

**Submission to Department of Education and the Department of Further Education, Research, Innovation and Science from the Department of Foreign Affairs/Irish Aid on Ireland’s Education for Sustainable Development Strategy to 2030**

1. **What are the links between Global Citizenship Education/ Development Education and Education for Sustainable Development?**

Irish Aid defines Global Citizenship Education (GCE) as a lifelong educational process, which aims to increase public awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, inter-dependent and unequal world in which we live. By challenging stereotypes and encouraging independent thinking, GCE helps people to critically explore how global justice issues interlink with their everyday lives and how they can act to build a better world. This is particularly important in an increasingly globalised world faced with immense challenges, such as the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic, climate change, entrenched poverty and growing inequality, as well as misinformation-fuelled radicalisation.

GCE is another term for development education and Irish Aid’s work in this area will continue to be underpinned by the principles of the Code of Good Practice on Development Education (IDEA 2019). Importantly, we will support informed public engagement and debate on the role of development co-operation and awareness and understanding of the work of Irish Aid in addressing global poverty and inequality.

GCE has much in common with other forms of values education, in particular with Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). These synergies include:

* A holistic approach, bringing together a wide range of common topics and issues such as human rights, environmental sustainability and climate change, peace and non-violence, global poverty and hunger, inter-culturalism, anti-racism and gender equality
* A focus on justice, interconnectedness and solidarity
* A focus on the local and global dimensions of issues affecting the people and planet
* Use of participatory educational processes, either within formal education, non-formal or informal educational settings[[1]](#footnote-1)

GCE also has strong synergies with human rights education, education for peace and conflict prevention and intercultural education.

1. **How does Department of Foreign Affairs / Irish Aid currently support Global Citizenship Education?**

Irish Aid supports education in its broadest sense, supporting lifelong learning for GCE through formal, non-formal and informal approaches. We have worked closely with the Department of Education in the implementation of the current ESD strategy, which has key synergies with development education. Working with our partners, Irish Aid has contributed to making progress in embedding GCE in both formal and non-formal education.

1. **Supports to the formal education sector**

**World Wise Global Schools (WWGS):** Akey strategic partner,WWGS provide in-service training at post-primary level including in-school CPD, regional training events including one in Irish, and a National Teacher Conference each year. They also hold an annual symposium for school management on global citizenship education and run the “Global Passport”Awards. Grants for GCE activities are paid directly to schools, to networks and clusters and to NGOs who implement GCE programmes in schools. A range of curriculum linked ‘Doing DE’ resources are available in hard copies or online. WWGS currently reaches 70% of post-primary schools in Ireland**.**

**Development and Inter-Cultural Education (DICE)**: The DICE Project is implemented by the four primary teacher Colleges of Education: DCU; Froebel, Maynooth University; Marino Institute of Education; and Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. DICE works to support teacher educators and student teachers to integrate global and intercultural perspectives and themes into their teaching practice.

**Ubuntu:** The Ubuntu Network receives grant funding to embed global citizenship education into post-primary Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Ireland. The project, which is based at the University of Limerick, supports teacher educators and student teachers to engage with local and global development issues in fourteen member HEI institutions, to see how they are relevant to their subject areas and disciplines, and to understand the value that such perspectives bring to teaching.

**Other partners** in the formal sector include Concern, Trócaire and Children in Crossfire all of whom provide workshops and trainings for teachers and students. Other grant partners have produced GCE resources for post-primary level including for Politics & Society, business, maths and Spanish while many more focus on Transition Year. At Third Level, Engineers without Borders targets engineering and design students while Proudly Made in Africa works with business students and their tutors on the themes of trade justice and sustainable development.

Science students are reached through the Irish Aid funded Science for Development Award at the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition. Irish Aid reaches young people in schools all over Ireland by funding the Global Citizen Award with Young Social Innovators.

1. **Supports in the non-formal sector – youth, adult and community education.**

Irish Aid supports development education organisations working directly with young people, as well as adult and community groups.

The Irish Aid supported STAND project, implemented by strategic partner SUAS, promotes global citizenship across 3rd level institutions. Working with the Union of Students of Ireland, the programme provides a range of workshops, short courses, events and festivals on global citizenship themes. STAND News is an online platform for students to learn about global justice issues in an accessible way.

Irish Aid has a new strategic partnership with the National Youth Council of Ireland called ***“***Youth 2030 – Development Education in the Irish Youth Sector” which promotes global citizenship with NYCI member organisations. NYCI is lead member of a Consortium made up of NUI Maynooth, Trócaire and Concern Worldwide. The ‘One World Week’ festival which takes place in November each year engages youth groups across the country. The programme has also supported the development of a Level 8 Certificate in Global Youth work at NUI Maynooth.

Many others are reached through Irish Aid funded programmes with EcoUnesco, Irish Girl Guides, Scouting Ireland and An Taisce

Irish Aid also funds ‘Saolta’, which aims to increase the accessibility, quality and effectiveness of development education in the adult and community education (ACE) sector. This new programme includes the training and mentoring of a network of “SDG advocates’ across the country and the integration of global citizenship issues into both initial training and continuous professional development for adult and community education workers. Workshops are held with Public Participation Networks across the country with the aim of integrating the SDGs into County Development Plan. The Consortium is headed by Development Perspectives, a Drogheda based development education NGO working with Concern Worldwide, AONTAS (the national adult learning organisation), NUI Maynooth and Irish Rural Link (a national network of organisations and individuals campaigning for sustainable rural development in Ireland)

A range of other Irish Aid grant partners work in the Adult and Community Sector, reaching learners in a wide range of settings from all over the country including An Cosán and InisOwen Development Partnership.

**© The Irish Aid Awareness Programme**

The Our World Irish Aid Awards is an annual awards programme for third to sixth class in primary school which has been running for 15 years. Pupils explore the United Nations Goals for Sustainable Development and the work of Irish Aid.

School workshops for both primary and second-level learners are provided in the Irish Aid Centre located in central Dublin. Experienced facilitators explore the work of Irish Aid and the SDGs in these interactive workshops. Close to 8,000 primary and secondary pupils and their teachers, in addition to third-level students attended Irish Aid workshops in 2019. The facilitators also offer the Irish Aid Workshops at events such as the BT Young Scientist Exhibition and RDS Science Blast. In line with COVID restrictions, the Irish Aid Centre is currently closed but on-line workshops and resources are currently being provided which will continue to be offered by the Centre once it reopens (hopefully later in the year).

1. **What are the priorities for the new Strategy 2021-2025 and how can we strengthen cross-Government coherence?**

Over the last 6 months, Irish Aid has been developing a new Global Citizenship Education Strategy for 2021-2025. Close to 40 written submissions were received and nearly 300 people attended town halls meetings, including a specific consultation with young people organised in partnership with the National Youth Council of Ireland. A draft of the strategy has been shared with both Departments for comment and bi-lateral meetings have been held.

A number of new priorities for the GCE strategy have been proposed which have strong synergies with the proposed strengthened focus in the new ESD strategy on policy coherence, transforming learning environments, capacity building for educators and trainers, empowering and mobilising youth and engaging with the wider community. These include the following:

* Cross-Government policy co-ordination and coherence will continue to be a core priority for our work including through our engagement with the ESD Advisory Committee as well as bi-lateral dialogue with the Department of Education and the Department of Higher and Further Education, Innovation and Research. The NCCA and the Teaching Council will also be important partners and we look forward to supporting the operationalising of the new ‘Céim’ standards for ITE which include GCE as one of 7 core elements.

Working with other relevant Government Departments will be important for both the ESD and GCE strategies including the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications: Department of Rural and Community Development and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

As well as the upcoming National Strategy for ESD, other current and upcoming Government strategies on youth, anti-racism, volunteering and the SDGs require cross-Government coherence and co-ordination. We would propose that all of these Government Departments and agencies should engage with the national advisory committee on ESD, or whatever cross-Government structure is put in place once the new ESD strategy is finalised.

* It will be important that there is coherence across Government in relation to inputs to upcoming curriculum reform processes including the ongoing review of the senior cycle, the development of the new primary school curriculum and the review of the Aistear framework.
* It would be useful to discuss if there are opportunities to work cross-Government on an integrated framework to measure progress on SDG target 4.7. Currently, there is a performance management framework in place which has tracked progress on the implementation of the Development Education strategy launched in 2017. A new framework will be developed as part of the new strategy.
* In the area of formal education, we will build on our strong engagement with both the post-primary sector (through the World Wise Global Schools Programme) and our supports to Initial Teacher Education (ITE) through the DICE and Ubuntu programme with a new programme targeting the primary education sector. This will be piloted in 2021/2022 and will have a strong focus on both supporting continuous professional development for primary school teachers and the roll out of whole-school approaches. We will also look at opportunities to support the delivery of GCE in Early Years Education.
* Building on our support to student societies and the Union of Students of Ireland, we will look to strengthen our engagement on CPD for lecturers as well as curriculum and resource development on GCE in Higher Education Institutes and whole- of-institution approaches.
* A revitalised “Community Initiative “ will be launched building on the learning to date from the Saolta and Youth 2030 programmes in the youth, adult and community education sectors. This will include supports to CPD for adult educators and youth workers as well as supporting the integration of GCE into ITE for ACE practitioners and youth workers. We will also look to work more closely with local Government including Public Participation Networks. Diversity and inclusion will be a core issues and we will aim to work with a range of different organisations including family resources centres, women’s groups, older person’s groups, men’s sheds and arts sports and cultural organisations as well as young people from a diversity of backgrounds.
* Across all of our work, there will be a strengthened focus on engaging people from the broadest possible range of backgrounds, including those marginalised from mainstream education. In formal education, this will include a focus on increased engagement with a more diverse range of schools including DEIS schools, Gaelscoileanna and Gaelcholáistí and Special Schools. We will strengthen supports to integrating GCE into Leaving Certificate Applied, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programmes as well as Youth Reach programmes.
* We will look at mechanisms to further support research on GCE, including looking at opportunities to work with the Irish Research Council if appropriate. In this, we will work closely with other Government Departments to identify areas of shared interests and priority.
* An Innovation Challenge Fund will be launched which will include supporting the use of digital learning and new technologies to build links with schools, institutions, youth groups and the Global South.

It is likely that the strategy will be launched in September 2021, as which point we will be in a position to confirm the various initiatives being proposed.

June 29th 2021.

1. *.* Adapted from Global Education in Europe, Concepts, Definitions and Aims- GENE- 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)