more strategic engagement in this area (indeed this has been noted in previous Irish Aid strategic plans). In the schools sector there is strong support for development education from the NCCA, support in principle from the Teaching Council, and good engagement from teachers' professional associations. However the opportunities for these key partners to come together and give a clear message to the sector about the importance of development education as a core part of a young person's educational experience are very few. Institutions of higher education require partnership at the level of the institution more than the level of the sector and Irish Aid should consider how to engage at this level, recognising that Irish Aid has a number of relationships, other than development education, with the higher education sector.

It is clear that there some good foundations for cross-departmental working exist, and a future strategy will need to build on these. For example, DEAC has provided a good platform for multi-agency and cross-departmental cooperation, although members of DEAC, are in the main, asked to provide advice on the basis of individual expertise, rather than taking on a representative role for their organisation as a whole. Another example is the intergovernmental steering committee for education for sustainable development which has been chaired by the Department for Education and Skills, and brings together a wide range of key agencies and government departments.

However, these do not yet go far enough. Across all the sectors the need to engage more strongly with a broad and inclusive range of other Government Departments and agencies including the Department of Education and Science and Department of Children and Youth Affairs which have policy responsibility for children, education and lifelong learning has emerged as a priority if Irish Aid and its partners are to maximise the policy opportunities available to integrate development education in the formal and non-formal education sectors. A strong and independent development education sector also has an important role in contributing to a shared approach to strategic leadership.

### ***Existing and new opportunities for development education in the formal curriculum and the non-formal education sector***

In the formal education sector it is essential that there is space in the curriculum for development education, if it is to be integrated within mainstream teaching and learning. In primary and post-primary schools, despite the fact that the curriculum is crowded, there is clear space carved out for development education. Irish Aid, and the development education community in Ireland more widely, should take some considerable credit for the inclusion of development education within the

school curriculum. Good working relationships with the NCCA, coupled with active engagement in consultations, have paid dividends. At present the opportunities include:

- In primary schools there is a strong global dimension within social, environmental and scientific education (which incorporates the subjects of history, geography and science) and the area of social, personal and health education includes an explicit strand on “Myself and the wider world”.
- At both junior and senior cycles, subject areas including geography, religion, science, business and home economics are key areas which present an important opportunity for global issues to be addressed.
- In junior cycle, the curriculum for CSPE, albeit limited to one period a week, demands a focus on issues of global justice and inequality.
- The Transition Year provides a unique opportunity to engage students in an extended focus on development issues through a dedicated module, as well as taking part in extra-curricular projects, awards or youth programmes.
- Leaving certificate applied curricula, for example the contemporary issues task within social education, provide opportunities to integrate development education, as do short courses for leaving certificate such as enterprise.
- In senior cycle preparatory work is now complete on a new leaving certificate subject, Politics and Society, which includes a significant development education focus. However, implementation has not yet been agreed.

For a teacher looking for a curriculum “hook” on which to hang development education there are myriad possibilities. In addition to the subject based opportunities outlined above there is evidence in some schools of innovative cross-curricular projects based on development education as well as extra-curricular opportunities which often empower young people to find their own voice on development issues. For example, the Concern “Voice Your Concern” debates take place in around 20% of post-primary schools every year and use the medium of debating to get young people involved and interested in development issues. However, there is nothing in the curriculum that compels schools to make development education a core part of their learning offer, and many may therefore choose to give global issues a marginal status. Nonetheless, those interviewed for the fieldwork suggest that, as a result of inclusion of a global dimension in CSPE in particular, but also the integration of justice, human rights and development issues in other subject syllabi, most post-primary schools are covering at least some development education.

In the higher education sector, the critical issue is not the curriculum per se, there are many curricula. Indeed many incorporate a strong global dimension, for example geography (especially), RE, education, environment, economics, and sociology. A more critical issue is whether the courses offered to students, funded by Irish Aid as part of development education, are compulsory or optional. Only a small number of courses, funded by Irish Aid within degree programmes are compulsory. Overall the student experience with development education in higher education sector appears to be limited. Currently, fewer than 1,000 a year, perhaps 1% of the population of students in higher education institutions attend a variety of courses funded by Irish Aid under its development education programme and most of these are optional. According to recent research higher education students are already persuaded that development is important, however there needs to be a greater focus on creating a better understanding of the causes of underdevelopment

and the structural factors relating to interactions between wealthy and poor states. To achieve this both formal and informal learning opportunities within the higher education sector are important in contributing to the student's experience.

In the youth sector the place, and importance, of a curriculum is somewhat different given that there is no agreed 'curriculum' or educational framework for the delivery of youth work. As a consequence, there is no core framework or set of negotiated guidelines in place for the delivery of development education in youth work. This has led to diverse, and sometimes conflicting, visions of development education and has led to a lack of coherence across the sector. There is a further challenge that the nature of the development education input to youth work is often seen as too "academic". Having a flexible framework from which to work would not only support a greater coherence within the sector, it would also increase the level of understanding by youth organisations and youth workers of development education issues and support the linking of local and global issues in a way suitable for the young person involved in the youth activity. The current FETAC and HETAC courses on offer in/to the youth sector should act as an initial guiding framework for further developments in this area and the involvement of third level colleges in the training of youth workers will be important for assisting standards across the sector.

In the adult and community learning sector the same absence of a formal curriculum also presents a challenge for development education and community based organisations in providing validation for their inputs. However, there is a growing number of FETAC accredited courses on offer which have direct relevance to development issues and this provides a basis on which to build. In addition, further education colleges, although situated in the formal education arena, are a key place in the system in which adults learn and which have, as yet, not formed a major focus for Irish Aid. Working with VECs to embed development education within FE college curricula, may be an important lever in future.

Overall, the evidence from these reviews suggest that opportunities within the curriculum in schools are providing an important driver towards integration in those sectors, but that in the other three sectors the leverage achieved through the curriculum, or an educational framework, is much less.

### ***The confidence and skills of educators to deliver development education***

It is clear that in all sectors one of the positive outcomes of Irish Aid support has been to build the skills and confidence of educators to deliver good quality development education in the classroom, a youth group or a community setting. In the youth sector, for example, there is now an identifiable cohort of qualified and experienced youth workers well versed in development education and a number of FETAC approved modules upon which additional training activity could be built. While it is not funded by Irish Aid, Dublin City University offers a Master's Programme in development with a specialism in development education. This is taken by a dozen students a year, mainly teachers and NGO development workers. In primary schools the positive impact of the DICE programme on the skills and motivation of newly qualified teachers entering schools has already been noted.

However, despite this evidence of the growth of a confident and competent workforce, it remains the case, across sectors, that too few educators have the skills to fully embrace development education and that this is having a negative impact on the opportunities for integration. In schools there often remains the perception that development education, as a subject, is "difficult" or

“depressing” and the evidence of teachers across the curriculum having the skills to integrate development education is limited. In the youth sector the high proportion of part-time and volunteer workers, and the still limited number of FETAC accredited training opportunities present structural barriers. There is a continued need to demonstrate the links and connections between development education and youth work to youth leaders. This might be achieved through promoting lesser used methodologies such as arts or drama, engaging youth workers through social media, and sign-posting to concise updates on what is happening in the world which are appropriate for young people. In the higher education sector there is little sharing of the expertise of development studies academics with fellow educators and with those engaged in development education, and in the adult and community learning sector there is also limited accreditation and educators within further education colleges have not, in the main, been targeted for the building of both awareness and knowledge. These issues are addressed in greater detail below, but it is clear that more focus is needed on building the capacity of the educator workforce in order to achieve integration.

## How strategic and coherent is the balance of support?

In considering whether the balance of support by Irish Aid for development education is strategic and effective, the reviews asked whether the balance of investment both within and between sectors was right, whether the investment in continued support for programme delivery versus capacity building was sustainable, and whether Irish Aid’s overall approach to investment and support in the sector was having a strategic impact. The questions are addressed in the subsections below:

### ***The balance of support within sectors***

A key finding which cut across all the sectors reviewed was that the geographical spread of provision was uneven. There are a number of possible reasons for this. In part it is a result of demographic factors. It is also likely to be influenced by the fact that the approach to funding has been, in the main, bottom-up and has not sought to target particular localities. However, it must also be recognised that at present there is no systematic data captured which would enable a more strategic approach to ensuring consistent coverage geographically.

In addition to this cross-cutting observation, in each review there were a number of key issues raised which relate to how the balance of support and investment are distributed within that sector.

**In the primary sector** over two-thirds of funding over the last four years has been allocated to support initial teacher education. This has been effective, and seized an important opportunity to capitalise on teachers’ initial training. However, the very heavy reliance on initial teacher education to make the difference in primary schools has some weaknesses. There is a concern that individual newly qualified teachers, no matter how enthusiastic and well trained in development education, will have only a limited impact in the classroom because they can easily become overwhelmed by the requirements of a new teaching role and, without the support of the school’s leadership or other teachers their influence to change practice within the school is likely to be relatively weak.

Anecdotally, it appears that many new teachers re-engage with development education as an issue around 3 years after qualifying, but at that stage the support mechanisms do not exist to refresh their training and re-direct them to the latest resources and thinking.

This analysis raises a real concern that, without supporting and follow up investment in continuous professional development, the funding for initial teacher education may not have as significant an impact in the classroom as might be hoped.

**In the post primary sector** over one third of the funding available is dedicated to school linking and immersion programmes, mainly through Worldwise. This strategic approach to investment, although not initially welcomed by all elements of the development education community, has born dividends in a number of ways. It has:

- established a strong brand for Irish Aid’s linking and immersion programme – schools talk proudly about being a “Worldwise” school
- created a means of rationalising the large potential number of opportunities for school linking, and is beginning to incentivise partnerships between organisations focused on linking and immersion activity to create a more coherent offer, built around development education
- generated a structured approach to linking which leads schools through phases of engagement and places an emphasis on linking for the sake of learning, rather than as an end in itself
- enables the targeting of support to schools in areas of disadvantage through dedicated funding
- engaged around 10% of the post-primary school population in school linking activities

However, linking and immersion schemes are, by their nature, cost intensive, not easily scalable and certainly not the only way in which schools can deliver good quality development education . There is, therefore, a strategic question to answer about whether Irish Aid is achieving maximum impact from its investment by devoting 36% of its post-primary funding to a form of intervention which only reaches around 10% of schools. By establishing linking and immersion as Irish Aid’s major flagship programme in the post-primary sector, it begs the question what support or alternative is in place for those schools that do not wish to enter into a linking or immersion scheme but who may have an ambition to deliver better development education in the classroom.

There is a clear need not to undermine the very tangible benefits that have been achieved through the Worldwise programme to date, but if Irish Aid’s ambition is to reach more schools, as well as improve the quality of development education in the schools already engaged, then options will need to be considered for the future commissioning of the programme which help to ensure that the impact of this investment is felt more widely. There would also be capacity, through re-commissioning the programme to seek greater alignment with other existing or future elements of the development education strategy.

As in the primary sector, it is also the case that there is much more investment in initial teacher education, with a particular focus on supporting teacher educators, than there is on provision for in-service and continuous professional development.

**In the higher education sector**, a considerable proportion of funding within the sector has been directed to the creation and delivery of course modules in a small number of higher education institutions. A further issue is that despite the fact 40% of students in higher education attend Institutes of Technology, only two of these organisations have come forward for funding for development education work and are therefore not currently strongly represented in the support offered by Irish Aid. This is potentially a missed opportunity, although further work would be needed to scope out whether there are target groups of students within these higher education institutions who would particularly benefit from opportunities to access development education.

**In the youth sector** there is concern that despite the significant investment in a strategic national partnership through NYCI, the geographical spread of projects is uneven nationally with significant areas of the country poorly served. The review also found that when coverage is described by organisations as ‘national’, such coverage is likely to be very thin on the ground. This is an issue which cuts across all sectors, but came to light particularly strongly in the youth sector. In addition to the imbalance in geographical coverage, there are important areas of youth work still not adequately engaged with development education, such as sport and the arts. Also noted by the review was the lack of funding or engagement with a number of key youth based organisations which have a strategic role in relation to the sector. Although a number of these organisations are overloaded in terms of their own work programmes, it is still important to extend development education to new target audiences through the larger youth organisations including for example Foróige and those youth structures operating under the umbrella of the VECs.

**In the adult and community learning sector** the main imbalance identified was the very small proportion of funding (just 1% overall) allocated to work with statutory adult learning organisations such as VECs and for further education more generally. However, where such work was taking place it was showing great promise in terms of its capacity to train educators and integrate development education within the learning taking place. The VECs were identified in the review as an area with potential for future focus, and could provide strategic reach and good opportunities for multiplier effects.

A cross-cutting issue which emerged in a number of review areas was that a high proportion of funding was allocated to development education providers in order to “supply” high quality inputs such as training, resources or learner workshops. In contrast, less funding was allocated to learning institutions themselves – for example schools, youth groups or adult and community learning providers. The successful experience of the Worldwise programme, through which small grants are distributed to schools and in turn create demand for inputs from a shortlist of high quality development education organisations, is a model which may have wider potential.

### ***The sustainability of funding***

In most of the review areas concerns were raised in relation to the sustainability of the funding provided by Irish Aid. There are three particular issues to highlight:

Irish Aid has provided funding, either in the form of annual grants or multi-annual programmes, to a very wide array of specialist development education providers working across both the formal and non-formal education sectors for considerably more than a decade. The funding provided has, in many ways, made a strong contribution to creating a vibrant and broad-based sector with significant

expertise. However, many of these organisations are relatively small and rely almost entirely on Irish Aid support for their continued existence. This is a precarious situation and does not bode well for the longevity of the sector or maintaining the expertise that has been developed.

There are not many alternative sources of funding available, but those sources which exist, for example EU funding, are not being fully exploited. The sector has experienced significant challenges associated with the EU regulations for development education funding including the minimum size for projects to attract funding and the long time frame in which funding decisions are made. There is a need, therefore, to build the capacity of the development education sector further to enable organisation to work together and compete successfully for EU funding. This may be a key future role for IDEA. Irish Aid may also wish to consider the nature of its support in relation to EU funding and may have a role to play at a European level in terms of influencing European partners to support development education and to make applications for funding sustainable and meaningful.

The second issue is that in many cases Irish Aid is funding direct interventions by development education providers with groups of learners – children in schools, young people or youth workers in a youth organisation, or an evening session in a community centre – which may be of high quality in themselves but do not always build the capacity of the system. For example, key skills in development education are not transferred to the class teacher or the youth worker, and therefore the opportunities for the learning to be replicated, and hence the sustainability of the investment, are diminished. It is not a question of either funding direct delivery or capacity building, but the need to achieve the right balance between the two and to maximise the potential for time-limited interventions to also facilitate longer term change.

The final issue is the sustainability of funding given to initiate development education programmes within learning organisations. This is a particular concern in the higher education sector where the support provided through Irish Aid funding has enabled development education modules to be designed and delivered in specific degree courses, but little thought has been given to how these modules or programmes are to be mainstreamed over time within the higher education institutions own resources. This is particularly difficult given Irish Aid's expectation of learner-centred and action-based methodologies and the costs associated with these. A consequence of this is that Irish Aid investment is restricted to continuing to support programmes which are already underway, without being able to expand the reach into new areas or target audiences.

### ***The extent to which the funding mechanisms facilitate an overall strategic response to issues in each sector***

A key concern across all the reviews conducted was that the overall pattern of support provided by Irish Aid investment, when seen in its entirety, was too open ended and piecemeal and did not strategically respond to the key issues or gaps in each sector. Moreover, Irish Aid may not have done enough to establish the strategic connections between the various activities that are funded. For example, knowledge about which schools take part in the Our World Awards could be used to target additional support to those schools in order to deepen their engagement in development education, or it would be possible to follow up on DICE students as newly qualified teachers in order to provide induction or mentoring programmes.



To some extent the fragmentation of support is driven by the way in which funding is administered through grants. Currently almost 75% of funding is allocated through the Grants Scheme with the remainder allocated to a number of key partnership projects ( DICE, Worldwide and NYDEP).

A good fit with Irish Aid's criteria for development education for each individual programme is ensured through the funding criteria and the grant application process. However this method of funding does not lend itself to an overall programme of support which is strategically coherent and focused. The focus of the individual projects is essentially determined in a bottom-up fashion. This means that irrespective of the quality and strategic fit of each project individually, the totality of support funded is likely to be piecemeal and fragmented.

In order to achieve a more strategic approach Irish Aid might need to consider moving gradually towards a more mixed approach to funding which, while retaining grant-giving, would include a larger proportion of funding targeted for specific priorities. In essence a commissioning approach and a more targeted grants scheme would mean that Irish Aid funding would be able to respond more strategically to issues arising in the sector. Some of this already takes place, for example the strategic partnerships with Leargas in relation to the Worldwide programme, with DICE in relation to initial teacher education, and with NYCI are based on a variety of commissioning models. A more commissioning based approach might also be valuable in relation to research for development education.

If Irish Aid were to move towards a more balanced and mixed funding model, which included a greater commissioning element and more defined strategic priorities, it would undoubtedly make the support on offer more strategic. However, Irish Aid also has a stated commitment to promote broader engagement by civil society organisations in development education. This is important in maintaining the dynamism and vibrancy of the sector, and allowing innovative bottom up solutions to entrenched problems to emerge. It has to be recognised that many of the smaller organisations which Irish Aid funds are very reliant on that investment. Striking the right balance between commissioning and grant giving will be important, and maintaining funding which supports innovation will need to remain a key part of the mix. Irish Aid will also need to consider, in this context, how funding for NGOs through Irish Aid's Civil Society funding schemes can be directed to better support an agreed set of priorities.

There may be an important role going forward for membership bodies such as IDEA to help build the capacity of organisations to respond effectively to any changes that might be introduced, and to maximise their capacity to bid successfully for a range of different funding routes. Consideration of the balance of funding in future will also need to be informed by an understanding of how the totality of potential funding available, through Irish Aid, the EU, NGOs and other sources, might best be aligned to achieve the greatest possible impact. This will be an important dialogue to take forward with IDEA and some of the main NGO funders.

### ***The balance of support between sectors***

The reviews noted that the distribution of funding between sectors has developed incrementally, as a result of grant applications and decisions, changing ministerial priorities, and capitalising on strategic opportunities that have arisen, rather than an overall investment strategy. It is therefore recognised that further work may need to be done to establish the optimum allocation of funding

between sectors. For this work to take place it would be helpful to establish an agreed set of criteria against which decisions could be taken. These might include:

- The number of learners that could potentially be reached
- The capacity of the learner audience to engage critically with development issues
- The opportunities for engagement in a sector, including identifying potential multipliers
- The readiness and ability of the learner audience to act on the learning
- The existing capacity of providers
- The sustainability of investment and alignment with existing structures

In order to facilitate this process it may also be helpful to carry out a baseline needs assessment of the different target audiences for development education, how well they are currently served by existing support, and how this might influence the balance of support in future.

However, the reviews also identified that in some cases the original categorisation of funding, determined through the mid-term review which took place in 2010, could be misleading in terms of understanding the true distribution across sectors. The particular issues identified were:

- In the schools sector a very significant proportion of funding is allocated to higher education institutions and colleges of education to support both initial teacher education and research. For the Ubuntu network in particular (currently categorised as post-primary), it could be argued that their core focus is on support for action research by teacher educators and that their impact is mainly felt in the higher education sector.
- In the adult community learning sector, and to a lesser extent in the youth sector, a significant proportion of funding is devoted to specialist development education organisations which work across sectors, engaging with a number of different target audiences and whose expertise and capacity building work lead to benefit which go wider than just the adult, community or youth audiences. One World Centres, ethnic minority led development organisations, arts-based organisations, and organisations offering support for volunteers and volunteering are examples of organisations which have, for the purposes of this review, been classified within the adult and community learning sector but whose role and remit extends to a range of target audiences outside that sector.

These issues about categorisation are more than simply cosmetic or administrative as they change the understanding of the balance between sectors. It is therefore recommended that Irish Aid consider revising the categorisation of some projects funded in order to achieve a more representative basis on which to consider the strategic distribution of funding across sectors.

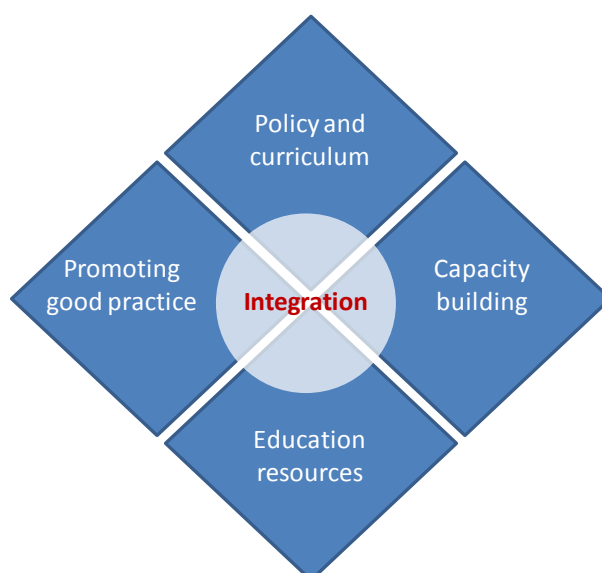
### **Are there gaps in the support available?**

The analysis set out in the preceding sections identifies a number of areas in which support for development education across sectors could be strengthened or introduced. This section aims to bring together a comprehensive overview of the areas of unmet need by addressing the key gaps in support for development education.

The support provided as a result of Irish Aid funding, and indeed Irish Aid’s own strategic priorities for integrating development education within the formal and non-formal education sectors, can be categorised into four main areas

1. **Support to maximise new and existing policy and curriculum opportunities, in formal and non-formal education**
2. **Support to build the capacity of educators to deliver good quality development education**
3. **Support to promote and share good practice in development education**
4. **Support for the development of and access to high quality education resources**

Together, and combined with clear strategic leadership by Irish Aid, these four aspects of support contribute towards a coherent approach to integrating development education, as illustrated in the diagram below, and provide an organising framework for the next two sections of this report:



### ***Gaps in support to maximise new policy and curriculum in formal and non-formal education***

**In the primary and post-primary sectors** opportunities within the curriculum, as discussed above, are generally strong, and there is a need to target training, resources and other support so that schools are able to make the most of the opportunities already available. However, there are new opportunities on the horizon which need to be seized and could be a specific focus for Irish Aid. These include:

- The forthcoming review of the junior cycle curriculum is likely to emphasise the development of a more flexible curriculum and creating linkages across learning and subjects. This may mean schools do more cross-curricular topics, and project work and have greater opportunities to innovate locally in the design of their curriculum. This poses both opportunities and challenges for development education. It may mean that the current focus on development education within CSPE is lost or diluted, however development education lends itself well to cross-curricula skills based project work and therefore greater

opportunities may arise. It is likely that development education methodologies will be valued more as being aligned with the new approach.

- Transition Year modules for development education are being produced by individual organisations, and in some cases schools or school networks, and accredited by the NCCA. A number of good quality modules have already been produced with support from Irish Aid and others. There is an opportunity for Irish Aid to incentivise schools to take up and use the units which have been produced, or even develop their own units, in order to maximise the potential space for development education within Transition Year and deliver high quality programmes linked to defined learning outcomes. These units may in turn provide models that could be applied to a revised junior cycle curriculum.
- The implementation of *Politics and Society* in senior cycle, if it goes ahead, will be another important opportunity for Irish Aid and its partners to engage. Although it is likely to be a niche subject, its inclusion in senior cycle may raise the profile of citizenship and global issues within post primary schools generally. Furthermore, the implementation is likely to involve training for teachers, which could significantly increase the pool of specialist subject teachers in this area and have a beneficial knock-on effect for teaching in CSPE, in which most teachers are not currently subject specialists.

Beyond the curriculum developments in the schools sector, there is a review underway of initial teacher education in Ireland and an opportunity for Irish Aid to engage with this in order to influence how the additional time available for teacher education might be used to support the better integration of development education.

**In the higher education sector** the key issue is too few institutions have a whole-organisation focus on development, and within that on development education, which means that coverage becomes fragmented often in optional modules, available to a small minority of students. Irish Aid should therefore consider targeting their support towards Higher Education Institutions prepared to make development education a whole-organisation focus. This might start with a dialogue with interested institutions to explore how, and to what extent, development education could be integrated in formal, non formal and informal education activities on campus.

**In the youth sector**, the partnership with NYCI, while it has delivered on many of its aims, now needs a refreshed focus to enable effective engagement with the implementation of the National Quality Standards Framework for youth work and the new Children's Strategy to ensure that development education is integrated. As discussed previously in this report, there is no agreed core framework for delivering development education through youth work. A key gap, therefore, for Irish Aid to explore in partnership with the youth sector is the creation of a framework for development education which would be of value to youth organisations in terms of quality, standards, accreditation and impact.

**In the adult and community learning sector** a significant gap identified is the lack of structural engagement with further education, and the consequent missed opportunities within the further education curriculum to maximise exposure to development education. Although an identified target area in the strategic plan, the further education element of the sector has not been supported in a coherent and systematic way. Currently there are only two colleges providing accredited further education opportunities for development education. Experiences of engagement with the VEC,

although on a relatively small scale to date, have nonetheless been very positive. There is need to engage at a structural level both within the VEC's and through the accrediting body, FETAC, to establish alliances and explore options and potential strategies for the development of an accredited curriculum for use within the further education arena.

In the sector more broadly, notwithstanding the uniqueness of the diversity of opportunity for the nature of engagement, in the sector and the desire to retain this as a feature, there is a need to establish and implement standards for the delivery of development education training. Curriculum options, coupled with accreditation standards and support for adult and community education providers on how to use them, would lever up the quality of development education within the sector in both the formal and non-formal arenas.

### ***Gaps in the support to build the capacity of development educators***

**In both the primary and the post-primary sectors** the reviews identified a strategic gap in relation to the provision of ongoing continuous professional development for teachers. In both sectors previous attempts to build support for continuous professional development have proved very difficult to implement, in particular in terms of the restrictions in place on releasing teachers from class. However, there are opportunities available which could be further exploited, including perhaps the additional 33 hours available within schools for professional development as a result of the recent Croke Park agreement, although the potential time available for development education within this is not clear.

In looking to support professional development of teachers in the future there is a need to build both on what is known to be effective, and what experience has shown to be possible. Best practice internationally suggests that teachers learn best when they have the opportunity to learn from their peers, and have the chance to try out new skills and techniques in the classroom and then refine them with expert input and guidance. The experience of training in development education in Ireland also indicates that practically speaking it will need to be provided in ways that does not take teachers out of the classroom. This means providing after school, weekend and holiday-time training opportunities, making peer support available directly in the classroom, or utilising the benefits of online and distance learning.

In the primary sector the popularity of online training options was demonstrated by the INTO summer course which attracted over 1,200 teachers. There is an opportunity now to build and consolidate a systematic approach to online training by commissioning the development of specific training modules at different levels and targeted towards teachers with different depths of experience. It may also be possible to create a natural follow-up to the training by maintaining an on-line professional community for those who wish to continue their engagement – including for example DICE alumni. Online is not sufficient as the only route for professional development, but there is scope to exploit it far more than is currently the case.

Within the post-primary sector the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) currently uses serving teachers to provide after school and evening training to their peers in education centres across the country in CSPE and other development related subjects. It would be worth exploring

whether, with the backing of the Department of Education and Science (DES), Irish Aid might establish a strategic alliance with the PDST, backed by funding in order to enhance their current CPD offer in relation to development education and spread it further. This could also provide opportunities to create semi-formal networks of teachers and further develop certified or accredited training that would be recognised by the teaching council. There is, moreover, a strong link between good quality continuous professional development and systematic mechanisms for the sharing of good practice between and within schools. To deepen the sharing of good practice the review has recommended identifying cadres of excellent teachers who might be released on a part-time basis to support their peers in the classroom, and incentivising whole school approaches to development education through targeting school principals and creating a whole-school award scheme. These proposals are explored in the following section, and should be seen as part of a continuum which incentives professional development at a number of levels.

In addition to continuous professional development, there is a need to further reinforce initial teacher education in the post-primary sector. Achieving good coverage of development education in initial teacher education in post-primary is more challenging than at primary: the time available for initial teacher education is much less and trainees specialise in particular subject areas. It is currently unclear how many teacher trainees in the post-primary sector are receiving training in development education during their initial teacher education, and what the direct impact has been on the skills of practising teachers in the classroom. The reality is likely to be that practice differs very significantly between individual higher education institutions and between different subjects. Given this uncertainty, it would be useful to set a more targeted ambition around ITE in the post-primary sector and consider using Irish Aid funding to leverage a specified number of hours of development education training for all trainee teachers in subject areas most strongly linked to development education and most likely to encounter global issues in the curriculum, such as CSPE, religion, geography, science and economics, perhaps combined with a more extensive elective option for those who are very personally motivated by development issues. Alternatively, given the challenges associated with integrating development education within initial teacher education in the post-primary phase, Irish Aid might consider whether greater impact for the available funding might be achieved through targeting continuous professional development in post-primary, rather than initial teacher education.

**In the higher education sector** Irish Aid has supported the Ubuntu network to undertake a peer-reviewed programme of action research which takes a holistic approach to integrating development education across post-primary teacher education programmes by supporting teacher educators to identify teaching interventions or strategies that are appropriate to their teaching context and professional organisation. There has also been some work in integrating development education in faculties and degree courses outside of education departments and departments of development studies. However, this is too often dependent on specific lecturer posts, directly funded by Irish Aid, and has not led to the systematic building of capacity of educators and other staff in key disciplines within the higher education institution. An option for Irish Aid to consider, therefore, would be to invest in building capacity in specific professions other than education which naturally lend themselves to both a global and developmental context, with a view to integrating development education more systematically in undergraduate degree programmes in those professions. This might be achieved by developing a coherent approach in a small number of organisations initially and then scaling up in the medium to long term. There is a need to build the 'business case' for more

development education within Third Level, as well as a critical mass of actors. Working with existing or potential champions of development education in higher education will be important.

**In the youth sector** maintaining a cohort of experienced and qualified youth workers with development education expertise is central to any strategy now and in the future, and ensuring that such a cohort is sustained at a 'critical minimum level'. This is particularly important during a period in which there is a high degree of turnover in the sector. There are still large cohorts of youth workers and managers who have not been trained in development education. It must also be remembered that the youth sector is largely weighted towards volunteer leaders which presents particular challenges for the integration of development education into the sector in terms of how to provide appropriate training, the capacity and time of volunteers to undertake training, and the fact that focusing on formal structures in youth work will not reach all youth leaders in the sector. In this context it is necessary to strike the right balance between continuing to invest in capacity building for the core cohort of development education youth workers and the need to extend the reach of training to groups of youth workers not previously targeted.

**In the adult and community learning sector** evidence from the fieldwork indicates that there is little or no support available for ongoing professional development for educators, in both the non-formal and formal settings, and this undermines confidence in delivery within the sector. There is a clear view from those in the field that there are too few trained people to deliver development education effectively in adult and community settings.

### ***Gaps in promoting and sharing good practice***

Across all the reviews, weaknesses were noted in the mechanisms to systematically share and promote good practice both between and within organisations. In the primary and post-primary sectors opportunities do exist to showcase good practice, such as award schemes, effective school to school networks, and high profile events. However, these opportunities do not go far enough, and too often remain limited to those who are already part of, and engaged with, the development education community. However, there was evidence from the reviews of primary and post-primary provision that award schemes could be a common entry point into development education for schools that previously had little engagement in global issues, and therefore have the potential to increase the reach of current good practice.

In both the youth and adult and community learning sectors it was found that mechanisms for demonstrating and evidencing what is happening in the sector, and what works, in terms of development education tended to be informal and opportunistic, rather than structured and coherent. A lot of this is explained by the diversity of organisations operating within the sectors. Much of what happens in terms of development education in these sectors remains unshared and unprocessed and most organisations agree that this is something they would like to see changed. There is the potential to make greater use of social media, such as social networking sites, to reach out to new audiences in these sectors, and possibly across sectors.

In the higher education sector, despite the fact that many universities have graduate programmes in development studies and some also have specialist institutes devoted to development issues, these bodies are not sharing their learning sufficiently with development education programmes either

within the higher education sector, or more broadly. There may be benefit in commissioning more targeted research on good practice, linked to priorities, and ensuring that this is disseminated strategically which has not always been the case with the outputs of existing research.

In addition to the limitations of sharing and promoting good practice between sectors, a number of the reviews also identified issues within organisations. In the primary, post-primary, youth and higher education reviews it was found that too often development education was taken forward within an organisation by a single enthusiast – a teacher or a lecturer – who was individually highly committed but was limited in terms of what they could achieve without the wider support and backing of the organisation. This lack of whole-organisation approaches to development education also raises concerns for the sustainability of development education where the knowledge, skills and experience is too tied to an individual, rather than a whole organisation approach. This points to the need for more support for promoting and sharing good practice within organisations, as well as between them. It also indicates the need to target education leaders, for example school principals, more explicitly.

At present in the schools sector, for example, there is very little communication, activity, or support directed at school principals and yet they are critical to achieving integration in the sector. Teachers interviewed as part of the review process indicated how important it was to have the support of senior leaders within the school for their work to embed development education in teaching and learning. The experience of some very effective school to school networks also indicate the critical role that senior leaders within a school play in establishing an ethos and culture in which development education can thrive.

In order to better promote the sharing of good practice within and between organisations there are a number of options for Irish Aid to consider. These include:

- Increase support for school to school networks, with an emphasis on sharing the experience of established networks more widely
- Consider expanding the structured networking opportunities and expectations into the recommissioning of the Worldwide schools programme, within the context of the pilot network activity already underway
- Identify excellent development education practitioners in primary and post-primary schools and fund their release time to work directly with other teachers in other schools, possibly through networks or other clusters
- Develop a strategy for more systematically communicating with and engaging primary and post-primary school principals on development education issues
- Create some form of award to recognise successful whole school approaches to development education, based on cooperative learning and building on the success and experience of various existing awards schemes, such as green schools, young social innovators, young scientist and our world awards. However, this is contested in some sectors and is something that would need to be explored further before implementation. Awards can be seen ‘as competition’ rather than as developing quality within an organisation or between a group of people.
- Work with the youth sector to support the creation of a national forum to support the structured, ongoing and considered sharing of practice between youth sector organisations.



- Create a central online hub for information sharing and peer dialogue in the adult and community learning sector, and facilitate and support networks for targeted information exchange
- Irish Aid more broadly to work with those in the development education sector to enhance each other's work and information sharing with target groups and the wider public.
- Use social media (such as social networking sites) more extensively to bring development education to new audiences on a cross-sector basis

### ***Gaps in the development of and access to high quality teaching resources***

In all five reviews there were considerable strengths noted in terms of the development of resources. In schools a range of high-quality curriculum linked resources have been created, and increasingly these are being provided on an "on demand" basis which gives a clearer indication of use and take-up. In the youth sector many individual organisations have developed resources which support their engagement with youth groups, and some very good practice is emerging in the use of arts and drama based activities to deliver development education. In the adult and community learning sector an array of training materials and resources has been developed by a number of the organisations in the sector, many addressing particular development education themes. Many of the resources produced have also been used successfully on a cross-sectoral basis.

However, there is more to be done to build on the promising foundation that has been laid. Across the sectors there is a need to carry out a comprehensive audit of what is available, so that where there are critical gaps in the resources on offer (either in terms of subject matter, age-range or target audience) these can be commissioned and filled. In the youth sector, in particular, it was found that some resources do not meet the needs of young people involved in youth work, or make clear enough to youth workers how to make effective links between local and global issues. The audit may also consider the availability of Irish language resources. A particular issue identified in the school sector was the poor quality of development education material in textbooks which still underpin teaching and learning in many schools.

There is also a need to improve access to the resources which have already been developed and provide better mechanisms for navigating the resources including how to choose relevant resources for the target groups, and how to use resources creatively by adapting them to groups' interest and needs. There is an online portal, [www.developmenteducation.ie](http://www.developmenteducation.ie), which contains many of the published resources, but this is not comprehensive or fully searchable. It would be helpful to build on this to increase the scope of what is included, introduce a more sophisticated cataloguing of resources to enable educators to search what is available, and to create an interactive dimension to enable educators to discuss with each other the merits of different resources and how they can be implemented. In the post-primary sector it will be very important to integrate the growing number of Transition Unit modules into a coherent set of resources.

The cataloguing of resources is currently underway, but is a complex process. This portal should also be expanded to include more resources developed for the youth sector and extended to the adult and community sector, to encourage educators in those sectors to share what they have developed, and learn from others. In the higher education sector, developed modules could be made available

on line. This could also facilitate greater sharing of resources across sectors, if the cataloguing and search function included information on the appropriateness of resources for different target audiences and age groups. It will also be important that links to the site are placed on websites that are frequented by educators. Some of the reviews found that at present the site appears not to be well known beyond the development education community.

## What are the possible future priorities for Irish Aid?

In drawing together the findings of this report, this section will consider how Irish Aid's priorities for funding and support may need to evolve to meet the needs identified. It is clear that there are many aspects of the support provided for development education which are working well and should be continued. However, the five reviews have identified a number of areas in which additional focus or a change in direction is recommended.

The possible priorities set out below are the key recommendations which arose from the individual reviews. These are based on the best information and knowledge available to the review team, and are intended as a helpful set of suggestions for Irish Aid. It is clear, however, that there are many ways in which the issues identified by these reviews could be addressed and the recommendations set out below are not intended to be seen as the only possible solutions. It is also critical that the forward agenda forms a coherent and integrated strategy, which these suggested priorities are designed to support.

The possible priorities articulated would together form an ambitious future agenda. It is now for Irish Aid to consider these and determine whether it is feasible, or desirable, to implement some or all of them. It remains the case that there is no "new money" for development education, and therefore emerging priorities can only be supported by refocusing existing resources. In this context, sustainability of initiatives is critical and it will be necessary for Irish Aid to give high priority to initiatives that can continue when Irish Aid support ends. As stated at the outset of this paper, the context in which development education is operating is challenging and this must inform the decisions made by Irish Aid. It is clear that an incremental and phased approach to any changes agreed will be important, and whatever choices are made it will be essential that a clear action plan for the implementation of change is set out and communicated to all stakeholders. There is also an important role for the development education sector to contribute their expertise to the shaping and implementation of future priorities.

### ***Priorities for maximising policy and curriculum opportunities***

- Target resources and training to encourage schools to make the most of existing curriculum opportunities, both in terms of individual subjects which are highly amendable to development education and cross-curricular project based work
- Seek to maximise the focus on development education in the forthcoming junior cycle review, particularly by incentivising more cross-curricular treatment of development education, and the implementation of the new politics and society subject in senior cycle
- Further promote the development, take-up and sharing of Transition Units

- Facilitate the creation of development education modules for leaving certificate applied courses, for example in social education, and short courses such as enterprise
- Engage with the current review of the structure and content of initial teacher education in both the primary and post-primary sectors in order to maximise opportunities to integrate development education
- Refocus and re-energise the partnership with the youth sector in order to take advantage of policy developments, including the implementation of the children's strategy and the NSQF and consider how, by working through a central body or partnership, organisations with expertise in development education and youth work might be able to take greater ownership and responsibility for development education in the sector
- Consider the development of a national curriculum or framework in youth work and development education and its associated outputs such as a set of guidelines and a framework for assessing impact. Such an initiative should include key youth organisations and possibly NUI Maynooth.
- Target VEC and Further Training and Education (FTE ) for the integration of development education into Adult and Community Programmes and Further Training Programmes – both at policy level and through curriculum integration
- Focus on integrating development education into courses for a limited number of professions other than education, and concentrate support for module development on these two professions. Support should aim at all levels of the profession, including professional training and in-service supports.

#### ***Priorities to support building the capacity of educators***

- Consider building a DICE alumni network for teachers who have received development education training, so that there are systems in place to enable them to maintain contact with each other and keep abreast of the latest updates in development education
- Ensure that all trainee teachers within the post-primary sector, in specific and defined subject areas, have access to a basic level of development education training
- Increase the reach of in-service training through targeted investment in the Professional Development Service for Teachers in the post-primary sector and through more systematic use of online training in the primary sector- including perhaps targeted at DICE graduates
- Ensure the availability of accredited training for targeted groups of youth workers and adult and community learning educators, formal and non-formal, through existing training routes
- Engage with relevant institutions in higher education to determine how they can expand their offer at undergraduate and graduate level to strengthen professional development of development educators within different sectors

#### ***Priorities to support the sharing and promotion of good practice***

- Identify a cadre of excellent teachers in primary and post-primary schools and look at options for funding some release time to provide peer to peer development education support in other schools, or alternatively build a group of externally based trainers with capacity to go into schools

- Create a new whole-school global award, with the appropriate support and materials, to incentivise whole school approaches to development education, building on the success of various awards schemes
- Incentivise schools to create networks through commissioning the development of a how-to guide on getting the most out of a school network and actively promoting the availability of network funding
- Recommission the Worldwide programme so that schools with mature and self-sustaining global partnerships become development education champions and lead networks of schools in Ireland
- In the youth sector support the creation of a national forum or structure for sharing practice and experiences. The possible role of the Youth Information Centres Network should be considered in this context
- Explore further the issue of regional variations in the coverage of development education in youth work, and commission a targeted approach to spreading good practice to those areas currently under-represented
- Use existing structures and networks, such as the one world centres, community development networks and adult education networks to more systematically promote good practice in the adult and community learning sector
- Commission research to identify and document good practice in delivering development education. The purpose should be to disseminate and encourage replication
- Consider options for how demand for development education expertise and inputs can be built in schools, youth groups, further education providers, higher education institutions and adult and community learning providers
- Consider providing networking opportunities for different actors in development education at Third level to support mutual learning and collaboration and or partnership
- Use social media (such as social networking sites) more extensively to bring development education to new audiences on a cross-sector basis

### ***Priorities to support the development and accessibility of education resources***

- Audit the full range of education resources available, across sectors, identify critical gaps and commission the development of resources to fill these
- Commission an on-line resource bank and good practice hub for educators in both the formal and non-formal sectors which is interactive, building on the existing [www.developmenteducation.ie](http://www.developmenteducation.ie) site. This could also include modules on development education developed and offered within HEIs.
- Ensure that the online resource bank is linked into mainstream formal and non-formal education websites and online communities that are frequented by educators
- Engage with textbook manufacturers to improve the quality and currency of the development education material contained in textbooks
- Develop a strategy to publicise new and existing educational resources

### ***Priorities for Irish Aid's strategic leadership of development education***

Irish Aid's strong commitment to development education, and its track record over a number of years in supporting the sector was recognised by the reviews of the various sectors. A number of gaps and suggested priorities for overall support for development education were identified, which if implemented have implications for Irish Aid's strategic leadership in the area. Further clarification is required in setting out what Irish Aid sees as the purpose, the priorities, the kind of results it expects to see in each of the five sectors reviewed. These need to be shared and communicated more widely. It will necessitate strengthened cross-departmental leadership at a national government level and with other strategic partners. Support is required for providers to measure the impact of their work. In some cases the role of Irish Aid will be to take the lead. In other instances it will be for Irish Aid to facilitate a strategic response across a number of different partners. The priorities include:

- Work with other government departments and key strategic partners to create a more coherent sense of shared leadership of the development education agenda, including outlining clearer expectations of a minimum offer for learners in development education in each sector and what good practice looks like
- Agree aspirational targets by sector, clearly communicate these, and identify appropriate indicators by which these can be measured
- Create a voluntary self-evaluation tool that organisations can use to assess themselves in order to support their further progress in integrating development education in learning. This would enable organisations to assess the depth and levels of learning provided
- Facilitate a dialogue with the sector around what constitutes good practice in relation to the action element within development education, including both fundraising and campaigning across sectors, and the place of development studies in higher education
- Consider moving towards a more mixed and balanced funding model, which builds on current commissioning approaches and aligns grant giving more towards defined strategic priorities, in order to enable a more strategic and joined up programme of support to be put in place

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