

Questions for the review of the White Paper on Irish Aid

1. Progress made

I just have a comment regarding Irish Aid in Zambia where I have constant that Irish Aid is very active and people are very grateful about the Irish intervention in social, economic and educational areas. Ireland recognises the close links between the issues of peace, security, development gender equality and women's human rights. I have seen in Zambia through Irish aid women and girls become economically, socially empowered and I can add culturally too.

2. Changing context

In the Ireland's National Action plan mainly to listen to the voices of women affected by conflict strengthen women's leadership and implement accountability mechanisms.

DR Congo's women in the East are those among women who are very affected by conflict; they are physically, economically and socially disempowered. I know that Irish aid helps through the NGOs Goal, Concern but these NGOs are very concentrated in some provinces and they are working only on their own projects, they did not see some initiatives of women who are organised in NGOs and who need to strengthen women's leadership in instance of Gege katana Bukuru the president of Sofad Congo (she is the laureate of frontline Ireland 2007 Prize). If Goal and Concern see the need of those women and their will to overcome, they can help them and they can control the use of their intervention. Irish aid have to be sensitive to actualities problems in the developing countries, that is means that when there is a problem as a war consequence like the insertion of raped women in the society in East of DR Congo which is a long term problem that need a strong focus on education because victims of sexual violence women and girls are rejected by the society. They are doubly victims of sexual violence and social exclusion so their integration can be effective through the education of people. Irish Aid attested that education is key to a successful future (Irish Aid annual report 2010) the Congo need it.

3. Key issues

In responding to the key issue, governance and human rights, and gender equality should be the government prioritise in its future aid programming.

Women perform 66 percent of the world's produce 50 percent of the food, but earn 10 percent of the income and own 1 percent of the property (UNICEF); help women's equal participation with men in political and economic decision-making, to eliminate gender inequalities in access to control of, and benefit from resources and services (women can reduce hunger and poverty if they have access to agricultural resources). The reinforcing of education of women will help to close the gender gap and will help women to anticipate with men in political and economic decision-making for the good governance.

4. Ways of Working

Irish Aid is guided by the English language in its interventions in developing countries through its programme, but I see that Ireland is only concerned about countries where English is the speaking language, I encourage Irish Aid to focus on the problems and not on the language. If Irish Aid work with some groups of women in Tanzania, in Malawi, in Ethiopia please look how to help victims of violence in DR Congo to be empowered too. Irish aid have not only limited to declare that: 'in the DR Congo the situation of gender-based violence is shocking' (Gender equality, one decade into the 21st century) but it will be good if Irish aid help these women to be empowered.

Another way is that in the countries where Irish Aid has not offices and overseas staff, leaders of NGOs from those countries can be send in Ireland by Irish Aid to participate to some training organised for its staff deployed overseas; so that people who participate to the training can apply it in their countries, in this way Irish Aid can help to strengthen women's leadership, and promote women's participation in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peace negotiations, peace building, and post conflict transition and governance.