

Seventh meeting of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development (IDCD)

23rd October 2008, Room 1, Irish Aid

Draft Summary Minutes

Introductory Points from Mr. Peter Power T.D. Minister of State for Overseas Development

Minister Power in his opening comments highlighted two developments since the June meeting. Firstly, the Budget outcome had demonstrated the Cabinet and Government wanted to maintain our commitments in the area of overseas aid. Secondly, the presentation by the Hunger Task Force of its report to the Taoiseach on 25th September at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, in the presence of UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, had demonstrated that Ireland was taking a leadership role in the area of international development. He also referred to the OECD Development Assistance Committee Peer Review of Irish Aid and his meeting with the Peer Review team in Dublin at the beginning of the month where our efforts to deliver a whole of government approach to development had been stressed. He underlined the importance of the work of the Committee in this regard and thanked members for their ongoing attendance and commitment.

(1) Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the sixth IDCD meeting, which was held on the 19th June, were agreed by the Committee.

(2) Report of the Hunger Task Force

The Committee received a presentation (copy circulated separately) on this Report from the Secretary to the Task Force Mr Brendan McMahon, Director, Emergency and Recovery Section, Irish Aid. There was agreement that follow up to the recommendations was key and Mr McMahon informed the Committee that a new Food Security Unit located in a new Thematic Sectors Section in Irish Aid would be tasked with this.

(3) Developments on OECD DAC Peer Review 2009

Mr Michael Gaffey, new Deputy Director General of Irish Aid, echoed the Minister of State's comments regarding the positive views expressed by the OECD DAC Peer Review Team on their HQ visit to Irish Aid and also some points for follow up. He thanked those Departments who had met with the Team. He outlined how the review would proceed and culminate with a delegation from Ireland visiting the OECD in Paris to finalise the report in late March 2009.

(4) Follow up to the First Annual Report to the Minister of Foreign Affairs

It was agreed that work on implementation of the first Recommendation (which would see all Departments, but initially the eight prioritised, producing with the support of the Committee Secretariat, statements identifying what contribution they could make to improving Policy Coherence for Development) would be dovetailed with the recommendations to be addressed to Departments in the final scoping report on Policy Coherence for Development of the Institute for International Integration Studies in Trinity College. The first draft of this IIS report was expected to be presented to the Advisory Board for Irish Aid by the end of October. Committee

members were informed that the IIS planned to allow six weeks to discuss the draft with Departments.

It was agreed that on publication of this scoping report the Secretariat would liaise closely with the eight priority Departments in order to devise statements which reflected existing work and also took on board IIS recommendations, as deemed appropriate by the relevant Departments.

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food proposed some topics which could usefully be addressed by the Committee i.e. the challenge to the UN system of dealing with food security; the proposed Food Facility; implementation of the Hunger Task Force findings; the role of Research and Science; general ongoing coordination issues; and a rights based approach to food; and these were favourably received by the Committee and noted by the Secretariat.

(5) Reports from Sub-Groups

Mr Frank Flood, Irish Aid Volunteering and Information Centre, updated the Committee on ongoing work in the area of Careers in Development. The **Multilateral Organisations Sub Group** had been focusing on an aspect of this - the placing of Irish personnel in multilateral organisations. Mr Flood reported on recent attendance at the CINFO (Swiss Centre for Information Counselling and Training Professionals relating to International Cooperation) hosted bi-annual careers exhibition. The next steps were (1) to identify in which agencies Ireland is underrepresented and which we should focus on and (2) to work with a number of agencies on hard to fill positions. The Committee felt there were opportunities for further liaison with professional bodies e.g. in the area of transport logistics and Departments were positively disposed towards providing contacts in this regard. The Committee noted the difficulty posed by the fact that only secondments to EU bodies were replaced. A workshop with Non-Governmental Organisations on general development careers was planned for before Christmas.

Mr Gaffey noted that Chairmanship of the Multilateral Organisations Sub Group would move to Gerry Gervin who would be taking over as head of UN and World Bank Section, Irish Aid in the following month. He took the opportunity to thank Felim McLaughlin, who was abroad on business, for his input and commitment as Chairman since the establishment of the Sub Group.

Mr Austin Gormley, Public Information and Development Education Section, Irish Aid, reported on the work of the **Skills Sets Sub Group** and its meeting held on 16th October. The Sub Group had considered a consultant's draft report 'Technical Assistance and Irish Aid Public Sector Skills Audit'. The final report could be presented at the next meeting of the Committee. Mr Gormley also reported on the positive reaction so far to the International Development Awareness Raising Lunchtime Seminars held in association with Dtalk in three of eight pilot government departments (Agriculture, Health and Enterprise). 57 staff members had attended and proved to be very engaged on development issues. Feedback from attendees highlighted increased awareness of their department's involvement in development issues as a result of attending the Seminar. As regards further information/training the suggestion of an e-news bulletin from Irish Aid and similar lunchtime seminars are so far proving popular although there is also some interest in more formal training

courses. The three participating Departments were thanked for their work in hosting and inputting at the Seminars. The next seminars were planned for the Office of Public Works on November 24th and Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government on 25th November.

(6) Developments on the Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) agenda

- **Institute for International Integration Studies Conference 4th July 2008**
Strengthening Institutions for Development and Poverty Reduction

Ms Mary Barrett, IDCD Secretariat had attended the 'Institution and Policy Coherence for Development' segment of this conference. She reported on the presentation by Gwenaelle Corre, a senior researcher at the European Centre for Development Management (ECDPM) whose ideas for the Irish context included investing in communicating PCD to the wider public to increase its visibility and keeping PCD on the EU Agenda. Professor Alan Matthews, Trinity College gave a presentation which noted that Ireland had travelled far in putting institutional mechanisms for PCD in place (i.e. the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development) and noted that four things were needed to promote development friendly policies (1) Commitment (government wide policy documents and sectoral policy frameworks on PCD); (2) Analysis (information and research); (3) Procedures (e.g. PCD indicators and possibly reshaping the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) process to include examination of any negative impacts on developing countries); and (4) Alliances (dialogue and civil society activism required to ensure political commitment).

- **Workshop preparing for Second EU PCD Report in 2009, 30th September**

Ms Mary Barrett, IDCD Secretariat and Michael King, Institute for International Integration Studies, Trinity College had represented Ireland at this workshop or brainstorming meeting the aim of which was to put forward ideas for the content/format of the Second EU PCD Report which is planned for publication in Sept/Oct 2009.

Ms Françoise Moreau, Head of DG Development's Forward Looking Studies and Policy Coherence Unit, summarized the days discussions by saying the 2009 Report could go a step further combining the self assessment of the 2007 report with external evaluation; more results oriented assessments; reflecting developing countries perspectives; and including case studies and OECD and MS studies. She concluded that the report should lead the EU to identify policy change/mitigation measures. DG Development will draw up a proposal regarding the 2009 Report to be discussed at the EU PCD Network on 25th November and will also consult with civil society.

Ms Barrett said the preparation for the report would involve a questionnaire from the EU on which Irish Aid would welcome input and assistance from other Departments.

Next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in January 2009. The Committee welcomed Mr Frank Flood's offer to host the meeting in the Irish Aid Volunteering and Information Centre, 27-31 Upper O'Connell Street.

Mary Barrett, IDCD Secretariat, Irish Aid, 31st October 2008.

List of Attendees

Mr. Peter Power T.D., Minister of State for Overseas Development

Deputy Director General Irish Aid, Michael Gaffey

John Murphy	Dept. Transport
Declan Cahill	Dept. Defence
Brian Reade	Defence Forces
Brendan Ingoldsby	Dept. of Health and Children
Tom O'Mahony	Dept. Environment, Heritage and Local Government
Mícheál Ó Fiannachta	Dept. of Education and Science
John Breen	Dept. Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
Brendan P. Ryan Dermot Quigley Alice Smith	Dept. Finance
Kevin Smyth Siobhán Dowling	Dept. Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Noel Sheahan	Dept. Arts, Sport and Tourism
Philip Melville	Dept. Social and Family Affairs
Rory Montgomery	Political Director Dept. of Foreign Affairs
Brendan McMahon	Irish Aid
Austin Gormley	Irish Aid
Mary Barrett	Irish Aid
Tom Sneyd	Irish Aid
Carmel Madden	Irish Aid
Frank Flood	Irish Aid

Apologies

Brian Millane, Dept. of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

Anne Webster, Dept. of Enterprise, Trade and Employment