



Latin America Solidarity Centre

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Submission to Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid

1. LASC notes Irish Aid work focuses mainly in Africa to the detriment of other regions in the World such as Latin America. In Latin America there are other models of development which come from civil society, such as the model of "Buen Vivir" Good Living, which has achieved Constitutional Status in both Ecuador and Bolivia. This model of development emphasizes not so much macroeconomic growth as the fulfilment of the rights of people, Mother Earth and communities.

The fact that this is not included in the work of Irish Aid skews the perspective of the Irish Public has about development issues.

2. We are also concerned about the way in which development is largely seen as an aid issue, leaving aside other forms of development, such as the development of a fairer model of international trade. We see a basic problem of coherence between the aid policies and EU trade policies which at times emphasize the privatisation of basic services and commons, which are greatly unpopular in the developing world. This is in direct contradiction with the development goals of Irish Aid.

3. Empowerment of civil society in the developing world should also mean empowering Irish civil society organisations which work hand in hand with them. In Latin America there is a term called "people's diplomacy" to express the importance of key partners in Europe or North America to their own work advocating the advancement of rights and democracy. The shrinking space for development education runs against this.