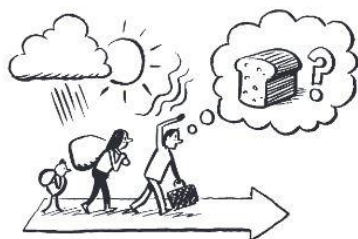


What is the purpose of policy?

To ensure that Ireland plays an active and effective part in promoting sustainable development in the Global South and to ensure that all of Ireland's policies are consistent with such development.

The present situation



The effects of climate change have increased the vulnerability of many communities leading to enforced migration, internal displacement, poverty, hunger and even death. Food production is a huge challenge for communities constantly forced to move.

9 OUT OF 10 countries most at risk of extreme weather are developing countries in the low income or lower-middle income country groups.

Current context with the Global South

- While Ireland faces a number of challenges, including deficits in our public services and infrastructure, unacceptable rates of poverty, and high national debt, it is important to remember that many people in the world face a far worse situation.
- Ireland's Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) budget reached 0.59 per cent of GNP in 2008. This was the closest that Ireland has ever come to reaching the UN-agreed target of 0.70 per cent of national income. During the years of the financial crisis Ireland's ODA budget as a proportion of national income fell considerably, and after modest recovery it is now projected to be 0.40 per cent of new modified GNI (also known as GNI*) in 2020.
- Of the ten countries most affected by climate change between 1997 and 2016, nine were developing countries in the low or lower-middle income country groups. Only one – Thailand – was classified as an upper-middle income country.

Migration

- Wars, inter-state conflicts and climate change result in the mass movement of peoples. At the end of 2018, 70.8 million people were forcibly displaced as a result of conflict, persecution, violence or human rights violations. The number of refugees under the UNHCR's care is almost double that of 2012, two-

thirds of whom come from Syria, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Myanmar and Somalia.

Global Inequality

- The UN has noted that of the 189 countries on their Human Development Index, 62 countries are in the very high human development group and 35 countries fall into the low group.
- In its *Global Wealth Report 2019*, Credit Suisse notes that the poorest half of the world's population collectively owns less than one per cent of total global wealth, while the richest 10 per cent of adults own 82 per cent of global wealth and the top one per cent holds 45 per cent of all household wealth.
- Today, average life expectancy is 20 years higher for people in the richest countries compared to those in Sub-Saharan Africa, while a third of adults in Southern Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa cannot read.

The AIDS/HIV crisis

- The number of people living with HIV in 2018 was 37.9 million; of these 36.2 million were adults and 1.7 million were children under 15 years. About 1.7 million people were newly infected with HIV in 2018.
- 24.5 million people were receiving antiretroviral therapy globally in 2019. In 2018, 62 per cent of all people living with HIV were accessing antiretroviral therapy. However, in 2018 about 770,000 people died of AIDS-related illnesses.

Things a new Government can do



Renew Government's commitment to meet the United Nations target of contributing 0.7 per cent of GNP to Overseas Development Assistance by 2025.



Ensure Ireland plays a prominent role in the support and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Policies towards the Global South

- The next Government should revise its commitment to meet the United Nations target of contributing 0.7 per cent of national income to ODA by 2025 and set a clear pathway to achieve this. Government has a current commitment to meet this target by 2030, but *Social Justice Ireland* believes that this goal has been postponed for far too long and the next Government should bring the target-date forward.
- Government should also take a far more proactive stance at government level on ensuring that Irish and EU policies towards countries in the Global South are just.
- Future policy must ensure that Irish businesses operating in developing countries – in particular Irish Aid partner countries – are subject to proper scrutiny and engage in sustainable development practices.
- Government must play a prominent role in the support and implementation of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. In particular it should work with other governments to end the race to the bottom on corporate tax rates. This would help all countries deliver on their commitments relating to the Sustainable Development Goals.

- Government should continue to support the international campaign for the liberation of the poorest nations from the burden of unpayable debt and take steps to ensure that further progress is made on this issue.
- Government should work for changes in the existing international trading regimes to encourage fairer and sustainable forms of trade. In particular, Ireland's policies at the World Trade Organisation should ensure that this goal is pursued.
- The Irish Government should Take a leadership position within European and broader international arenas to encourage other states to fund programmes and research aimed at mitigating and eventually resolving the AIDS/HIV crisis.
- Ireland should display greater coherence in its policymaking. Every year we give hundreds of millions of euros in overseas aid to developing countries, mainly in Africa, while at the same time maintaining a corporation tax regime that allows transnationals to move profits through Irish bases for tax purposes, depriving those same African countries of a tax base and preventing them from becoming self-sufficient. This amounts to giving with one hand and taking back with the other. Our taxation policies should be coherent with our development goals.