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Submission to the White Paper Consultation on  
Ireland's Policy for International Development Co-operation 2018

General Details

**Submitted by:**

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| 2. Nature of Views:          | On behalf of the organisation            |
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## SUBMISSION RESPONSE

The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, through its ministry co-ordinating department, Good Shepherd Ireland (GSI), welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the drafting of Ireland's new White Paper on International Development Co-operation.

Good Shepherd Ireland has a long history in International Development and its contribution to this consultation draws on this experience which extends across 72 countries in the areas of human rights and poverty alleviation, especially in relation to girls, women and children; and incorporates high level advocacy work as an NGO in special consultative status with ECOSOC at the UN in New York.

We make this submission as part of a vibrant missionary movement in Ireland's development cooperation sector at present, as we combine innovative development practice and an increasing focus on human rights with the distinctive Missionary Approach to Development. This approach unites, among other features: unparalleled reach across borders, long-term commitment, personal witness, and a holistic approach.

### **1. What elements of Irelands International development experience should the new policy reflect?**

Ireland continues to be recognised internationally for the quality of its development work. We applaud the Government of Ireland's renewed commitment to the work of NGOs and the missionary approach to development. Whilst engagement with multilateral agencies and the private sector are invaluable in promoting programmes to scale, *we urge the Government of Ireland to safeguard the quality of its development work executed through maintaining its commitment to continued partnership both with organisations espousing the missionary approach to development and the NGO sector at large in the delivery of alternative models of development co-operation. We further encourage the Government to capitalise on the results of these programmes in order to influence multilateral agencies such as the United Nations and the OECD.*

Irish AID funded development programmes are already part of this international showcasing. The Government of Ireland should capitalise on such models and use Ireland's influence at high level political meetings with the UN and the OECD to *avoid any dilution of programmatic quality and retain its reputation in this area.*

An example in point is the Good Shepherd programme in Kolwezi, DRC. *This*

programme whose design and conceptualisation involved expertise from Ireland and which the Government of Ireland funded and continues to fund in relation to research, design, development and implementation, has been invited to present at consecutive OECD meetings since 2016. Externally evaluated by Columbia University, New York, the project is presented at the OECD meetings as a model child protection programme for redressing child labour and exploitation in the mining sector. In 2017 the programme was recommended to the UN by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences as a low-cost model for addressing modern slavery and has also featured in the 2016 and 2017 Amnesty International reports on the cobalt supply chain.

## **2. What are the implications of the changing global context for Irelands international development cooperation and human rights action?**

We recognise the changing global context in which international development cooperation and human rights action now operates. The global context requires a concerned voice beyond individual nation states to affect pro-poor international economic agreements. We welcome the Government's commitment to countering the international narrative of self-interest that has contributed to the fragmentation of the focus of aid. We further endorse the Government's on-going commitment to being value led. To this respect, the Government of Ireland should use its membership of the EU to counter any dilution to its approach to development co-operation and use its standing as a member state of the European Union to promote a whole of Government approach to development cooperation and humanitarian action within the EU, in particular and as a priority, in trade negotiation at World Trade Organisation (WTO) level.

Affecting pro-poor economic change within nation states in a globalised world is an increasing challenge for isolated states. Whilst GSI acknowledges that trade has the potential to lift millions out of poverty, and thus applauds the Government of Ireland's focus on food security in Africa and focus on agricultural production in Africa; we also recognise that the benefits of trade are not automatic and much is dependent on international trade policies. Whilst we welcome the commitment to achieving food security in Africa, we urge the Government to extend these efforts and work to counter the marginalisation of Africa in current agricultural trade policies at a minimum, by using its membership of the European Union as leverage to influence a pro-poor agenda with and within the Word Trade Organisation and ensure in advance that trade policies are framed in ways that really do help rather than harm developing countries.

These efforts should also be extended to include ensuring that trade agreements do not usurp the ability of the state to regulate in the public interest. We strongly encourage the Government of Ireland to forward their whole of Government Approach to development co-operation within the European Union to also ensure that International

investment agreements do not place constraints on a state's right to implement genuine public interest regulatory measures to protect the health of its citizens. To reinforce these efforts, the new international development policy should include a more pronounced focus and emphasis on building and reinforcing local civil society groups in advocating for change.

### **3. Do the proposed priorities [in the public consultation paper] respond to the changing context and contribute to the achievement of Ireland's vision of a more equal, peaceful and sustainable world?**

With 1.8 billion young people in the world, young people are central to development efforts. Close to 90 percent of the world's youth live in developing countries, where they often make up the largest proportion of the population. Barriers to education, poor living conditions, and lack of decent work have worked to marginalise many young people and contribute to intergenerational conflict dynamics in many societies.

The consultation paper puts the most pressing needs of today front and centre of its new development strategy (Protection: Peace, Conflict Prevention and Fragility; Food: Nutrition Agriculture and inclusive economic growth; People: Social Protection, Education and Health) and encouraging the participation of disadvantaged youth in education and employment. However, there is little emphasis on youth across other intervention areas in the document, particularly on their role in peace building and security, including little language which recognises that their marginalisation is detrimental to building sustainable peace and countering violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism.

Promoting an inclusive and participatory peacebuilding process is particularly vital to rebuilding peaceful communities, jumpstarting economic development, and supporting democratic governance in countries emerging from conflict, and yet young people are generally left on the margins, unable to contribute and participate in the transformation of their countries. We would urge the Government of Ireland to consider and consider the role of Youth beyond education and employment and extend this across all priority interventions, with a special emphasis on youth focused peace and security. We recognise the unique strengths of Ireland in peace building and encourage the Government of Ireland use this strength by focusing on youth in its sustainable peacebuilding interventions and in supporting youth focused peace and security international instruments, specifically the UNSCR Resolution 2419 – Maintenance of International Peace & Security which:

- *Recognizes the role of youth in promoting a culture of peace, tolerance, intercultural and interreligious dialogue that aims at discouraging their participation in acts of violence, terrorism, xenophobia, and all forms of*

*discrimination and reiterates that efforts to counter terrorist narratives can benefit through engagement with a wide range of actors, including youth and youth-led civil society;*

- *Recognizes that youth and youth-led civil society can also play an important role in efforts to peacebuilding and sustaining peace.*

#### **4. How can we improve delivery of Irelands international development co-operation and humanitarian action?**

We strongly support the Governments of Ireland's continued commitment to meeting the UN target of providing 0.7% of GNI in Official Development Assistance. We are also cognisant that whilst inroads have been made in reducing global poverty much remains to be done, with more demand placed on limited resources. Whilst an *emphasis should be placed on resource provision to the least developed countries*, some provision should be made for regions in middle income countries that are least developed.

We also urge the Government to adopt learning from other institutional donors, notably trends in *building strong local and small NGOs* as evidenced in work by DFID and the Scottish Government. A *recognition of the unique contribution to innovation, best practice and cost effectiveness in development work set by small NGOs* should be explored as a priority.

*Emphasis on best practice programming, focused on achieving multiple SDGs and which promote partnership for the reduction of duplication of interventions at local level should also be prioritised.*

GSI welcomes the emphasis placed on strengthening governance and the recognition that good governance is essential for long-term transformational change. We therefore, encourage the Government to focus development funding on *programmes that address and integrate policy changes through well-defined advocacy initiatives which include partnering and networking for change.*

Delivery of development aid must respond to new trends. The most pressing issues of human trafficking, modern slavery and illegal economic migration are increasingly trans-national in nature. Effective responses to such issues must also be *trans-national in nature*. GSI urges the Government to base funding of such programmes *on the basis of a cross-border approach that builds on the expertise of multiple partners and which integrates policy advocacy at multiple levels- national, regional and international.*

Thank you for inviting our thoughts and suggestions, which are informed by our long history in international development particularly in human rights and poverty reduction, specifically targeting vulnerable girls, women and children. We applaud the Government's commitment to consulting broadly on this new policy, and are delighted to contribute to Ireland's development programme, in partnership with Irish Aid and ultimately in the service of those in the global south with and for whom we engage in this work.