



## Aid Works!

Ireland's development aid exists because of human need: one in every three people on the planet lives in conditions of unacceptable poverty, disease and suffering. At the same time countries such as Ireland are enjoying unprecedented wealth and opportunity.

Irish development aid exists, because Irish people do not want this situation of global inequality and injustice to continue. One of the fundamental values of Irish society is that we do not want people to suffer or be excluded: solidarity comes naturally to us.

As one of the richest countries on earth, Ireland not only wants to, but also is able to, invest substantial amounts of money in work to prevent suffering and redress inequality.



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

White Paper on Irish Aid

Aid alone will not "develop" a country. At best, international development aid can provide support for a country's internal processes of change and be a catalyst for change.

The role of international development assistance is nevertheless crucial. Aid can help relieve suffering and enhance opportunities for prosperity. Aid can save lives and provide essential services to vulnerable people. Aid can provide funds and advice for immunisation campaigns, education drives and training of health workers. Aid can help reform governments and encourage citizen participation in public policy.

Thanks to international aid, millions of children around the world now enjoy the opportunity to be educated; diseases such as smallpox, leprosy, river blindness and guinea worm no longer needlessly turn healthy workers into dependents; women, disabled people and ethnic minorities are being given a voice in

decisions that affect them; refugees the world over are receiving life-saving support during and after emergencies; rural farmers can use roads to reach markets previously unattainable to them.

## Going beyond aid

Yet aid has its limits. No amount of financial assistance can be effective in the long run, if it is not backed by systems and policies that **support the aims of development aid**. Aid cannot lift countries out of poverty if they are not being given a fair chance to participate in global trade. Subsidies, trade rules, migration policies and unequal access to energy supplies all present obstacles for poor countries wishing to work their way out of poverty.

It is precisely because making poverty history is about more than aid alone that Irish development NGOs combine their aid efforts with calls to remove those obstacles and reform the policies that undermine development.