

**To:** #HQ-DCD PP&E White Paper Review

**Subject:** White Paper Review

Dear Sir,

This is not a definitive and fully researched communication but is the result of significant experience in the field.

On the Dochas website I have read a number of the responses to the White Paper and do not wish to reiterate points already made. But in my view there is one glaring omission which is education. The MDGs specify Primary Education so it maybe that the view is that the issue is covered but that is not the case.

The approach to Education as one of the MDGs is specifically and solely focused on Primary education although it is now recognised through the World Bank and others that it is not possible to treat education as a group of independent sectors:

1. Students need a clear line of progression from Primary to University level.
2. If staff are to be capable of doing their jobs they must be adequately educated and trained themselves. A teacher who is educated to primary level only cannot teach at primary and the same applies at secondary level. The consequence of this is that even for an adequate primary level school system it is necessary to have a good secondary and University level system in place.

In my experience one of the reasons why the international community finds it difficult to manage and fund the development of educational is that the necessary time scales are far longer than many other development programs and the assessment of progress, success and 'value for money' is very difficult.

However the importance of education as the one and only route to true long term sustainable development cannot be over-emphasised, as surely we in Ireland know so well: the value of our well educated and young population features prominently in all IDA and other such pronouncements.

One issue that is normally brought up as a problem for supporting higher education in developing countries is that so often the graduate will migrate overseas. Although obviously a loss to the home country the likelihood is that they will remit money home which can be of great assistance to the extended family. But the real answer is a policy change in the Developed world in which those who study overseas are required to return home at the end of their training and just as importantly 'we' stop using those professionally trained in developing countries as a source of cheap labour. One answer to this issue could be to pay to the developing country [or it might be to the family who will almost certainly have contributed to the education costs] the full cost of the education of the person being recruited from, let us say South Africa. At least they would then be able to pay for the training of a replacement. The fundamental point here is that the rich countries are being subsidised by the poor.

I also find it surprising that when students from overseas are recruited to courses in Europe and elsewhere there is no distinction between a recruit from Uganda and one from Singapore or Hong Kong. They are being seen as a revenue stream and not as part of the development support system. Ministries of Finance of course reinforce this by putting financial pressure on the Universities to raise a growing proportion of their revenues.

My specific experience of the effects that a University may have on the surrounding

communities comes from establishing Mountains of the Moon University in Fort Portal, Uganda where the benefits can be seen at a multiplicity of levels, perhaps made most obvious by the fact that Fort Portal now has five international banks whereas in 2007 it had only two. The Region has a vibrancy, self confidence and vigour that is new. The principle reason why the University, although struggling financially of course, is so successful and innovative is the deep commitment of the local community across the major divides of tribe and religion and this is a consequence of the commitment of the highly educated local initiating group for whom high quality education is the sine qua non for development.

This is to emphasise that high quality, integrated education is essential for sustainable development and that its absence as a central plank of the White Paper and the submissions I have seen is a very serious weakness and one of which Ireland of all Countries should be very aware.

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