

Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid

Terms of Reference, July 2011

Background

A Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid, published in 2006, was one of the commitments in the Programme for Government. Minister of State for Trade and Development, Jan O Sullivan will lead the Review.

The *Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid* will examine changes in the context in which the Government's overseas aid programme operates, five years on from the publication of the White Paper. It will examine progress in meeting the commitments contained in the White Paper, and take stock of experience to date and the changed economic environment. It will draw from analysis of independent evaluations carried out on the aid programme and will examine changes in the international context for aid and responses from other donor countries, including emerging economies. The Review will involve wide consultation, and will set forward the way ahead, with a view to ensuring that Irish Aid remains at the cutting edge in reducing poverty and vulnerability, and increasing opportunity in developing countries.

The Review will be undertaken in consultation with interested parties over the coming year, culminating in the publication of the Review report in July 2012.

Aim of the Review

The aim of the *Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid* is to analyse the changing national and international context in which the aid programme is being implemented, assess progress in meeting the commitments made in the White Paper, draw on the lessons and experience to date, and set out the policy direction for the way ahead.

The Process

The *Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid* will be led by the Minister of State for Trade and Development at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Strong independent oversight of the Review will be provided by the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group (EAG). The EAG will report directly to the Minister of State. A Working Group will be established within the Development Cooperation Division of DFA, responsible for resourcing the Review process.

The Review will draw upon the wealth of evidence, research and contributions already in place, as well as existing processes (for example, the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Mid Term Review of Irish Aid in September 2011, the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in November 2011, Country Strategy Paper evaluations, the work of NGOs, and the views of recipients of Irish ODA and other partners).

There will be opportunities for interested stakeholders and parties to contribute directly to the Review process at key stages, as set out below. In addition, a web-based forum will be established in order to share outputs and stimulate the contribution of views. It will also be important to consult, as far as is feasible, with stakeholders in developing countries (through, for example, the Irish Embassies/offices).

There will be a focused number of public meetings hosted by the Minister of State which will stimulate discussion and debate on development cooperation and the ongoing review.

Timetable

July 1st 2011 - Minister of State and EAG meet and agree on ToRs for the Review.

July to December 2011 – Internal review of context and current trends and evidence on progress to date, as well as preparations for the consultation

January 2012 to March 2012 – Main consultation period

April 2012 – Drafting of *Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid*

July 2012 - Publication of the *Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid*

Conclusion

Development cooperation, as the White Paper makes clear, is an integral part of Ireland's foreign policy. Guided by the principles of partnership, public ownership and transparency, effectiveness and quality assurance, coherence and long-term sustainability, the Irish Aid programme is having a significant impact on reducing poverty and vulnerability.

The Review of the White Paper affords an opportunity to take stock, to reflect on the fast-changing global environment, and to set out an approach on how Ireland's development cooperation programme can continue to be relevant, delivering real results, making change happen on the ground.