

DÓCHAS

The Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations

Press Statement

14 October 2014

Budget 2015

Government maintains overseas aid budget but fails to produce credible plan for future, say Irish NGOs

In response to today's Budget 2015 announcement, Dóchas, the network of Ireland's overseas development NGOs, said it is disappointed that despite the economic recovery, the Government has failed to make progress towards the UN overseas aid target of 0.7% GNI. The umbrella body said it is urgently calling on the Government to lay out its plan for the future of Ireland's aid programme.

Speaking on behalf of 61 Irish NGOs, Dóchas Director Hans Zomer said:

"We acknowledge that in Budget 2015 the government has halted the trend of repeated cuts to the aid budget. However, the Minister made no reference to the commitment in the Programme for Government, that Ireland will achieve the UN target of 0.7 GNI on overseas aid. We now call, as we did in our Budget submission, on the Government to urgently set out a strategy for meeting the UN target."

"Minister Flanagan says that today's decision to stop the cuts will strengthen Ireland's voice internationally. There is no doubt that Ireland's positive reputation in the area of overseas aid has increased our influence abroad. We need to build on that reputation, and build partnerships for the future, by clearly outlining Ireland's plan for meeting its overseas development commitments," he continued.

Dóchas highlighted that there continues to be overwhelming public support in Irish society for overseas aid. In July, an opinion poll undertaken by Ipsos MRBI, found that a very large majority of people – 75 percent – think we have an obligation to invest in overseas aid.

"Public support for investing in overseas aid remains strong. This opinion poll shows that 4 out of every 5 people in Ireland do not want us to turn our back on the world's poorest people," noted Zomer.

"The figures remind the Government that the vast majority of people in Ireland feel strongly about our tradition, and our obligations towards those less fortunate than ourselves," he concluded.

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Notes to the Editor

- Dóchas is the Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations. It provides a forum for consultation and cooperation between its members, and a platform for them to speak with a single voice on development issues. For more information, visit: www.dochas.ie
- Dóchas membership is comprised of 61 overseas development and global justice organisations. A list of Dóchas members can be found at <http://www.dochas.ie/membership/our-members/>
- In 2000 Ireland committed itself to reaching the 0.7% ODA/GNI target by 2007. However that deadline was later deferred to 2012 and then to 2015. Earlier this year, the Government indicated that also this third deadline would not be achieved, despite the target and the deadline being outlined in the Programme for Government.
- The Dóchas Budget submission can be found at: http://www.dochas.ie/shared/Files/4/Dochas_2015_Budget_Submission.pdf
- The Ipsos MRBI opinion poll key findings are available at: http://www.dochas.ie/Shared/Files/4/Ipsos_MRBI_2014_Overseas_Aid_Opinion_Poll_Key_Findings.pdf