

Written submission to Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in response to the public consultation paper on the White Paper on International Development

on behalf of

Irish Forum for International Agricultural Development (IFIAD)

The Irish Forum for International Agricultural Development (IFIAD) is a voluntary, multi-disciplinary platform, bringing together actors from the agri-food sector to share knowledge and good practices for the benefit of agricultural development programming and policy in support of Ireland's development objectives. The underlying premise for establishing IFIAD was a recognised need for a more effective multi-disciplinary engagement in the area of agricultural development combined with an opportunity to better leverage Irish expertise in this area for the benefit of development programmes overseas. Capitalising on Ireland's excellence in the agri-food sector, the Forum aims to bring together researchers, policymakers and practitioners with a view to strengthening the research-policy-practice interface and maximising the Irish contribution to agriculture-driven poverty reduction in developing countries.

This response represents the views of the following founding members of IFIAD, Teagasc, National University of Ireland Galway, University College Cork, University College Dublin, Self Help Africa, Concern Worldwide, Vita, Trocaire, Misean Cara, Sustainable Food Systems Ireland, Greenfield International, ICMSA, IFA, ICSA and Macra na Feirme.

The Forum is comprised of a Chair, Vice Chair, Steering Committee, Secretariat and Ad hoc technical thematic groups.

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IFIAD RESPONSE

1) What elements of Ireland's international development experience should the new policy reflect?

The new policy should have a major focus on agricultural and agri-food sector development, which is central to the realisation of Ireland's development objectives and globally for the realisation of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the UN in September 2015. Agricultural development has the power to substantially reduce global poverty and under-nutrition while transforming the lives of many millions of people who rely on agriculture for their food and incomes.

While globally agricultural productivity continues to rise, there is still a significant gap in reaching optimum potential yields in many developing countries, and in parts of Africa yields have even declined. Rio+20, in framing the challenges for agriculture, emphasized the need to reinvigorate a diversity of farming systems through support to farmers – with emphasis on women's empowerment and gender equality – and increased investments in research, technology, market infrastructure, extension and knowledge sharing. This will catalyse innovation and empower farmers. In relation to farmers in developing countries, we must ensure we avoid assumptions about who does what, and find out who has access to different resources, controls income, and can make decisions. Irish Aid must strive to avoid assumptions, even if programmes on the surface appear not to contain gender related issues.

Overall there is a need to fund collaborative and synergistic agriculture and food security research by Irish, international and developing country research (in close partnership with development implementing institutions, agribusiness sector, producer organisations and value chain stakeholders) focussed on improving the specific food security and nutritional needs of the poorest countries and communities.

The key recommendations of IFIAD in relation to elements the new policy should reflect are:

- a) A stronger focus on strengthening Irish-Irish and Ireland-Developing Country partnerships to enable improved productivity and sustainability of agriculture and agri-food systems in partner countries, particularly focussed on the needs of smallholder rural communities and women farmers. Amongst others, the Irish Potato Coalition provides an example of a strong cross-sector Irish led initiative focused on improved productivity around potato in multiple Irish programme countries.
- b) To develop mechanisms for financing the harnessing and synergistic integration of IFIAD member organisations with capabilities in research, innovation, education, advocacy and development practice in agriculture for development activities funded by Ireland.
- c) Irish Aid should develop Challenge-based research and innovation funding mechanisms strictly linked to impact pathways in relation to agriculture and development that can allow partnership approaches between Irish institutions and partner institutions in developing countries to generate evidence-based research impacts, outcomes and impacts on poverty reduction and food security in partner countries. These would need to be multi-annual and of

- sufficient scale to enable partnerships that can generate major impacts and should be subject to external peer review, monitoring and evaluation.
- d) Continuously assess support being provided throughout aid programmes and disseminate results of programme reviews and evaluations in agriculture related programmes (and others), to ensure the development community learns from the success as well as any failures in aid. This will help to ensure that mistakes are not repeated. Encourage more evaluations and impact studies to examine the socio-economic dimensions on how interventions increase productivity.
 - e) Irish Aid should also develop partnership co-funding mechanisms in the agriculture for development arena with other bilateral donors (and also multilateral donors) to allow IFIAD members to partner in agriculture for development research programmes and projects. For instance, taking the UK as an example, Irish Aid should develop an Ireland-UK GCRF partnership fund (to fund researchers and research activities on the ground) to allow Irish research groups to engage in GCRF research projects underway in Irish Aid partner countries. To date, these are 230 GCRF funded projects with UK universities underway or starting in Irish Aid partner countries; Ethiopia (28); Lesotho (3), Malawi (34), Mozambique (12), Tanzania (42), Uganda (62), Zambia (20), Sierra Leone (7), Vietnam (22).
 - f) A stronger focus on supporting the engagement of IFIAD members in entrepreneurship and agri-food enterprise and value chain development for humanitarian and food security purposes in Irish Aid partner countries with private sector partners. However, value chain development should not an end in itself. From a poverty and rights base perspective the focus must be on empowering value chains where producers and workers are properly rewarded for their work and where market opportunities particularly at local, sub national and national levels are promoted.
 - g) The new white paper should outline a roadmap for developing policy coherence between the ambitions for domestic development of sustainable agriculture and food systems, and the ambitions for development of sustainable agriculture and food systems in partner countries. Irish Aid should encourage national and developing country partners to use analytical and statistical tools to assess the situation of both men and women in the rural sector and act in accordance with their national commitments including poverty reduction or social inclusion policy statements.
 - h) A stronger whole-of-government approach which is rooted in policy coherence for development (in line with Article 208 of the Lisbon Treaty) which can harness and combine the rich resources, capabilities and experience of Irish state entities (e.g. Teagasc, Department of Agriculture, Bord Bia, Sustainable Food Systems Ireland etc), with the research and training capabilities of the university sector, while also drawing on development and business expertise into collaborative models. IFIAD itself provides a model for such an approach and should be financially supported to become more efficient and effective, along with sister fora in other sectors such as the Irish Forum for Global Health. IFIAD member Sustainable Food Systems Ireland has significant expertise can capabilities for delivery of integrated services based on Ireland's strengths.

2) What are the implications of the changing global context for Ireland's international development cooperation and humanitarian action?

Major challenges remain for development of sustainable agriculture and agri-food systems, which are as relevant to Ireland as they are to many other countries, with emphasis on responding to climate change, rising energy costs, food insecurity and rural livelihood insecurity. Such challenges call for increased overseas development investments by Ireland in development of sustainable agriculture and agri-food systems to ensure it is more resource efficient, climate resilient and to balance different resource uses with the need to preserve the integrity of agro-ecosystems while maintaining profitability for smallholder farmers and within value chains.

Producing enough food for the increasing global population must be done in the face of changing consumption patterns, the impacts of climate change and the growing scarcity of water and land. Agricultural production methods must also sustain the environment, preserve natural resources and support livelihoods of farmers and rural populations around the world, while increasing yields without adverse environmental impact and without the cultivation/clearing of more land.

Given the rapidly growing demand for food (and other agriculture-derived resources) internationally as the global population heads to 10 billion, the sustainability of agriculture and food systems (including smallholder systems) will be essential for reducing poverty, food insecurity and undernutrition in partner countries. Ireland's development assistance will need to support agricultural initiatives for smallholder farmers that increase crop yields, income and nutritional wellbeing without expansion of cultivated land areas. In particular, Irish Aid should intensify and diversify its work with the relevant CGIAR, NARs and other agricultural research partners on the development and deployment (via farmer participatory extension approaches, including Farmer Field Schools and farmer-to farmer learning models) of improved crop varieties and animal breeds (and farming systems) that are more resilient and sustainable, thereby allowing smallholders to grow more food on less land with less resources (e.g. water-use efficiency, nitrogen-use efficiency, labour saving tools and technologies etc). Emphasis has to be placed also on how smallholder farmers can grow the scale of their farm business and transition out of poverty cycles.

Food and agricultural industries add value to and increase demand for farm outputs, thereby contributing to poverty reduction and food security in rural areas. They provide employment opportunities in off-farm activities, such as handling, processing, packaging, storage, transportation and marketing of food and non-food agricultural products. Providing support to the development of cooperatives and producer organisations, for-profit market brokering services, innovative use of ICT, development of agricultural insurance and risk management products.

A key issue for Irish development assistance will be to ensure that the promotion of environmental sustainability initiatives (financed by Irish taxpayers) in agriculture and agri-food systems (financed by Irish taxpayers) in developing countries does not inadvertently aggravate poverty and vulnerability of rural communities and households.

The key recommendations of IFIAD in relation to the changing global context for Ireland's international development cooperation and humanitarian action:

a) By harnessing the expertise and capabilities of IFIAD members combined with existing partners in developing countries, Ireland's international development assistance can realise an ambition to become a global leader in agriculture for development activities that impact on poverty reduction and food security.

b) There is a need to focus efforts on supporting initiatives to improve productivity (i.e. yield of staple foods per hectare; income per unit hectare) in a more environmentally sustainable manner, particularly of smallholder women farmers. These initiatives should also focus on the food security and nutritional needs of smallholder households. This will require that Irish Aid places a much greater emphasis on agricultural research, extension, the role of agribusiness and programmes/supports that are explicitly focused on improving productivity of smallholder women farmers as well as developing strategies on how they might grow the scale of their farm business. More imaginative approaches should be encouraged to reach female smallholders and groups excluded from mainstream agriculture research and advisory services and value chains. For example, recognising that women are not a homogenous group, Irish Aid partners should encourage partners to put in place strategies to address women's constraints in access to information on various issues in agriculture (as well as health, nutrition, education) so as to better address gender equality issues and support empowerment processes.

c) Ireland should focus its agriculture for development activities on a number of key challenge areas where it can make major impact, including through leverage of IFIAD expertise. These include the IFIAD Thematic Areas of (i) Climate Smart Agriculture; (ii) Nutrition and Agriculture; (iii) Understanding Inequality and Exclusion for pro-poor agricultural systems; (iv) Knowledge Transfer and Innovation; (v) Whole Value Chain Development and (vi) One Health.

In relation to Climate Resilient Agriculture, Irish Aid has been proactive in assisting farmers to adapt to the impacts of climate change, with an excellent web portal, climate risk analysis for all Irish Aid focus countries and funding for climate related research. Ireland should maintain a strategic strength in CSA. Similarly, in relation to One Health, key Irish Institutions (HSE, Vet Ireland, UCD, NUI Galway, TEAGASC) have strengths in One Health. Irish Aid should support the One Health approach, and frame development assistance. In relation to nutrition, we propose that Ireland continue to focus on reducing chronic malnutrition and micro-nutrient deficiencies.

Other areas that should be considered for thematic funding for research, innovation and impact include:

- Sustainable Agricultural Intensification
- Sustainable Diets & Public Health
- Water Use & Rural Livelihoods
- Sustainable Energy Production/Supply/Access
- Natural Resource Management (NRM)/ Watershed/ Catchment management.

- Decent rural employment and safe migration - creating both on- and off-farm jobs in rural Africa. TVET and life skills training for the youth to improve the options for migrants.
- Support for Agribusiness Development
- Rural Youth Employment & Entrepreneurship
- Agroecological Farming Systems
- Transformative Agriculture and Food Systems
- Growth Models of the Farm Enterprise
- Support for young farmer to farmer initiatives (Similar to Macra Na Feirme in Ireland)

d) Social Protection: - Social protection measures need to be a key part of strategies to address poverty. Unconditional Cash transfers or guaranteed labour schemes for the poorest in rural areas provide a basic income, enabling the poor to invest time in their own farmers rather than working as labourers on other farms. Guaranteed labour schemes provide alternative income opportunities for the landless and have led to an increase in agriculture labour rates in India. Cash transfers enable the poor to buy their own inputs, increasing choice and supporting the agriculture input supply chain, and are more efficient than fertiliser subsidies. Cash transfers provide a safety net for innovative farmers and for those who wish to retrain and leave agriculture. In any job creation initiative and women and youth should be placed at the centre of agricultural investment strategies.

d) Ireland should support work with IFIAD members, the CGIAR, NARs and other research partners on assessing the impacts on labour (especially women, children, elderly), educational attainment (especially of girl child), and household member income of different types of sustainable intensification agricultural interventions. In this regard it is important to recognise the extent of female waged and unwaged work in agriculture including smallholder farmers who informally employ both male and female waged workers. Irish Aid should encourage the collection of sex-disaggregated data in agri-industry and high-value agriculture, and could make systematic use of tools such as the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture (WEIA) index to promote women's empowerment.

3) Do the proposed priorities respond to the changing context and contribute to the achievement of our vision of a more equal, peaceful, sustainable world?

The productivity, climate resilience and decent work opportunities in agriculture and food systems in developing countries over the next decades will have major influence human migration patterns, while rural wages and food prices will have major impacts on prospects for peace and security. Ireland's overseas development assistance can play a greater role in the development of agricultural and food systems that are (a) more climate resilient and (b) foster inclusive economic growth, and (c) promote food security and improved nutrition.

The strong focus on agriculture and pro-poor agri-business is welcomed and it is hoped that resource allocation will reflect this priority. For instance, the DAFM/DFAT AADP is a good starting point for supporting Ireland-African joint agri-business investment activities, but is grant-based and limited in budget and

management resources. Significant scaling-up of its activities would require additional investment.

4) How can we improve delivery of Ireland's international development cooperation and humanitarian action?

The delivery of Ireland's international development cooperation and humanitarian action can be made much more effective through supporting a more synergistic and joined up "Ireland Inc" approach to development. This is urgent and necessary to more effectively combine the differential expertise, capacity and roles of multiple institutions in Ireland with partner institutions in developing countries to develop impact pathways that integrate research, innovation, learning and knowledge co-creation activities into all ongoing development activities supported by Irish taxpayers.

Irish Aid should deepen its relationship and support for the CGIAR, regional agricultural research forums and policies and with National Agricultural Research Centers (NARS) and HERIs in partner countries in order to coherently support ongoing efforts to increase smallholder productivity of women farmers in Africa. Irish Aid should support greater engagement of Irish HEIs/research institutes with the CGIAR system in order to promote robust partnerships which can both deliver impact and enhance the capacity of Irish HEIs/research institutions.

Irish Aid (and other Irish government agencies involved in funding of bilateral or international development activities) should develop pro-poor impact evaluation metrics to measure the tangible impacts of all current and future planned Irish development financing. Evidence of development impact from existing/prior Irish Aid-funded development initiatives, and future use of development impact metrics should be mainstreamed across all work of Irish Aid to allow for more effective use of the ODA budget whereby development impact (both short term and longer term strategic impact) per unit costs can be maximized over time for the benefit of the poorest in partner countries. All such impact data should be made public and open to external scrutiny and peer-analysis.

Irish Aid should expand its fellowship program for developing country nationals from partner country institutions where such fellows are likely to return to their institutions (to avoid a brain drain). The major review of such a programme should aim to foster twinning partnerships between Irish educational/research institutions/centres and counterpart institutions in partner developing countries (or mandated to work on behalf of partner countries e.g. CGIAR agricultural research institutes). Irish Aid should support Master's and PhD (by research) Fellowships for developing country nationals working in partner country institutions for conducting research and training on topics of priority for development. Such funding schemes should avoid a brain drain and require the students to work as much as possible "in country" and also provide re-entry financing for the PhD/Masters graduates to implement their research in their home institutions for 2-3 years after graduation so that development research is not separated from development practice. Postgraduate programmes that mix learning/research and practical work experience that are increasingly used in Ireland, such as, *inter alia*: Bord Bia's Origin Green Ambassador Programme, the NUI Galway/CCAFS MSc Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (MScCCAFS),

the NUI Galway/Teagasc Structured PhD program in Plant & AgriBiosciences, Co-funding Partnerships with the IRC and Teagasc Walsh Fellowship Schemes should be explored under the Irish Aid Fellowship programme. Short term study periods by developing country scientists and experts in Ireland should also be supported. This is especially important in supporting technical skills development (learning laboratory technique, farm management etc.)

As criteria for all Irish Aid research funding, poverty screens for research proposals could be developed which would force applicants to focus on impact-oriented research with relevant partners in DCs. Developing a poverty screen for development-oriented research proposals should allow room for different types of research (enabling, inclusive, strategic, applied/adaptive) and explicitly recognize why all these forms of development-oriented research are important i.e. a balance of each of these types of research is valid. Methods of evaluation of projects should move beyond current 'simple' Results Framework Models.

Agro-Business Development Fund/ Bank/ Corporation / Institution - Ireland is one of the few major European countries that does not have a development bank or corporation to manage strategic investments in new enterprises in developing countries. Germany, for example, has KfW, the German Development Bank, while the UK has CDC (formerly the Commonwealth Development Corporation). IFIAD proposes that the Government of Ireland should create a Development Investment Institution that will provide Impact Investment funds to enterprises in Africa. Given Ireland's technical experience in the agri-foods industry, and in order to generate decent rural employment, IFIAD proposes that the Fund should, at least initially, focus on investments in agriculture-based enterprises. Investments should be made in developing enterprises that have could be a potential catalyst for the growth of smallholder agriculture and rural agri-food industries or to create significant rural employment. Examples include farm input suppliers: companies providing AI services, farm machinery manufacturers, companies producing inputs for IPM (bio-control agents); food processing companies that provide a market for smallholders; and companies providing financial and insurance services to smallholder farmers.

Research Funding - Irish Aid has long supported international agricultural research through the CGIAR system, both through direct funding from Ireland and project funding through Irish Embassies. IFIAD proposes that Ireland should continue to support international agriculture research but as well as block grants to CGIAR institutions competitive research grants for research to support the implementation of IA strategy should be available to a wider range of research institutions Ireland and partner countries. Such research grants could also promote partnerships between Irish research institutions, CGIAR centres and developing country partners. IFIAD recognises that managing research would significantly increase the workload of IA staff, so the management of the research program should be sub-contracted-out to research funding agencies that run competitive calls. Hence, a combination of new and partnership funding models should be used to drive more effective collaboration between research/education institutions and development implementing bodies in Ireland. These can be modelled on current EU funding models or national models, involving partnerships with national research funding agencies such as Science Foundation Ireland, Irish Research Council, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, EPA, Teagasc and the Marine Institute. For instance, this could be along the

lines that DFID's agriculture, livestock and health research programs have been managed and the Global Challenges Research Fund (UK) in the UK is managed by BBSRC. Irish Aid could implement some new approaches which would encourage greater collaboration between NGO's themselves and between NGO's and Research, Education and Development Bodies in Ireland. This is best done by using budget as a lever. There are multiple research co-funding models in place in Ireland including those run by Science Foundation Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, IRC and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Funding conditionalities can be placed which require clear impact and outcome pathways, including cofunding from non-exchequer partners. Such models could be used to facilitate collaboration between Institutions in Ireland, NGO's and organisations in partner countries.