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# Editorial

## ANOTHER COG IN THE ANTI-POLITICS MACHINE? THE ‘DECLAWING’ OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

**Audrey Bryan**

“Washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral” (Paulo Freire, 1921-1997).

This issue of *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review* is devoted to the theme of ‘Professionalisation and Deradicalisation of Development Education’ and is centrally concerned with a number of paradoxes and contradictions that characterise the field in an era of neo-liberal shaped globalisation. It addresses, in particular, the question of why the development education sector endorses, tacitly or otherwise, the very ideologies and political-economic arrangements that are responsible for producing or exacerbating conditions of poverty and injustice, while simultaneously encouraging people to take action against this poverty and injustice? It asks: What are the implications of retaining a politically detached stance on crucial policy issues that the sector is ideally positioned to respond to? Why does the sector sometimes have surprisingly little to say about key development issues and crises as they are played out in local contexts? What are the consequences for development organisations that do take on divisive ‘local’ issues? What have efforts to ‘mainstream’ development education within formal education meant for the radical underpinnings of the field? What does it mean to ‘do’ development education in an era of financial austerity and insecurity, where people’s lived experiences increasingly clash with their inward expectations and desires for their (now blunted) futures – futures which were, for many, until very recently, imagined in far more positive and hopeful terms? How are government cuts to development education impacting on its practice? Do the long-term educative goals of informing citizens about the underlying structural causes of poverty and injustice inevitably become compromised or obscured within the context of more immediate ‘bread and butter’ tasks like fundraising for development programmes in the global South? How can those whose task it is to educate people about the structural and systemic features of global poverty best align

themselves within organisations whose primary function is to fundraise and raise awareness about their projects overseas?

The question of whether development education has been ‘de-clawed’ or stripped of its original radical underpinnings, based on the ideas of such radical thinkers as Paulo Freire, is an uncomfortable one for those of us who identify ourselves as development educators, with our claimed commitment to ambitious goals like social transformation, global justice, and poverty eradication. The question is ‘thorny’, not least because it requires us to cast the gaze on ourselves, forcing us to ask—as well as respond to—difficult questions about the possible disjuncture between the professed rhetoric, values, and organising principles of development education, and the policies and practices we enact, endorse or contest through our work. As development educators, we are acutely aware of how our everyday actions or inactions, our complicity or contestation of dominant discourses and ideologies, can have very real material consequences. We encourage learners to embrace *pedagogies of discomfort* which cause them to reflect on their own positionalities within local and global hierarchies (Boler, 1999). Applying the same principles of reflexivity and critical scrutiny to the field itself is a challenging, conflictual, and in some ways dangerous endeavour; yet it is arguably also a very timely exercise because unprecedented political, economic, and environmental crises are forcing us to think and teach about familiar topics in radically different ways. While in many ways, the old questions — whether they be about effects of loan conditionality imposed by international institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), or the social and environmental impact of multinational corporations — remain the right ones, it seems that now, more than ever, they need to be posed in new and different ways.

Concepts such as de-radicalisation and de-politicisation are also already familiar terrain within the broader field of international development. Ferguson’s seminal *Anti-politics Machine*, from which the title of this editorial takes inspiration, explains how the development apparatus, similar to the anti-gravity machine which suspends the effects of gravity in Science Fiction stories, can function as a kind of ‘anti-politics machine,’ ‘suspend[ing] politics from even the most sensitive political operations,’ while simultaneously strengthening statutory power, all at the flick of a switch (Ferguson, 1994:256).

Moreover, the co-optation of radical projects and discourses by powerful actors, and the subsequent muting of their transformative potential, is one of the hallmark strategies of neoliberalism. Feminist scholars have

demonstrated the ways in which policy commitments to gender equality often ‘evaporate’ or become heavily ‘diluted’ as they move through development bureaucracy (Longwe, 1997), such that an essentially political project gets reduced to a technocratic activity to be measured and evaluated in terms of analytic tools, frameworks and mechanisms, thereby restricting rather than amplifying the scope for transformation (Cornwall, Harrison & Whitehead, 2008:9). The neoliberal emphasis on performance, efficiency and accountability within the development industry is further implicated in a narrowing of development aspirations and a reluctance to tackle some of the more challenging dimensions of global poverty, gender injustice, etc. The preoccupation with impact measurement, for example, has arguably resulted in a situation whereby tangible and expressible indicators and measures often drive development goals and targets, rather than the indicators being determined by, and following from, the goals themselves (Unterhalter, 2005).

Concrete examples of de-politicisation in action can be found in recent development frameworks such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The disjuncture between the ambitious nature of the third MDG, with focuses on promoting gender equality and empowerment, and the far more limited target of eliminating gender disparities in education, has been the subject of considerable criticism. The *Beyond Access* project in the UK, for example, has highlighted the problems associated with employing gender parity as a measure of gender equality, pointing out the persistence of gender-based inequalities in societies where universal access and high levels of educational attainment for women already exist.

Indeed, the most powerful players on the international development stage, including the World Bank and the IMF, have become increasingly skilled at appropriating political concepts like gender to present a progressive face while perpetuating the *status quo*. As Vavrus (2003) suggests, policies and programmes aimed at promoting gender parity and girls’ education supported by development institutions like the World Bank tap, albeit superficially, into equity concerns, thereby obfuscating the economic and political crises triggered by the neoliberal policies that these very same institutions devised. As Klees explains, the situation is akin to a ‘good cop-bad cop’ scenario, with frameworks like the MDGs serving as a:

“compensatory legitimisation’ function for states and agencies that are deeply implicated in the perpetuation of global poverty. In order to compensate for the intensification of poverty and inequality associated

with detrimental political-economic arrangements, which call into question the legitimacy of the social order ('the bad cop'), key players in the world system of neoliberal globalisation introduce policies like the MDGs, aimed at ameliorating some problematic symptoms and thus restoring legitimacy ('the good cop') (Klees, 2008).

As development education becomes more formalised in institutional and policy arenas, and concepts like 'global citizenship' have become ubiquitous across a range of ideological camps, some development education scholars and practitioners are becoming increasingly concerned about a possible de-radicalisation of what they see as an essentially political, ethical and transformative project. Within the formal educational sector, for example, some have pointed to an inherent tension between the goal of development education – which seeks to develop active citizens who can respond to pressing global issues – with a more dominant instrumentalist approach to schooling which views the primary purpose of education as to prepare students for competitive employment in the global marketplace (Andrzejewski & Alessio, 1999). Recent policy proposals to 'eliminate' or 'discontinue' academic subjects from education programmes within Colleges of Education in the Republic of Ireland and to instil a 'relentless focus' on literacy and numeracy within teacher education and in schools, as laid out in the recently published *Draft National Plan to Improve Literacy and Numeracy* (Department of Education and Skills, 2010), can be seen as part of a broader trend to further entrench this ideology of instrumentalism and performativity that is characteristic of the encroachment of neoliberalism in all spheres of life. The Literacy and Numeracy plan, which argues that the inclusion of subjects and themes like social and life skills, environmental issues, arts and music education has meant that '...the time available for the acquisition and consolidation of critical [sic] core skills has been eroded' (2010:25), has potentially negative implications for already marginalised subjects like development education.

Fears about the future of development education in schools are amplified within a context of global and national economic crisis. Since the onset of the recession in the Republic of Ireland, public debate about education has become almost exclusively concerned with economic rationalism and the role that education can and should play in national economic recovery. Within this instrumentalist framework, the type of 'knowledge worth having' is identified, implicitly or explicitly, as only that which supports employability, competitiveness and 'our' international reputation and educational rankings in a context of market-led globalisation. Within post-primary schools in the

Republic of Ireland, the exam-driven focus of the curriculum has *already* been identified as a major obstacle to the meaningful inclusion or in-depth exploration of development issues and global justice themes in schools (Bryan & Bracken, forthcoming). There is much evidence to suggest that the wider context within which teachers perform their work may constrain their more ambitious aspirations to foster more critical forms of engagement with development themes and issues (Smith, 2004). Those teachers who have a sophisticated understanding of complex development issues are often torn between engaging students critically with complex development issues and ensuring their students produce 'safe' and acceptable answers in the context of a competitive national examination system (Bryan & Bracken, forthcoming).

The implementation of Citizenship Education as a discrete academic subject in formal educational settings, while creating a formal space for consideration of development themes and issues, has also arguably contributed to the de-politicisation or 'de-clawing' of development education. Citizenship Education is widely perceived by teachers and students as a Cinderella subject, due to the failure to grant it parity of esteem with other academic subjects (e.g. Bryan & Bracken, forthcoming; Davies, 2010; Gleeson, 2009; Niens & McIllrath, 2010). Problems also abound with the substantive content of citizenship curricula in schools. A comparative analysis of Citizenship Education textbooks produced in Australia, Canada, and the UK by Davies & Issitt (2005) highlights a disconnect between official rhetoric, which supports a radical conception of Citizenship Education, stressing the need to engage with the challenges and complexities of the current historical moment, and the reality of curriculum resources providing mere surface treatment of these issues, and failing to engage with issues of power. These authors highlight the tendency within these materials to privilege national rather than global issues, to devote limited attention to issues of diversity and to favour cognitive thinking or reflection about personal issues over active involvement in political issues.

David Gillborn has likened Citizenship Education in the UK to a placebo drug – maintaining that it 'gives the appearance of addressing issues like racism and race equality but which, in reality, manifestly fails to tackle the real problem' (2006:85). Similarly, Bryan (forthcoming) suggests that Citizenship Education in the Republic of Ireland context functions as a kind of 'band-aid' pedagogical response to the problems of global injustice – denying complex political or economic realities in favour of overly-simplistic, easily digestible and 'regurgitable' laundry lists of symptoms of global poverty and the promotion of overly-simplistic, quick fix and ultimately ineffectual solutions to global



problems. Consistent with the ‘soft’ versions of development education being promoted in textbooks, development activism in schools is often characterised by a ‘three Fs’ approach, which defines development education within narrow parameters of *fundraising, fasting and having fun* in aid of specific development causes (Bryan & Bracken, forthcoming).

Some of the available evidence on the ‘mainstreaming’ of development education in schools points to a less pessimistic analysis than that afforded by looking at its integration within discrete subject areas like Citizenship Education alone. Seán Bracken, Gareth Dart and Stephen Pickering (2011) suggest that while government support for development education in the UK, and the associated mainstreaming process may have resulted in a diminution of more radical development education perspectives articulated in earlier development education policy documents, it has nevertheless facilitated more profound engagement with development issues—both in the context of teacher education and classroom-based practices. They argue that the mainstreaming of development education has indeed provided significant opportunities for all learners to engage with issues of equality, identity, social justice and development. Yet they conclude that in the current climate of market-driven changes in the educational landscape, it is likely that future debates regarding the place of development education in the formal curriculum are more likely to be driven by a concern with maintaining momentum made through mainstreaming rather than on further radicalisation of current policies or strategies.

The disjuncture between the radical aims and professed rhetoric of development education and its practical implementation has led many to become deeply disillusioned by, and increasingly sceptical of, the agenda behind development education itself. Biccum (2005) argues that official development education efforts constitute part of a broader effort to normalise neoliberal-shaped globalisation and to produce a citizenry which is complicit in, and unquestioning of, a ‘new imperialist’ agenda. Similarly, Schattle (2008) presents evidence to suggest that some development education programmes implicitly endorse neoliberal free-market ideologies and have been packaged in ways that ‘appeal to the political right’ (Schattle, 2008:85), focused as they are on stressing the need to prepare students to compete in the world economy. Leslie Roman (2003) offers an equally sceptical view of the ways in which the discourse of global citizenship has been used by some North American universities to fulfil a nationalistic, as opposed to transnational, democratic agenda.

David Selby & Fumiyo Kagawa (2011), apply a related set of arguments to the related fields of development education and education for sustainable development as they are being framed in a European policy-making context. More specifically, they examine the impact of what they refer to as the 'global treadmill of neo-liberalism' (so-called 'globalization from above') on these fields (which they refer to as educational expressions of 'globalization from below'). These authors interrogate the failure of mainstream institutions which promote development education to problematise the discourses, ideologies and political-economic arrangements that are responsible for, or complicit in, producing the very conditions that development educators seek to promote deeper understanding of and action against (e.g. poverty and related injustices). Particularly worrying are the ways in which recent development education policy documents produced in Europe appear to be re-defining development education as being centrally concerned with workforce preparation for technocratic competitive efficacy. Selby & Kagawa apply the useful metaphor of the Faustian bargain to explain the mechanisms of dilution and depoliticisation at play within the related fields of development education and education for sustainable development. They suspect 'collusion with the prevailing neo-liberal worldview in return for some, likely ephemeral, purchase on policy' such that original radical values and aspirations are compromised for a place at the policy-making table *now*, 'whatever the dystopian future prospects afforded by the growth imperative' (2011:17).

A number of the articles in this issue are centrally concerned with the current economic crisis and its implications for development education. Stephen McCloskey's article, which focuses on the failure of the development sector in the Republic of Ireland to intervene in public debate about Ireland's recent financial collapse and its loss of economic sovereignty, gives further purchase to the metaphor of the Faustian bargain, laid out in Selby & Kagawa's article. McCloskey criticises the development sector's failure to locate its 'Act Now on 2015' campaign to engage public support for, and prevent further cuts to, the aid budget within a broader international political-economic context. He outlines how development campaigners failed to connect fundamental 'dots' between aspects of domestic economic policy which were instrumental in bringing about the financial crisis (e.g. de-regulation, reckless lending practices by banks, etc.) and a dwindling development assistance budget, thereby depoliticising the campaign, at the flick of a switch. Moreover, with notable exceptions, McCloskey points to the virtual absence of a critical voice from the transnational development sector about the likely effects of IMF loan conditionality and related austerity measures 'locally' in the Republic.

Ultimately development organisations have undermined their role as the very organisations best placed to educate the public in Ireland about these issues, by virtue of their long history of campaigning against, and working ‘on the ground’ to ameliorate the effects of conditionality and austerity on people in the global South.

As Cornwall, et al. (2007) point out, the pressure for complicity with bureaucratic norms, or to remain silent on policies to which one might otherwise object is far greater within an economic and employment context characterised by dwindling resources, growing unemployment, increasingly insecure working conditions, recruitment and promotion embargos, etc. The Irish example speaks to broader questions about the relationship between development actors and agencies and those who hold the purse strings. As McCloskey points out, in the Irish context, ‘the relationship between the NGO and government sectors goes beyond that of donor and aid partner to, for example, joint missions to multilateral development gatherings which can arguably result in a blurring of roles, policies and agendas’ (2011:38). McCloskey attributes this reluctance to intervene in the public debate on the EU-IMF ‘bailout’ to, in part, the funding distribution mechanisms within the development sector, suggesting that ‘when the stakes are so high in terms of financial support, policy formation and government access, development organisations may be reluctant to overtly criticise government policy, particularly in areas beyond international development.’ (2011:38).

Thus the adoption of a politically detached stance on the EU-IMF ‘deal’ by development NGOs may be partly understood as part of a broader strategy not to further compromise an overseas development aid programme that had already been slashed in successive budgets. While this desire to secure funding and resources for, or to prevent further cuts to, development projects is understandable, the consequences of failing to adopt a more political and critical stance has arguably proven detrimental to the development education project, whose *raison d’être* is to deepen public understanding of local and global injustices and inequalities. McCloskey maintains that NGO detachment from the debate undermined the sector’s credibility as a critical voice and represented a derogation of development education’s role as an agent of *local* as well as global development. McCloskey’s arguments are reinforced by Andy Storey (2011), whose Perspectives article addresses a similar theme of the development sector’s failure to draw upon its knowledge of similar processes in the global South to inform the debate about the loss of Irish economic sovereignty under the terms of the EU-IMF ‘deal.’ As Storey suggests, ‘if an opportunity for

education *from* the South is being lost here then so also is an opportunity to learn *about* the South' (2011:36). The development sector's reluctance to adopt a more critical stance on the EU-IMF 'bailout' reveals a lot about the ways in which professional and economic investments shape what we choose to see, hear, say and how we act in critical moments. It might also be explained in part by our *emotional* investments in particular ways of seeing the world and 'our' place in it, which prevent us from being able to draw parallels between 'our' experiences of structural adjustment in the West (or in Ireland more specifically) and 'theirs' in the global South. These blind-spots are especially regrettable in light of the current public appetite for understanding the structures that led to the current financial crisis (See Henderson & O'Neill, 2011).

A number of the articles in this issue illuminate an important contradiction at play within the field of development education in an Irish context as it relates to one of its major organising principles: the local-global dialectic. Effective development education is seen to hinge on educators' capacity to make explicit local-global linkages, whether in terms of highlighting the connection between the global consequences of local everyday choices, actions or behaviours or in terms of highlighting the ways in which international political-economic arrangements and issues are 'appreciably intertwined' with the daily living conditions of people in each respective society (Carr & Thesee, 2008:177). For example, as Henderson and O'Neill (2011) point out, there is an urgent need to empower people locally to recognise existing global interdependencies, and the ideologies and institutions that have created excessive wealth and persistent poverty, so as to enable them to make sense of their part in altering oppressive structures. Yet as a number of the articles in this issue make clear, despite its mandate to illuminate the dynamic, interactive relationship between the global and local, the development education sector has sometimes surprisingly little to say about key development issues and crises as they are played out in local contexts. Even more problematic, perhaps, are the policing mechanisms through which the parameters of the dialectic are restricted, such that the very prospect of development education organisations or actors addressing 'local' issues becomes unthinkable or sanctionable.

Narrowly articulating the remit of development education so as to focus exclusively on the global South is, as many of the articles in this issue point out, to pass up an important opportunity to educate people 'at home' about global justice issues. Moreover, it reinforces an artificial binary between 'the global' and 'the local', which conceives of the relationship in hierarchical, vertical, and separational terms. This has the unfortunate side effect of re-

inscribing a problematic ‘them’ and ‘us’ dichotomy, which closes off consideration of the possibility of ‘us’ being similar to ‘them’ in any way, of ‘our’ struggles’ being ‘their’ struggles, and ultimately how the struggle for justice is *really* about “‘us all”, always’ (Andreotti & Dowling, 2004:611). Furthermore, this policing of the borders of the global and the local fails to allow for the possibility of national policies, practices and events *being both shaped by, and in turn influencing*, local, national and international forces. By restricting the terms of the local-global dialectic, how can we truly understand the mutually interdependent ways in which the local and the global construct and shape one another? How can we ever seek to ‘know’ those distant ‘others,’ with whom our lives are so intimately, yet often invisibly, bound? How can we expect local issues to have a broader impact or to connect to different projects? How can we expect alliances across different places and peoples to be forged? And ultimately, how can we work collectively towards better worlds? (Sheppard, et al., 2008).

On the other hand, conceiving of global issues as *already and also* local ones, and of local issues as *already and also* global, opens up important spaces for exploring critically and creatively how issues and lives are deeply and irrevocably inter-connected. Bringing local and global manifestations of the same phenomenon into the same analytic frame (such as the case of Shell Oil in the Niger Delta and North Mayo, for example) is to open up real opportunities and issues with which people can relate, and better understand their inter-connectedness with distant ‘others’. While not suggesting that these ‘local’ and ‘global’ global situations are directly comparable or commensurate, drawing linkages between the lived experiences and struggles of ‘local’ inhabitants whose lives are affected by global forces, whether it be local fishermen or farmers in Erris, or the Ogoni, Urhobo, Ilaje, Ijaw or Itsekiri peoples of Nigeria, also facilitates deeper understandings of the ways in which contestation and action (another central pillar of development education) can work in multiple and context-specific ways (Sheppard, et al., 2008). It is through drawing these kinds of connections and comparisons with diverse local and non-local actors that people will be best placed to understand the complex workings of globalisation, and to ‘envision and make different worlds’ (ibid.). Embracing the elasticity and inseparability of the local-global dialectic is instrumental to the realisation of development education’s radical goals because it is within these merged ‘glocal’ spaces that social actors can come together (both individually and collectively, both virtually and materially) to forge alternative, more equitable futures for ‘us all’.

Helen Henderson and Grainne O'Neill present a useful analysis of some of the most pressing contemporary challenges for the field, as seen from the perspective of development education practitioners working within a development NGO which seeks to support children and communities living 'in the crossfire' of poverty in Africa. Their case study raises a number of important questions about what it means to 'do' development education amid funding cuts to the sector and demands from official funders that development education programmes show demonstrable links between overseas aid and poverty reduction. These authors caution against the perception held by some development NGO representatives that development education should be used primarily for the purposes of fundraising and raising awareness of overseas projects, as this 'will call into question the extent to which it can maintain a critical perspective on the structural causes of poverty' (2011:77). Nevertheless, they feel that development education can and should retain its 'critical edge' while still working within the boundaries of a development NGO. This critical edge, they suggest, can be maintained by stressing historical and contemporary practices of exploitation and oppression perpetrated by the North that adversely affect inhabitants of the global South.

Collectively, the articles in this issue call for the development education sector to re-claim its radical roots, so that it can 're-claw' its way back to doing what it knows best, and what it is positioned to do, better than most. I close this editorial with the words of an Australian Aboriginal woman, who responds to those who would offer her 'solidarity' as follows:

“If you have come here to help me  
You are wasting your time...  
But if you have come because  
Your liberation is bound up with mine  
The let us work together” (Holloway, 2010:271).

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# Focus

## DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: ARE THEY STRIKING A FAUSTIAN BARGAIN?

David Selby & Fumiyo Kagawa

Faustus is writ large in European mythology. A sixteenth century German astronomer, he is reputed to have sold his soul to the devil for unlimited power. In modern English parlance, to 'strike a Faustian bargain' is to be willing to sacrifice anything for knowledge or power or influence, closing one's eyes to the consequences. In this article, **David Selby** and **Fumiyo Kagawa** enter the landscape of development education and education for sustainable development and find either a falling in with the neo-liberal marketplace agenda or a reluctance to directly, overtly and critically engage with that agenda. They wonder why. Are the fields in danger of striking a Faustian bargain so as to achieve some purchase and influence over educational directions, a bargain that brings short-term gains at the expense of transformative goals? They offer some suggestions for having influence but sidestepping such a bargain.

### Falling in or falling out with growth and globalisation?

The recent global financial meltdown has occasioned yet another wave of frenzied action to revitalise the global economic growth machine. Governments, banks, corporations, as well as the multilateral and bilateral banking and development agencies related to the United Nations system, are now canvassing and enacting all kinds of initiatives intended to stimulate (or at least avoid hampering) further and faster growth. These include swingeing reductions in public expenditure and services, reinvigorated drives towards privatisation, decentralisation of control away from government, and otherwise shrinking governmental latitude to intervene and regulate so as to shield the vulnerable from oftentimes deleterious market forces.

All of this is happening in the name of the global marketplace, of ensuring virility in an era of global competitiveness predicated on unending growth. Affluent societies and peoples, in particular, have become so transfixed by the idea of economic growth that it has taken on the proportions of delusional realism. Capitalist realism, argues Mark Fisher (2009:2), has become

such an ideological malaise that there is a ‘widespread sense that not only is capitalism the only viable political and economic system, but that it is now impossible even to *imagine* a coherent alternative to it’ (italics in original).

As Clive Hamilton (2010:32) sees it, we have become immured in ‘growth fetishism’. He writes:

“In affluent societies...religious value seems now to be invested in the most profane object, growth of the economy, which at the individual level takes the form of the accumulation of material goods. Our political leaders and commentators believe that it has magical powers that provide the answer to every problem. Growth alone will save the poor. If inequality causes concern, a rising tide lifts all boats. Growth will solve unemployment. If we want better schools and more hospitals then economic growth will provide. And if the environment is in decline then higher growth will generate the means to fix it. Whatever the social problem, the answer is always more growth” (2010:33).

The reference to growth as an article of quasi-religious faith is echoed by Bob Lloyd (2009:516) who sees close parallels between the ‘God delusion’ as interrogated by Richard Dawkins (2006) and what he calls the ‘growth delusion’, ‘the irrational insistence on endless growth as a non negotiable axiom, by a large proportion of the world’s population’. Those with the temerity to suggest that the king of growth is in the altogether are ‘denigrated as aberrant spoilsports’ (Lloyd, 2009:517) and characterised as ‘opponents of progress’ wishing us back to a cave dwelling existence (Hamilton, 2010: 34). Viable alternatives are not there to countenance; they are banished from the mainstream landscape.

Economic growth goes hand in glove with economic globalisation; what Carlos Torres (2009:14) calls ‘globalization from above’. This involves the ongoing neo-liberal systemisation of the world as marketplace through the opening of national economic borders, the creation of huge regional markets, the acceleration and intensification of financial exchange especially through electronic communication, the burgeoning role of the corporate sector, and the diminution of the power and sway of the nation state by reducing its capacity to stem the global tide of market deregulation and by weakening national authority in determining policy priorities and stripping national legislation of its force (Hall, 2002:36; Rizvi, 2004; Torres, 2009:14; Wells et al. 1998).

This hegemonic form of globalisation is resisted by 'globalization from below' (Torres, 2009:15) - the myriad more or less interconnected expressions globally of social and environmental justice activism and indigenous cultural resistance (Hawken, 2007; Selby & Kagawa, 2011). It is also paralleled by the globalisation of human rights, a connection often being made between the full exercise of pluralistic democracy and optimal free play of markets. Parallels and synergies between economic globalisation and the global application of human rights have been noted, in that both have the effect of eroding the boundaries of the nation state, as has the 'smokescreen' nature of much which passes for rights reform in an increasingly neo-liberal environment (Torres, 2009:17, 18, 21). In reality, the embrace of humanistic values is largely tokenistic within neo-liberal discourse (Chossudovsky, 1997; Stromquist, 2002). 'The trouble,' writes Hossey, 'is, increasingly, the only goals that matter are those defined by the market. Concerns over the health of the global ecosystem, justice, traditions, sacred beliefs, shared community, care and concern for fellow beings, are all left by the wayside' (2006:120).

Within such a climate, there is the constant danger that those committed to 'globalization from below' can find themselves co-opted, seduced or swallowed up by the growth and globalisation agendas. Wanting to effect change, they feel themselves facing a dilemma of either trimming their agenda so as to have some say, sway and influence of a reformist nature within the prevailing climate or of adhering to a transformative, status quo critical, standpoint which may well resign them to a position of peripheral, maverick influence. Do they opt for tampering with, and so, perhaps, bolstering the system, or stand by turning it around? A case in point is that of climate change advocates seeking purchase and influence in the corridors of power and so making the most persuasive case they can for green energy primarily based on its potential to make a significant contribution to continuous economic growth. They have chosen to do this when, all around them, lies abundant evidence that economic growth and consumerism are at the root of runaway climate change that is already damaging the lives of 325 million people per year (Hamilton, 2010:41; Global Humanitarian Forum, 2009: 1). Advocacy of green energy is laudable but in making their case as persuasively as possible to the powers-that-be they accede to making protection of the climate secondary to growth. In so doing a kind of Faustian bargain is struck; a collusion with the prevailing neo-liberal worldview in return for some, likely ephemeral, purchase on policy. A place at the table now, whatever the dystopian future prospects afforded by the growth imperative. For probably similar reasons, leading environmental advocates have chosen to relinquish their public embrace of the intrinsic value

of nature by adopting an instrumental growth-speak lexicon in which nature is described as ‘natural capital’, ‘ecosystem services’ and ‘natural resources’ (Selby & Kagawa, 2011).

In this article we want to enquire of the interrelated and overlapping fields of development education and education for sustainable development whether they are similarly in process or danger of striking a Faustian bargain. Each field draws significant inspiration from a radical, status quo critical, value system, espousing transformative intentions with respect to the human condition and the human/nature relationship. As such, they can be considered educational expressions of ‘globalization from below’. But, are there signs within each field of a compromising of values and trimming of original intentions and visions happening in the light of the global marketplace? And, if so, is that happening by commission, by oversight borne of sleeping immersion in current orthodoxies, or by studied omission?

### **Development education across Europe: what is said; what is not being said**

Development education in Europe is a broad field embracing overlapping initiatives under various headings: development education and awareness raising (DEAR), global education, global development education, global learning, education for sustainable development, to name but a few. The *European Consensus on Development* states that ‘Development Education and Awareness Raising contribute to the eradication of poverty and to the promotion of sustainable development through public awareness raising and education approaches and activities that are based on values of human rights, social responsibility, gender equality and a sense of belonging to one world’ (*European Consensus on Development: The Contribution of Development Education and Awareness Raising*, 2007:5).

Agnes Rajacic and her colleagues’ recent (2010) comprehensive review of the field analyses definitions, interpretations and concepts of development education and awareness raising among key actors and in key policy documents, identifying some common aspirations. First, DEAR aims to offer ‘differentiated knowledge and critical **understanding** of global interdependence, global and local development and environmental challenges, power relations, and issues of identity/diversity’. Second, it seeks to ‘**empower people** to participate in public affairs’, by enhancing ‘citizen’s active involvement and engagement for social change’ within their local environment and by promoting ‘active citizenship and

co-responsibility at the global level of world society'. Third, DEAR's vision is underpinned by '**values** of justice, equality, inclusion, human rights, solidarity, and respect for others and for the environment'. Fourth, it aspires to 'learner-centred, participatory and facilitative, dialogue oriented and experiential' pedagogies that help learners 'learn how to learn'. Fifth, it seeks to effect 'informed citizen engagement and advocacy for more just and sustainable policies, political/economic structures and individual practices'. Sixth, acknowledging the limitations of current Eurocentric perspectives in the field, it suggests integrating Southern perspectives more rigorously (2010:11-12, bold in original). Overall, the study points to an emerging tendency to move away from uncritical acceptance and promotion of an official development co-operation agenda to more critical engagement with development-related issues.

Such a transformative reorientation is welcome. However, what is largely missing from current DEAR discourse is explicit attention to issues of economic growth, neo-liberal globalisation and consumerism which, according to many commentators, are deeply and devastatingly culpable for fomenting inequality and social injustice and the destruction of the ecosphere and ethnosphere (Chossudovsky, 1997; Hall, 2002; McGregor, 2003). A keyword search of three recent studies on development education in Europe (CONCORD/DEEEP, 2009; Krause, 2010; Rajacic, et al., 2010) reveals that economic growth is barely mentioned, let alone problematised. Then, while globalisation appears throughout the three studies, usually associated with the concept of 'interdependence', it seems to be taken as a given, an essentially unexceptional, non-complicit canvas against which social justice and environmental issues are treated. There is no single mention in the studies of 'consumerism', although 'consumption' is identified as a development education theme at project level, for instance, in Bulgaria and Lithuania (fair trade, sustainable consumption), Poland (sustainable consumption), Norway (sustainable production and consumption), and the Czech Republic (ethical/responsible consumption).

Some expressions of development education adopt a heavy 'global skills' orientation which, in its formulation and overall tenor, would seem to close down learning opportunities for sustained and forensic scrutiny of the complicity of the global marketplace. *Global Skills*, a manual produced by the Development Education Research Centre at the University of London's Institute of Education, offers 'a framework that equips the UK workforce to make sense of the global society, with the appropriate skills to be active participants in the

global society and economy of the twenty first century' (Bourn, 2008:4). In one passage it summarises the generic skills the learner requires:

“It could be argued that generic skills in the context of globalisation refer firstly to areas such as being prepared to communicate well with a range of people, recognising their cultural and social differences....Secondly, working within a global economy requires skills to respond to rapidly changing needs, being prepared to take on a variety of tasks and being able to adapt and continually recognise the need for developing new skills and knowledge. Thirdly, in the context of working with others, understanding cultural difference and developing skills to work with people in collaborative environments from a range of backgrounds could be crucial” (Bourn, 2008:24).

The manual's skills summary takes in three elements:

- Understanding of what globalisation means, particularly in relation to planned and current employment;
- Ability to understand and engage with global challenges, such as climate change and poverty, in order to become a more informed and engaged citizen;
- Development of skills to understand and respond to a range of cultures and values and to be able to reflect critically upon one's own values base (Bourn, 2008:24).

Development education, so rendered, looks by and large accepting of the neo-liberal growth and globalisation model and seems primarily concerned with workforce preparation for technocratic competitive efficacy. Key global issues are explored but against a backdrop of imperturbable and incontrovertible economic globalisation. Social cohesion and multiculturalism – what the manual refers to as ‘the recognition of cultural sensitivity in forms that are appropriate and relevant to up-skilling the UK workforce’ (4) - matter but are conceived of as feeding into muscular economic performance. Where are the skills and capacities for resistance and transgression amidst a ‘globe-speak’ reflective of UK national imperatives?

These findings raise some important questions. First, why does a field with a core commitment to the eradication of global poverty and inequality through education largely shrink from explicitly addressing the relationship between global poverty, social injustice and environmental devastation and what

has been described as ‘the powerful wave of neo-liberalism rolling over the planet’ (Jickling & Wals, 2008:2). Effective treatment of the relationship would seem to be a *sine qua non* of a thoroughgoing social justice change agenda.

Following from this, does the field sufficiently deal with controversial issues that could be construed as indispensable for fostering ‘informed citizen participation’ and helping the learner ‘learn how to learn’? The 2010 CONCORD/DEEEP study on development education in formal curricula in 29 European countries reveals ‘a reluctance to address particular controversial issues that challenge our global society’, pointing out that the theme of global terrorism never appears in curricula ‘despite its constantly high profile and analysis in national media, and in government policies’. It may be included, the study suggests, under the topic of ‘human security’, as, for instance, in Finnish curricula but is never explicitly referenced (2010:16). The global growth economy and hyper-consumerism may occupy an analogous position. They may lie submerged under themes such as ‘global poverty,’ ‘global economy/markets and trade,’ and ‘globalization’ while not made explicit. But, why might that be?

Third, how can mal-development be treated unless consumerism is confronted head-on in learning programmes? There is no assurance in the programme descriptions reviewed that consumerism is interrogated. Or that, if it is present but inconspicuous, the treatment moves beyond reformist ‘consumer awareness’ (sustainable, responsible, ethical, green consumerism) to a critical treatment implicating ‘consumption beyond dignified sufficiency’ (McIntosh, 2008:180) as complicit in global environmental and social breakdown? David Woodward and Andrew Simms point out that ‘Europe’s levels of consumption amount to more than double its own domestic biocapacity, meaning that European lifestyles can only be sustained by depending on the natural resources and environmental services of other nations’ (2006:3). Why, then, is rampant consumerism given such minimal attention in development education programmes?

Fourth, what are the repercussions of the easy connect being made with the concept of ‘education for sustainable development’? The CONCORD/DEEEP (2009:13-14) study finds that the terminology ‘education for sustainable development’ is widespread amongst educational systems, teachers and the NGO sector in 12 European countries, and that development educators in 19 of the 29 countries surveyed are using ‘sustainable development’ as an operative descriptor in learning programmes. But has the field embraced the concept too readily and uncritically? If so, why might that be?



## Education for sustainable development: *sotto voce* on the neo-liberal agenda

*Tomorrow Today* (UNESCO, 2010) is a collection of papers published to coincide with the mid-decade report to the UN General Assembly on the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014). As such, it provides something of a 'state of the art' policy and practitioner overview of a field garnering adherence and support from around the world. The UN agency with coordinating responsibility for DESD, UNESCO, has been identified as a key agency promoting the model of neo-liberal globalisation (Torres, 2009:15). Perhaps this goes some way to explain the virtual absence of any critical exploration of notions of sustainable development and of the dilemmas and tensions that exist between at one and the same time seeking to sustain a growth economy, ecological systems and social systems.

In an opening contribution to *Tomorrow Today*, the Director of UNESCO's Intersectoral Platform on Education for Sustainable Development, Mark Richmond (2010:19), asserts that ESD 'provides many of the questions and answers about what education should be about and what it should be for in the 21<sup>st</sup> century'. That said, it is interesting that across the contributions to the collection there are no questions directly addressing and unpacking the neo-liberal agenda and its culpability for fomenting many of the issues that are ubiquitously touched upon in the collection, such as inequality, poverty, starvation, biodiversity collapse and climate change. There is, then, space for a serious look at presenting symptoms and consequences but little, it seems, for critical examination of root causes. Across the collection, too, the inevitability of increased economic globalisation and the consequences for environmental and social (and social justice based) sustainability are not called into question. While there are references to the importance of 'sustainable consumption', there is no direct reference to rampant consumerism in the metaphorical North and amongst elites in the metaphorical South and the part it plays in violating the indentured slave, the sweatshop worker, the once-resilient local community, and ecosystems globally. The global arms trade, a lucrative strand of globalisation (Hall, 2002:37) is not mentioned. True, there are contributions expounding the positive benefits of green growth (Sangkyoo, 2010:49) and outlining approaches to building a corporate social ethic in the private sector (Fien & Maclean, 2010:24) but absent from the collection are descriptions of programmes that embrace a root and branch critique of the global marketplace, its institutional manifestations and its impacts, and that offer alternatives.

This same lacuna was observed by a UK spokesperson at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. At the Summit there was no critical exploration of sustainable development:

“It was as if engaging in this discussion could potentially ruin the ‘whole idea’ and slow down its world-wide implementation. The focus of this international gathering, instead, seems to have been on how to *promote* education for sustainable development, and how to set standards, benchmarks, and control mechanisms to confidently assess progress towards its realization. Rather than discussing and exposing underlying ideologies, values and worldviews, the general consensus at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and the many meetings that were organized in its slipstream, seemed to be that educators have passed the reflective stage, and that they must roll up their sleeves and start implementing! However, it can also be argued that at best they are implementing a chimera – a fanciful illusion – or worse. It could also be argued that many educators have become agents in the trend towards economic globalization” (Jickling & Wals, 2008:6, italics in original).

How resonant is this with the neo-liberal educational agenda of standards, benchmarks, testing and accountability!

The Bonn Declaration emerging from the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development, March/April 2009, was in similar vein with two thirds of its text given over to a ‘call for action’ listing of concrete initiatives that policy makers and practitioners should undertake. In its (short) preamble, there is reference to the global economic system. ‘The global financial and economic crises,’ the text goes (UNESCO, 2009:1), ‘highlights the risks of unsustainable economic development models and practices based on short-term gains.’ This is subsequently followed by the assertion that ESD ‘is critical for the development of new economic thinking’ (2009:2) but the reader is left wondering in what direction that thinking might tend to go. For John Huckle, UNESCO-driven ESD is tantamount to ‘business as usual’ and supportive of the global treadmill of neo-liberalism. Huckle asserts that the Bonn Declaration, ‘ignores economic and political realities,’ ‘locates the challenges facing humanity in values, rather than the political economy of sustainable societies,’ ‘fails to specify what values, knowledge, skills and competencies might encourage sustainable living, participation in society, and decent work,’ and ‘fails to suggest ways in which current economic thinking should change’. We need, he adds, ‘to locate the barriers to sustainability in the

structures and processes of global capitalism and recognise the limitations of dominant models of sustainable development and current proposals for new green deals' (2010:135-136).

There is a fundamental problematic in education for sustainable development arising out of the continued reticence of its agencies and proponents to come clean about whether, for them, development connotes growth. The World Commission on Environment and Development report, *Our Common Future*, gave us the definition of sustainable development that has been rehearsed mantra-like in the past twenty years or so: 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs' (WCED, 1987:43). The report proceeds to treat economic growth and sustainable development as largely consistent concepts, a view compounded at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Gutiérrez Perez & Pozo Llorente, 2005:298) yet fails, as do most still reciting the 'Brundtland' formula, to reconcile the problems associated with a paradigm that conceives of a future that is 'axiomatically sustainable and able to grow' while being 'supported indefinitely by a finite Earth' (Lloyd, 2009:516). 'It will be highly improbable to reconcile the objectives of poverty reduction and environmental sustainability if global growth remains the principal economic strategy,' write Woodward & Simms (2006). 'The scale of growth this model demands would generate unsupportable environmental costs; and the costs would fall disproportionately, and counter productively, on the poorest – the very people the growth is meant to benefit.'

A related problematic concerns the melding of globalisation and sustainable development, a union that many sustainability educators appear to see as wholly unexceptional or advocate as desirable (see, for instance, Bourn, 2009). According to Jackson (2003:325), globalisation is more or less taken without question as 'a viable agenda for a sustainable and just future for all people'. For Jickling and Wals (2008:5), education for sustainable development is a policy-driven phenomenon, both a subset of and propelled forward by the globalisation imperative. 'We view education for sustainable development,' they write, 'as a product and carrier of globalizing forces' (2008:18). As such it becomes allied with allopoetic (neocolonial, externally driven and/or imposed) forms of development rather than autopoetic (locally framed, self-generating and self-regulating) alternatives (Shiva, 2008:14).

The field so far offers little by way of antidote to the growth machine by opening learning windows for consideration of ideas for transition to slow

growth, no growth and steady state economies (Daly, 1996; Victor, 2008) or for concretizing those ideas through learning-in-community experimentation and practice.

Critical theory prompts us to apply some important insights when we find no-go areas and blind spots, such as the insights proffered by Delyse Springett:

“What is power? Who holds power? How is it used in the sustainability debate? The concept of ‘false consciousness’: the ways in which we may consent to domination and hegemony and accept taken-for-granted ideologies without realizing we are doing so. The exploration of ‘silences’ or ‘gaps’ in the discourse; what is not ‘up for discussion’ may be even more important than what is” (Springett, 2010:80-81).

### **Sidestepping a Faustian bargain**

We have reviewed the fields of development education and education for sustainable development. With the first, we are left wondering why neo-liberal growth and globalisation are kept in the shadows when so clearly complicit in deepening poverty and injustice and harming the environment. With the second, we are left pondering on the reluctance to confront growth fetishism in the name of sustainable development and why the field is so seemingly comfortable with the globalisation of a marketplace that so threatens sustainability prospects. With both fields, we ask ourselves why the exploration of alternatives to the growth model fails to receive the curricular exposure the global condition would seem to merit.

Are there traces of a Faustian bargain here? Is the need to achieve purchase within educational systems increasingly wedded to the purposes of the global marketplace encouraging circumspection in identifying with status quo critical agendas? Is there an element of self-censorship amongst academic and non-governmental providers of development and sustainability learning programmes and resources as they gauge what development arms of government offering funding support and funding foundations are likely to countenance? Are alignment with prevailing orthodoxies and avoidance of the potentially risqué becoming consciously adopted strategies in relating to government and the formal sector? We have no answers to any of these questions, only hunches, and can only speculate, just as we encourage colleagues from within their respective contexts, roles and responsibilities to speculate and reflect.

With powerful forces wedded to the global marketplace, how might those committed to pursuing a transformative agenda sidestep the dangers of falling into a Faustian bargain? We close with some suggestions:

### ***Catalyse the ‘shadow spaces’***

Institutions have their formal dimensions and structures but also their ‘shadow spaces’, ‘the relational spaces within organisations that cut across the formal organisational structures for learning and adaptation, and which relate to individual and social learning’. These spaces ‘allow individuals or sub-groups within organisations to experiment, imitate, communicate, learn and reflect on their actions in ways that can surpass formal processes within policy and organisational settings’ (Pelling, et al., 2008:868). Effectively nurtured, the dynamism of the shadow space can inform the formal dimension. Transformative educators, we suggest, might do well to think more creatively and laterally about strategies for creative use of shadow spaces and for inducing spillover into the formal. These can be built into project design.

### ***Ask questions of and speak truth to power***

From the platform, in the workshop, over an informal cup of tea or anywhere else, we can ask questions of power, just as Delyse Springett, cited above, does. Or, as Vanessa Andreotti (2006:44) does: ‘Who is this global citizen? What should be the basis of this project? Whose interests are represented here? Is this an elitist project? Are we empowering the dominant group to remain in power? Are we doing enough to examine the local/global dimensions of our assumptions?’ We can tease out and expose incongruities in mainstream thinking (for instance, between embracing, on the one hand, growth-oriented sustainable development and committing to tackling global inequality, on the other). We can follow Woodard & Simms (2006:5) in asking the king-is-in-the-altogether question of ‘why is [economic growth] the single over-riding goal of every government, of every economy, the world over?’

### ***Capitalise on Trojan horses within the walls of mainstream thinking***

Notions such as ‘balance’, presenting diverse perspectives and critical thinking are articles of faith within formal learning systems. The problem has been that the arms of the balancing scales have not extended far enough either side of the fulcrum, the diversity of perspective has been excessively constricted, and the critical thinking not very wide or deep. But in the name of these articles of faith, the transformative educator can legitimately fold into learning resources and processes critical examination of the growth machine and its impact, and of

alternatives to growth. In an age of deepening uncertainty, we can argue for a pedagogy of uncertainty that unlocks and fully engages with peripheralised perspectives in the name of securing some future.

### ***Do not see social entities as monolithic***

We should regularly remind ourselves that no arm of government offering development education funding, no funding foundation, no educational system and no learning institution is made up of people uniformly wedded to one worldview. Diversity, difference and dissonance are everywhere! A critical stance towards the growth-oriented global marketplace can resonate in the most unexpected of quarters! Seeking to effect transformative change involves at one level developing and building outwards from a network of the sympathetic within and across institutions and systems. But we should note, too, that across the plethora of funding sources for development education and education for sustainable development, there are grant givers who signal their interest in supporting risk-taking, 'out of the box' thinking and radical interrogation of blind spots and assumptions leading to policy innovation. Drawing from a diversity of funding sources is always preferable to relying on a funding source monoculture but especially so for those pursuing (risking) a transformative status quo critical educational agenda.

### ***Return to first principles***

In our discussion of education for sustainable development, we have described a concrete experience of collective flight from first principles and root meanings at the World Summit of 2002. For those of us wishing to escape any Faustian bargain, a leitmotiv of our work has to be a return to first principles. Discussion of first principles and meanings is also a vital element in engaging with teachers, community leaders and members, and others with whom we work. Why are we committed to this? What values matter most to us, and why? What values, competencies and dispositions do we think will best realise the future, personal through global, that we are working for? Is anything we are doing or saying - or anything we are not doing or saying - tantamount to trimming on our worldview for short-term influence? If so, what are the attendant dangers and likely consequences? What should we do so as to better achieve a congruent way forward?

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# RISING TO THE CHALLENGE: DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION, NGOS AND URGENT NEED FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

**Stephen McCloskey**

## Introduction

Social change is the *raison d'être* of the development education (DE) sector. It aims to eradicate social and economic inequalities through a process of learning that supports action as summarised in the following definition from the European DEEEP project: 'It enables people to move from basic awareness of international development priorities and sustainable human development, through understanding of the causes and effects of global issues to personal involvement and informed actions' (DARE Forum, 2004). This is a widely shared approach to development education which also extends to governments. For example, Irish Aid suggests that development education 'seeks to engage people in analysis, reflection and action for local and global citizenship and participation' (Irish Aid, 2006). This article aims to discuss the role of development organisations in effecting social change primarily by reference to the sectors in Ireland and Britain. It argues that the sector has limited engagement with social movements which share many of the values and social vision of development education and could potentially widen its impact on society. A stronger and more radical social base could enable development education to initiate dialogical discussion on issues pivotal to our future like sustainability in the context of the prevailing model of growth.

This article will argue the case for a more rounded and substantial engagement with development education within the development sector itself by examining the deficits of the Make Poverty History (MPH) campaign events in 2005 and missed opportunities arising from the recent financial crisis in Ireland. The article will begin by examining the outcomes of recent research on development education and overseas aid which suggests that cosmetic engagement with development issues, as appeared to be the case for example with Make Poverty History, results in short-term public mobilisation and disappointing outcomes. It is argued that a more radical approach to campaigning that embraces the reflective practice of development education could generate a more meaningful and fruitful engagement with the public. It goes on to suggest that the reluctance of many key constituents in the development sector to engage in the debate around Ireland's recent financial

collapse and loss of economic sovereignty represented a missed opportunity to educate the public about fundamental aspects of development. It arguably undermined the sector's credibility as a critical voice in the non-governmental sector and represented a derogation of development education's role as an agent of *local* as well as global development.

The article concludes that more sustained public engagement with development issues could be generated through stronger links with social movements and a more radical agenda. The sector could become a more vital component of civil society by connecting the local to the global.

### **Shallow public engagement with development**

In a recent briefing on engaging the public in tackling global poverty in Britain, Think Global (formerly Development Education Association) and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) suggest 'that public support for development, whilst still widespread, is shallow and that public opinion is increasingly polarised on this issue' (October 2010). Hudson and van Heerde have questioned the assumption that there is an 'overwhelming level of public support for the principle of aid to poor countries'. In fact, they argue that the causal link between public support and development aid 'does not enjoy empirical support from available data' (2010:20). Hudson and van Heerde have found that the level of engagement with development in Britain is 'a mile wide and an inch deep' which supports the notion that public knowledge of development lacks the complexity and depth required to engage sustainably with the issues underpinning global poverty. This shallow public engagement with development arguably found its most visible expression in the Make Poverty History (MPH) campaign and its related events in 2005.

On 2 July 2005, 220,000 protestors convened in Edinburgh as part of a series of events organised as part of MPH, a coalition of charities, civil society groups, and faith organisations formed to campaign on key global issues like debt and poverty eradication. The Edinburgh protest coincided with a Group of 8 leading industrialised countries summit held twenty miles away in Gleneagles. As the protestors completed walking laps of Edinburgh city centre shouting slogans in an upbeat atmosphere, the level of mobilisation was impressive but the outcomes questionable. While big promises were made at Gleneagles including a \$50 billion aid package to Africa, they were subsequently not delivered upon. Among the development agency responses to the Gleneagles summit: the World Development Movement described it as 'a disaster for the

world's poor'; ActionAid complained that 'the G8 have completely failed to deliver trade justice'; Christian Aid described the summit as 'a sad day for poor people in Africa and all over the world'; and Oxfam lamented that 'neither the necessary sense of urgency nor the historic potential of Gleneagles was grasped by the G8' (*Guardian*, 6 September 2005).

Make Poverty History succeeded on the level of clearly communicating the need for change and highlighting some of the key issues that needed addressing but it failed in sustaining the participation of the hundreds of thousands who donned the white wristbands and took to the streets. A Eurobarometer poll in 2005 showed that despite the enhanced media coverage and increased public awareness of global poverty generated by Make Poverty History, Live8 concerts, and Gleneagles Summit, a total of 88 per cent of EU citizens cited no knowledge of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Eurobarometer, 2005). The MDGs are the central plank of development policy for the world's leading industrialised countries and the low level of public awareness of the goals reflected in this poll suggests that development organisations and governments alike have been largely unsuccessful in capturing civil society involvement in achieving the targets.

A Department for International Development (DfID)-commissioned poll in 2010 measuring public (adults over 16 years) attitudes to development shows that the proportion of the public who say they are very concerned about global poverty has declined from a peak of 32 per cent around the time of Make Poverty History to 25 per cent today. The percentage of the public describing themselves as 'active enthusiasts' in the area of international development declined from 18 per cent in 2008 to 14 per cent in 2010 while, in the same period, the percentage of respondents who thought 'most aid is wasted' increased from 47 per cent to 53 per cent. The percentage of respondents concerned about global poverty remained solidly high (74 per cent in 2008 and 73 per cent in 2010) which suggests that the public lack the knowledge and understanding of international development to meaningfully address relevant issues and move from a position of concern to one of individual or communal action (TNS, 2010).

Make Poverty History appeared to be an example of what Freire (1972) described as pure activism (action without reflection) rather than the more sustained engagement with the learner inherent in *praxis* (reflection *and* action) which had the power 'to negate accepted limits and open the way to a new future' (ibid.:11). Key questions arising from the recent surveys on public

attitudes to development are how to engage civil society at the kind of level likely to result in dialogical action, and what role development NGOs can play in this process?

### **The Irish financial crisis – where was the development sector?**

Bebbington et al. suggest that ‘NGOs are only NGOs in any politically meaningful sense of the term if they are offering alternatives to dominant models, practices and ideas about development’ (2008:3). This more politically-oriented role is problematic for many NGOs, particularly in the development sector where they tend to focus on the domestic policy arena only insofar as it impacts on overseas aid and development policy. Economic policy-making and social development in the national context is largely devolved to NGOs with a local or specialist focus in the domestic arena. However, the 2008 global financial crisis and the subsequent sharp contraction of the Irish economy resulting in an €85 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and European Central Bank (ECB) shows how the national and global frequently collide (*Irish Times*, 28 November 2010). For example the same economic mismanagement that cost the Irish taxpayer between €29 and €34 billion to bail out Anglo Irish Bank (*Guardian*, 30 September 2010), also resulted in cuts totaling €224 million from the overseas aid budget in 2009 (Dochas, 10 December 2009).

While the development sector launched a campaign to engage public support for the aid budget and prevent further cuts ([www.actnow2015.ie](http://www.actnow2015.ie)), it has stopped short of locating the cuts within the wider economic malaise impacting on Irish society. To critique the cuts in aid without analysing and attempting to address the underlying social, economic and political crisis underpinning those cuts severely limits the role of NGOs as critical friends of government and active agents of social equality at home and overseas. Bebbington, et al. believe that:

“NGOs can and must re-engage with the project of seeking alternative development futures for the world’s poorest and more marginal. This will require clearer analysis of the contemporary problems of uneven development, and a clear understanding of the types of alliances NGOs need to construct with other actors in civil society if they are to mount a credible challenge to disempowering processes of economic, social and political development” (2008:3).

One of the lessons of Make Poverty History is that the alliance of civil society movements involved in the campaign lacked a development education component that could have supported a more critical analysis of the issues tackled by MPH. Similarly, development education organisations with the capacity to provide critical literacy skills and a deeper understanding of development did not sufficiently engage with the campaign and its mobilisation of the public.

However, there is a striking recent example of an organisation that has attempted to connect the current economic crisis in Ireland to the global South. In December 2010, Action from Ireland (Afri) published a paper on the IMF's intervention in Ireland 'based on the experience of global justice organisations that have long monitored the impact of IMF policies in the Global South'. The paper argues that the IMF deal '[L]ocks Ireland into a very specific neo-liberal economic model dominated by policies which impose suffering on the less well off in Irish society'. Drawing upon examples of the IMF's – arguably disastrous – interventions in the global South, the paper argues for a defaulting on the bank debt, 'an option that it is imperative be exercised on the grounds of both justice and economic sustainability' (Afri, 2010). Thus, Afri is squarely addressing a fundamental and momentous generational question for the Irish people based on compelling evidence from the global South.

It is regrettable that key constituents in the development sector remained silent on Ireland's financial problems and refused to engage in the debate that enveloped Irish civil society. Here was an opportunity to mobilise stakeholders at a grassroots level against the IMF/ECB loan and educate the public on alternative economic models drawing upon the sector's links with the global South. Rarely has the local been so clearly intertwined with the global in an issue that impacts on all of us and beckons a contribution from development organisations and development educators. This required the sector to leave the more comfortable terrain of commentary on the global to become more visibly and actively engaged with the local and it largely refused to do so. As Storey suggests: 'if an opportunity for education *from* the South is being lost here then so also is an opportunity to learn *about* the South' given that the Irish people are confronting similar processes of structural adjustment to those faced by many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America (2011). The sector could, for example, have shared the experiences of Argentina at the start of the last decade when popular resistance to an IMF lending programme and its resulting austerity measures forced a partial defaulting on its debt which helped to set the country on the path toward economic recovery (ibid).

Alas, the Irish development sector, with honourable exceptions, missed this opportunity to bring global experiences to bear on a local issue of far-reaching consequences which begs the question why are development organisations so reluctant to enter the political fray at a domestic level beyond the area of international development?

## **Ducking the domestic agenda**

The Irish development sector has yet to open the kind of debate proposed by Bebbington, et al. on 'alternative development futures' rooted in sustainability and driven by social needs rather than a high-growth, neo-liberal ideology. And yet the development sector has considerable public support which could provide a platform for meaningful debate on alternative futures in Ireland informed by a global perspective. According to a 2006 Dochas survey of its members there are 854,613 supporters of its development sector affiliates, 77 per cent of which are drawn from the 'general public'. If this substantial section of civil society could be engaged in development education activities linking the local to the global then it would undoubtedly enhance active citizenship on development issues and strengthen public support for positive interventions in the global South. However, for the most part, development organisations will only engage in the domestic political arena when it addresses policy issues directly related to the area of international development. Thus, local development issues with a firm global connection like the economy, unemployment, asylum-seekers and refugees, and migration are deemed off the radar of key development constituents. So, why is there reluctance among development organisations to intervene in the public debate on issues to which they could usefully contribute?

Part of the answer lies in how development NGOs are funded, particularly in the development sector where the larger development agencies have traditionally acted as government partners in delivering aid programmes in the global South. For example, the 2009 Irish Aid Annual Report stated that '[a]pproximately one third of Ireland's bilateral ODA (Overseas Development Assistance) was delivered through non-governmental organisations' (2009:66) with Ireland's total aid budget in 2009 amounting to €722.2 million. These NGO partners include overseas agencies but five Irish NGOs alone - Christian Aid, Concern, GOAL, Self Help Africa, and Trócaire - received core programme support in 2009 totaling more than €56 million (Irish Aid, 2009:46). This is not to critique development organisations for working in partnership with government or to criticise Irish Aid for disbursing aid through NGOs; we need



a well-resourced aid sector and a government committed to international development. However, the relationship between the NGO and government sectors goes beyond that of donor and aid partner to, for example, joint missions to multilateral development gatherings which can arguably result in a blurring of roles, policies and agendas. When the stakes are so high in terms of financial support, policy formation and government access, development organisations may be reluctant to overtly criticise government policy, particularly in areas beyond international development.

Similarly, the development education sector is highly dependent on Irish Aid as development agency support for the sector has weakened. In total, Irish Aid expenditure for development education in 2009 was over €5 million which is high relative to other Western European states (2009:58). A trend in development education since the mid-1990s in Britain and Ireland has seen a reduction in support for development education from the NGO sector as government support has increased. This has resulted in traditionally small development education organisations becoming increasingly vulnerable to changes in government policy like, for instance, the decision by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID) to reduce its grant support for development education following the May 2010 election (DfID, 17 May; 2 July 2010). In such a government-dominated funding environment it is possible that some development education practitioners may either tailor their programmes to correspond with official development agendas or avoid tackling controversial issues that could possibly antagonise official funders.

Other factors that may explain why development organisations are reluctant to intervene in domestic policy matters includes the suggestion by some that 'NGOs can be more accurately seen as corporate entities acting according to the logic of the marketplace, albeit a marketplace in service provision' (Bebbington, et al.:6). As larger corporate entities they may have a stronger orientation toward fundraising and campaigns than education and a more international rather than local policy focus. There is also the question of public support and the perceived danger that adopting an overtly political role in domestic affairs which courts controversy may result in reduced donations and public goodwill. On the other hand, it is arguable that development organisations could augment their public support and strengthen their connection with local communities by speaking to domestic issues which have a strong global resonance. This is certainly an area of activity that development

organisations could usefully reflect upon particularly in the context of Ireland's worsening social and economic performance as outlined in the next section.

## **Under-development in Ireland: the case for local interventions by the development sector**

Ireland is a society ill-at-ease with itself as evidenced by public concern at the sweep of cuts resulting from the state's lending to banks and acceptance of an €85 billion loan from the IMF and ECB. Commentators and readers alike have vented their anger on the pages of the *Irish Times* at the 'surrender' of Irish sovereignty and loss of political credibility and independence of action (18 & 19 November 2010). Around 50,000 people attended a public rally opposing the cuts organised by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions on 27 November 2010 in one of the largest demonstrations seen in the capital for many years (*Irish Times*) in addition to smaller but significant rallies by nurses, pensioners and other sectors of civil society targeted by austerity measures.

Since 2008, Ireland has been experiencing indicators of social under-development most recently associated with the economically stagnant 1980s when high unemployment forced many young people to emigrate to more buoyant economies overseas. There are currently 439,200 people claiming unemployment benefits in Ireland, some 13.7 per cent of the population (up from 3.7 per cent in 2000) which in turn is pushing up the number expected to emigrate over the coming years estimated at 100,000 between April 2010 and April 2012. In the area of education, there are worrying indicators of social polarisation and under-achievement with 24 per cent of 15 year olds 'effectively illiterate' and Ireland slumping to 17<sup>th</sup> position on the world's international league table on literacy and 30<sup>th</sup> (out of 34) on the league table on education spending. Statistics in the area of health are equally worrying with 47, 587 patients waiting for elective procedures and €1.4 billion slashed from the health budget from 2011-2014 (*Irish Times*, 12 February 2011).

These statistics indicate a deeper, long-term malaise in the Irish economy, political system and wider society resulting from the more prominent role of the market in public life. In considering the impact of neo-liberalism on education both locally and internationally, the Irish National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) identified three key features in the external environment that impacted on its work: 'globalisation, marketisation and individualisation'. It added that '[t]he influence of the market has also been keenly felt in higher education, where individual schools and departments of

universities are increasingly viewed as the components of an internal competitive market'. As a result of accelerated globalisation, education in liberal democracies is becoming increasingly commodified and a significant outcome of this process is the 'trend of individualisation' and 'the atomisation of the individual in an increasingly consumerised and consumer-led world' (NCCA Strategic Plan, 2006-08:11-13).

This increasing commodification of the education system and other vital public services like health and utilities combined with the economic turmoil already besieging Irish society demands social change that extends beyond the current tried and failed model of untrammelled neo-liberalism. In order to engage in this debate both within the development sector and with social partners, development NGOs need to adopt a more overtly political role in society and align themselves more strategically with civil society groups that share their vision for a more egalitarian and just society. In assessing their findings on public attitudes to development and the role of NGOs, Hudson and van Heerde pose this question:

“Should building support for development seek to work through accommodating existing policy preferences or aim to actively shape preferences? The answer to this will depend upon what the true goal of a communication and public awareness strategy is: whether it is to maximize support for poverty alleviation or to foster critical civic engagement with poverty alleviation itself” (2010:22-23).

The current financial crisis in Ireland and erosion of public trust in political institutions as a means toward equitable social change demands that development organisations raise their voices in the debate on how we move forward as a society. Development education is particularly well positioned to contribute to this debate given its local-global dialectic as outlined in the aforementioned Irish Aid definition which regards DE as supporting 'reflection and action for *local* and global citizenship and participation'. The local component of development education practice involves drawing upon the learner's experiences in the local community and relating those experiences to wider concepts of social and economic development. The next section offers some proposals as to how development education and the wider development sector can contribute to this debate on social change.

## How do we rise to the challenge of urgent social change?

Firstly, development organisations of all stripes need to establish meaningful partnerships with the civil society organisations that represent the poor, marginalised and disempowered within Ireland as well as overseas. By creating new horizontal coalitions and alliances, development organisations can operate with renewed credibility and energy. Far too often development educators debate issues among themselves, rather than engaging with wider society and in the current social and economic context we no longer have that luxury. Trade unions, community groups, minority ethnic organisations, unemployed groups and campaigning organisations like social movements and human rights groups all represent potential partners of the development education sector. These horizontal rather than vertical alliances represent the natural constituency of development education.

Secondly, development educators need to become more proactively and overtly political in their operations. For the majority of development organisations political advocacy begins and ends with international development policy and how it is resourced. The development sector, for the most part, does not address domestic policy issues or consider the relationship between Ireland's national growth strategy and the well-being of Irish society as well as overseas aid. The cuts in overseas aid are on the same continuum as other reductions in government expenditure which are severely impacting on the poor in Ireland. The development sector has a large public base that could be mobilised in support of a domestic social agenda rooted in justice and equality and informed by a global perspective.

Thirdly, the development education sector needs to formulate its own agenda for change based on debate among practitioners and with social partners. The sector has traditionally operated within the strategic priorities of funders and statutory education bodies rather than identifying its own priorities for social change. A national development education strategy plan that has buy-in and support from the wider development sector and grassroots social movements, could enable the sector to chart its own course to development based on its strengths as a practitioner of education toward social change.

Fourthly, Irish development organisations need to immediately engage in a process of imagining and cultivating alternative futures that can steer our society toward a more sustainable model of development imbued with the kind

of values and community ethos that has been lost over the last two decades. As the NCCA suggests:

“In Ireland, the traditional family and the role of the family within a community are changing. The tradition of individuals volunteering to participate in initiatives for the benefit of the local community appears to be in decline, as this time is increasingly devoted to children and family and activities that directly benefit *my* family and *my* children” (NCCA, 2006:13).

In considering how the formulation of alternative futures might work, Bebbington, et al. believe NGOs should reach out ‘far more assertively, open-mindedly, but also critically to social movements. Indeed the imperative seems to be for NGOs to think consciously of themselves as part of a social movement in which the different constituents are equally important, and therefore in which relationships of power have to be thoroughly re-worked and made more horizontal’ (2008:32).

Fifthly, the leading development agencies need to re-engage or enhance their support for development education both internally and externally by way of financial support to the wider sector. A more independent financial base is imperative for the long-term sustainability of the sector and development agency support is necessary if development education is to be delivered to new audiences and social partners. Finally, and connected to the previous points, is the need for development education to formulate its thinking and positions on the key global issues impacting on our lives.

In a seminar on climate change for the Centre for Global Education (2010), David Selby posed some challenging questions for development education practitioners: is the sector critical enough of economic growth and its effects? Is development education offering a sufficiently root and branch critique of consumerism? Is development education helping to break through the cognitive dissonance surrounding what is happening to the planet whereby we acknowledge the threat posed by climate change but prevaricate from responding accordingly? (Centre for Global Education, 2010). Development education needs to place its focus on debating these questions and considering the role it wants to play in moving society towards a more sustainable and equitable future.

## Conclusion

Recent surveys and polls commissioned by development organisations in Britain suggest that support for overseas aid is weakening and the level of public knowledge of development issues is ‘a mile wide and an inch deep’. The Make Poverty History initiative was extremely successful in mobilising the public for actions on development issues but unsuccessful in sustaining their engagement with global poverty over the long-term. The MPH example suggests that social movements and development education practitioners have a mutual need for support and collaboration to ensure that the public have the requisite depth of learning and skills needed to engage in meaningful actions on development issues.

The development sector needs to rise to the challenge of the global financial crisis and its impact on the Irish economy together with the festering undercurrents of social inequality. The sector has an opportunity to apply its global learning to local problems based on new partnerships with grassroots social movements. The sector can no longer afford to limit interventions in local policy-making to overseas development issues. It is no coincidence that the five countries that have reached the United Nations’ target of 0.7 per cent of Gross National Income (GNI) for overseas development assistance – Norway, Sweden, Luxembourg, Denmark and the Netherlands – are also countries that have traditionally performed well in domestic social indicators like health and education (OECD, 2008; UN, 2011). Therefore, building social partnerships in civil society that help to address domestic deficits in social and economic development will also enable development organisations in Ireland to strengthen public support for overseas development.

In *The Spirit Level*, Wilkinson and Pickett suggest that mainstream politics ‘has abandoned the attempt to provide a shared vision capable of inspiring us to create a better society’ (2010:4). Development organisations in Ireland now have a significant opportunity to move beyond their traditional terrain and intervene more overtly in domestic policy issues to build a better society in Ireland and, at the same time, build support for development overseas.

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## EVOLUTION OR REVOLUTION? AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHANGING FACES OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

In this article, **Seán Bracken**, **Gareth Dart** and **Stephen Pickering** investigate whether and to what extent there has been an ideological shift in the realisation of development education policy and practice over the past three decades. Using the United Kingdom (UK) as a case study, the paper provides a review of the literature in the field and investigates the extent to which the introduction of the Primary School Curriculum through the Education Reform Act (1988) has had an effect on the teaching and learning of development issues within schools. Using a conceptual framework loosely based on the work of Andreotti (2008), which interrogates the narrative used in policy formation, the paper provides a comparative analysis of policy and curriculum documents. The overt and subliminal ideological perspectives adopted in these documents are interrogated to determine the relative positioning regarding how best development issues might be addressed. A critical analysis of findings is then used as the basis to determine whether there has been a de-radicalisation of the ways in which development education policy and content is addressed particularly in the contexts of formal education.

### Introduction

This paper uses historical inquiry and critical post-colonial analyses (Andreotti, 2008) to explore evolving notions of radicalism versus conservatism as reflected in the formal education sector's approach to development education in the UK. The study interrogates a variety of policy and curriculum documents over the past 35 years. However, investigating the supposed linear nature of historical developments in educational policy and practice is problematic because the past continues to interface with the present, and past exemplifications of practice are reflective of temporal contextual factors such as the political settings, spatial implications, and socio-cultural influences (Freathy & Parker, 2010; McCulloch & Richardson, 2000). Ideational perspectives encompassed in curricula addressing social justice, equality, inclusion and a global dimension may indeed shift over time.

For example, in an overview of the evolution of global education in the UK, Hicks (2007:19-20) notes that there was a conservative reaction against the concept of development education in the 1980s because it was perceived as condoning indoctrination and politicisation of the educational experience. Further, such approaches were critiqued as relying on improper teaching

methods which ultimately resulted in a lowering of educational standards. To some extent, this perception may be mirrored in contemporaneous reinterpretations of curriculum, because as outlined in the current White Paper, the curriculum 'must not try to cover every conceivable area of human learning or endeavour, must not become a vehicle for imposing passing political fads on our children and must not squeeze out all other learning' (DfE, 2010:41). There are hints that an impending reorientation in the curriculum may marginalise the importance of development education, just as in the 1980s an increasing control of the teaching methods and content led to a marginalisation of development education until the mid-1990s.

## Methodology

The methodology used in this paper relies on purposeful interrogations of written policies and procedures which provide insights into the cultural attributes of actions and mindsets based in time and initiated as a result of differing political perspectives (Atkinson & Coffey, 1995). The nature of cultural and political situatedness may become clearer through an interrogation of the conversational nuances within and between a diversity of documents because, 'all writing is intertextual in that texts relate to other texts, and is social in that writers relate not only to their readers but also to writers of other texts' (Nelson, 2009:545). This 'comparative intertextuality' may be further teased out through exploratory investigations of practical teaching materials and by gaining further insights from those who are charged with policy and document development (Rapley, 2008). However, the analysis of documents is not a straight-forward process because, as recognised by Bryman (2008), policy documents are specifically designed to portray an aspirational reality. Consequentially, researcher responsibility involves determining the nature and extent of possible dissonance between the aspirational reality as presented in documentation and the complexity of realities as evidenced in the lived experiences of stakeholders.

In order to gain a defined perspective of such dissonances, the methodology also relies on post-colonial perspectives of development education. These perspectives are identified by Andreotti (2008:60) as encompassing a focus upon inequality and injustice as opposed to portrayals of those in the global South as being helpless and poverty-stricken. This perspective also relies on recognition of unequal access to power and resources as the predominant narrative in development policy and practice. Accordingly, structures, and belief systems purported to be of universal relevance tend to mask asymmetrical power

relations reflecting the notions of Northern and Southern elites. An exemplification of this is reflected in the portrayal of the concept of globalisation which is generally treated as unproblematic and universally beneficial in many formal educational documents. According to this perspective, the role of the researcher is to reveal where these contentious issues are glossed over and incorporated into policy.

## **Shifting boundaries, a comparison of differing historical perspectives**

Until the recent changes in the political landscape of the UK, a global dimension in teaching and learning was seen as a central part of the curriculum and was supported by numerous resources, provided not just by outré NGOs but by central government. A primary aim of the National Curriculum before the recent changes identified that:

“The school curriculum should contribute to the development of pupils’ sense of identity through knowledge and understanding of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural heritages of Britain’s diverse society and of the local, national, European, Commonwealth and global dimensions of their lives”(DfID, 2005:5).

However, to a large extent, notions of identity or national heritage were not problematised, nor was the notion as to whether the concept of a single national heritage is possible in an era of fluid modernity (Bauman, 2004).

Historically, the concept of development education was defined by the United Nations (UN) in 1975 as an initiative that aimed:

“...to enable people to participate in the development of their community, their nation and the world as a whole. Such participation implies a critical awareness of local, national and international situations based on an understanding of the social, economic and political processes...and of the reasons for and ways of achieving a new international economic and social order (Hicks & Townley, 1982:9).

It is noteworthy that this early UN definition recognises issues of power, politics and unequal access to resources as being central to the development process. The role of development education then involves a strengthening of learners’ critical capacities so that they might lead a movement towards a new international social order. This model challenges concepts which

may be reflected in more recent models of development education which emphasise the necessity for the global South to catch up with economic development policies, priorities and practices established in the global North (Sinclair, in Osler, 1994:51). Though there were a variety of development educations in existence in the UK in the 1970s, to a large extent the critical practices associated with the radical definition identified by the UN were realised by the World Studies Project which involved a loose network of schools and teacher educators (Hicks, 2003:266).

While early initiatives of the World Studies Project and the collaborative engagements between NGOs and the UK's Development Education Association impacted within a number of schools there was as yet no formal declaration recognising the role of development issues in the curriculum. However, the government was moving towards the creation of a National Curriculum. As part of this process, the DES produced a green paper entitled, *Education in Schools: A Consultative Document* (1977), which included a checklist of 'essential areas of experience' incorporating a limited focus upon the social and political (Fowler, 1988:45). Some 12 years later the Education Reform Act was introduced and it outlined the role of the curriculum in preparing learners for global awareness as follows:

“Every pupil in maintained schools [is entitled]...to a curriculum which (a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and (b) prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life” (DES, 1989).

It is arguable that this document formalised the role of the curriculum in preparing learners for an ethical engagement with others, both at home and in the wider world. However, the scope to which this engagement would be realised is significantly more delimiting than the vision as expressed in the UN definition of development education. Rather, the focus is very much on the pupil and intrinsic perspectives, rather than the more critical, active and transformative perspectives which were the hallmark of earlier development education initiatives. Thus, in this historical analysis, radical perspectives in development education were rather short-lived, spanning about a 15 year period between the mid 1970s and lasting until the early 1990s. Doubtless, the impact of more radical interventions made an impression within participating schools and it is arguable that such interventions had the potential to embed development education issues at the heart of teaching and learning.

Nevertheless, there is a shortage of research data to ascertain precisely the depth or breadth of such interventions.

What is clear is that the introduction of a National Curriculum in England and Wales defined the future scope for what might be taught and learned in all schools. Because of the very prescriptive nature of the new National Curriculum, there was an exceptionally limited capacity for furthering any extensive engagement with global issues, economic awareness, political engagement or environmental education (Kelly, 1990; Alexander, et al., 1992; Radnor, 1992; NCC, 1993; Butterfield, et al., 1993). Within the curriculum, the focus was primarily upon a perceived necessity to strengthen the teaching and learning of English and mathematics at the expense of mediating a broader more liberal curriculum. This stance was not without its critics. For example, the National Curriculum Council (NCC) argued:

“We consider it important that the principle of breadth and balance in the primary curriculum should be retained. This was a key aspect of the Education Reform Act and we consider that any move to drop subjects would result in an unacceptable narrowing of the curriculum” (NCC, 1993).

Nevertheless, it was not until 1990 that the concept of development education and global citizenship once again gained significant traction within the formal curriculum. This occurred when the NCC published a pamphlet entitled ‘Education for Citizenship’ which offered specific advice that ‘[p]upils should develop the knowledge and understanding of the variety of communities to which people simultaneously belong: family, school’ (NCC, 1990, cited in Andrews, 1994:7). Practical guidance for the teaching and learning of development education was provided later, particularly with the publication of ‘Global Perspectives in the National Curriculum: Guidance for Key Stages 1 and 2’. To some extent, this document built on the work of Andrews (1994) who had articulated the ways in which the international dimension could be included in each of the subject areas.

Once again, there is a limited amount of research available for this period which might shed light upon the extent to which global development issues were taken up within mainstream schools. Nevertheless, even within the more formalised curriculum, as evidenced in the new GCSE examinations from 1986 onwards, there was a growing emphasis upon teaching strategies and practices which had traditionally been the preserve of development educators.

These strategies included the use of investigative work, discussion and debate and an increasingly incorporated emphasis on multi-faceted problem solving techniques. Schools were also encouraged to develop more creative and diverse schemes of work. For example, in English a new emphasis was placed upon coping constructively with different points of view. The new skills and values learned were, and continue to be, core to the development of social awareness and offer greater opportunities for a more profound, critical engagement with global issues.

The revised National Curriculum introduced from 2000 enabled a re-articulation of the role of education within a global perspective. There was recognition that ‘education influences and reflects the values of society, and the kind of society we want to be’ (DfES/QCA, 1999:10). This perspective heralded a new focus upon the necessity for the curriculum to address areas such as societal values, aims and purposes. The revised curriculum also recognised a need to incorporate the teaching and learning of sustainable development and equality of opportunity. It also recognised the role of schools in addressing ‘the opportunities and challenges of the rapidly changing world in which we live, including the continued globalisation of the economy and society’ (DfES/QCA, 1999:10). Significantly, the revised curriculum interpreted the National Curriculum as being ‘an important element of the school curriculum’ (DfES/QCA, 1999:10). In other words, the National Curriculum was no longer seen as the curriculum, but as an element which informed how a school’s curriculum might be developed. Teaching requirements were greatly reduced so that schools had opportunities to develop additional schemes of work deemed of importance.

Importantly, a ‘Framework for personal, social and health education and citizenship’ was established for key stages (KS) 1 and 2 and Citizenship became part of the curriculum from Key Stage 3. As identified below, the role of the new framework was to enable pupils to:

“reflect upon their experiences and understand how they are developing personally and socially, tackling many of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up. They find out about the main political and social institutions that affect their lives and about their responsibilities, rights and duties as individuals and members of communities” (DfES/QCA, 1999: 136).

Once again, some 24 years following the UN's definition of development education, the role of political and social awareness appears to have been restored. In using terminology such as 'tackling' social and cultural issues, there was a recognition that education had to engage proactively with contentious aspects of citizenship thus emphasising a role for active, reflective citizenship. This was a radical advancement of the National Curriculum away from its content-laden origins. Simultaneously, from 2000 DfID made funds available to NGOs such as the DEA and Oxfam in order to provide support for the teaching and learning of development education (Hicks, 2003). The DfES itself further supported this process by making available a resource entitled 'Developing a Global Dimension in the School Curriculum' which articulated "why the global dimension needs to permeate the wider life and ethos of schools and how this can be done" (DfES, 2000:1). While aspects of this mainstreaming process may have resulted in a diminution of more radical development education perspectives it certainly achieved a more profound level of engagement with development issues both in the context of teacher education and classroom-based practices.

The attack on the Twin Towers in New York in 2001 ensured that aspects of culture, identity and citizenship were brought more forcefully into mainstream education. NGOs such as the DEA and Oxfam developed workshops and exemplars to explore the relationship between local and global issues of identity and social justice. Teachers became active contributors to this process, for example TIDE, a Birmingham-based DEC, hosted meetings of the West Midlands and published a document for schools entitled *Whose Citizenship? Exploring identity, democracy and participation in a global context*. According to this document:

"There is an argument that global processes are transforming cultural identity, minimising its significance...on the other hand, these same global processes have also resulted in the insistence that identities do matter. Against this backdrop it is particularly important for us to give people, particularly the young, the tools to put their local concerns not only into a regional and national perspective but also into a global one" (Bhalla, 2002, in Tide, 2002:4)

As the threat of terrorism began to impact on Western countries, so there was a commensurate shifting emphasis from development issues as being solely situated in the global South and a growing awareness of global interconnectedness. It remains to be seen to what extent this reorientation of



focus has had an impact upon learners’ perspectives of social justice and global inequalities and how these might be actively addressed.

**Document analysis and discussion**

An analysis of six documents, three historical and three more recent, aims to provide insight regarding how development education has been interpreted and enacted in terms of both policy and practice within schools. This process draws on a critical post-colonial theoretical framework to analyse documentary data. As indicated earlier, it also draws on a conceptual framework cognisant of semantics and shared meaning as expressed through publications and interrogated through a lens of inter-textual analysis. The documents were chosen as they were seen to represent a cross-section of key stakeholders involved with development education policy and practice. As documents were initially reviewed, key attributes emerged which resonated throughout each of the publications, these included: an overarching conceptual framework, a focus upon some form of critical awareness for learners, a concern with the ways in which learners engaged as citizens, a targeting of the curriculum in terms of content or the teaching and learning strategies to be employed. These foci form the basis of the framework and subsequent discussions featured below.

**Historical perspectives on development education**

<b>Key issues and perspectives</b>	<b>Global Teacher Global Learner (1988) Pike and Selby. Teaching for Development Education</b>	<b>Report on the International Conference on Development Education (1982)</b>	<b>Development Education Centres as Agents for Educational Change (1979) Stansfield.</b>
<b>Conceptual framework</b>	Focus on development, environment, peace and citizenship (referred to as ‘rights and responsibilities’) through awareness about wealth, ownership, control, power and	There is a necessity for society to be changed radically not just in the countries of the South, but that the Third World compels us to review our own views about the economy, the production, the distribution of work, the conservation of the environment the	Development education in its content now encompasses a study of universal themes such as development (or ‘change for the better’ as it is sometimes defined), basic needs, natural resource depletion and conservation,

	equality.	democratic participation in power (Speech by Albert Peeters).	economic oppression, community self help and multi-cultural society.
<b>Critical awareness</b>	Students should be encouraged to see how perspective is shaped by factors such as age, class, creed, culture, ethnicity, gender, geographical context, ideology, language, nationality and race (1988:34).	Critical awareness activities are very unfortunately kept in the margin of school-life and are mostly situated after normal working hours. Many teachers and education systems believe that the classroom is set apart for information and intellectual work, but that educating conscious and socially engaged young people is to take place in out of school activities (1982:17).	Development education is increasingly concerned with values rather than technical solutions in learning about development and change, so the process of attitude development and self awareness is seen by development educationalists as much more important than the cognitive learning.
<b>Citizenship</b>	Students should explore the social and political action skills necessary for becoming effective participants in democratic decision making at a variety of levels, grassroots to global (1988:35).	Critical of current manifestations of development literature for example images featured in a recent textbook which asks children to rank people in order under headings between those who are civilised and those who are primitive. It goes a stage further in depicting the 'native' as a person with no shelter no clothes water is collected from afar and food is hunted (1982:31).	Our young people are not sufficiently aware of the international interdependence of modern countries (Quoting from Green Paper in Education; Education in Schools 1977).

<b>Education</b>	A different pedagogical philosophy is required to engage in development education (1988:48).	There is an argument that although a large variety of curriculum materials has been developed, development education in schools is marginal if non-existent in curriculum terms.	In methodology there is a strong emphasis on democratic classrooms. Teachers lack relevant knowledge, skills and confidence in teaching with a development education outlook and personal resistances to innovation are problems.
<b>Philosophical perspective</b>	Carl Rogers: 'We are faced with an entirely new situation in education where the goal of education, if we are to survive, is the facilitation of change and learning (1988:58).	NGOs have vital role to play in the progression of information and training in the field of development education in formal education.	Development Education Centres might create dynamic roles for themselves as outside change agents by engaging in collaborative relationships with schools and LEAs.

### Recent perspectives on development education

<b>Key issues and perspectives</b>	<b>Education for Global Citizenship; A guide for schools' (Oxfam, 2007)</b>	<b>The Cambridge Primary Review (Esmée Fairbairn, undated)</b>	<b>Developing the global dimension in the school curriculum (DfID, 2005)</b>
<b>Conceptual framework</b>	'... is relevant to all areas of the curriculum, all abilities and all age ranges. Ideally it encompasses the whole school - for it is a perspective on the world shared within an	Excellent teaching can be transformative. Teachers are at the forefront of education, and this education 'rejects any suggestion that 'standards' are about the 3Rs alone	Placing the school curriculum within a broader, global context, showing how all subjects can incorporate the global dimension.

	institution, and is explicit not only in what is taught and learned in the classroom, but in the school's ethos' (2007:2).	and insists that if curriculum entitlement means anything, it is about excellence across the board, in every aspect of learning' (27).	
<b>Critical awareness</b>	'Current use of the world's resources is inequitable and unsustainable. As the gap between rich and poor widens, poverty continues to deny millions of people around the world their basic rights...' (2007:1)	'Globalisation brings unprecedented opportunities, but there are darker visions. Many are daily denied their basic human rights and suffer extreme poverty, violence and oppression... global warming may well make this the make-or break century for humanity as a whole' (4).	At Key Stage 3 and 4 children and young people extend their knowledge of the wider world. Their knowledge of issues such as poverty, social justice and sustainable development increases.
<b>Citizenship</b>	Aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respects and values diversity;</li> <li>• has an understanding of how the world works;</li> <li>• is outraged by social injustice;</li> <li>• participates in the community at a range of levels, from the local to the global;</li> <li>• is willing to act to</li> </ul>	'... enable children to become active citizens by encouraging their full participation in decision making within the classroom and school, and advancing their understanding of human rights, conflict resolution and social justice. They should develop a sense that human inter-dependence and the fragility of the world order	Global citizenship: (involves) Gaining the knowledge skills and understanding of concepts and institutions necessary to become informed, active, responsible citizens (this includes) developing understanding (though not contesting) of how and where key decisions are made.

	<p>make the world a more equitable and sustainable place;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• takes responsibility for their actions (2007:3).</li> </ul>	<p>require a concept of citizenship which is global as well as local and national' (18).</p>	
<b>Education</b>	<p>Education...involves (students) fully in their own learning through the use of a wide range of active and participatory learning methods. These engage the learner while developing confidence, self-esteem and skills of critical thinking, communication, co-operation and conflict resolution (2007:1).</p>	<p>Education should 'guarantee children's entitlement to breadth, depth and balance, and to high standards in all areas of learning, not just the 3Rs; combines a national framework with protected local elements; ensures that language, literacy and oracy are paramount' (22).</p>	<p>Education plays a vital role in helping children and young people recognise their contribution and responsibilities as global citizens (2005:2).</p>
<b>Philosophical perspective</b>	<p>'A just and sustainable world in which all may fulfil their potential' (2007:1) can be secured through Education for Global Citizenship</p>	<p>The curriculum should be genuinely community based, everyone should feel that they can make a difference and the voice of the child should be paramount.</p>	<p>In a global society, the global dimension can be integrated into both the curriculum and the wider life of schools (2005:1).</p>

Is it possible to draw any conclusions in the light of the analysis above with regards to the emphasis of a radical Global Dimensions agenda within the curriculum? We take 'Global Dimensions' to encompass 'development education' whilst recognising that we may not be quite comparing like with like. Perhaps what can be discerned are a variety of shifts that represent both opportunities and challenges. While access to documents prior to the Pre-National Curriculum was limited, they all appear to share a rather pessimistic analysis regarding the opportunities for, and willingness of, teachers and schools

to engage with development education. Any notion that schools and teachers had a freer, more creative hand before the introduction of the National Curriculum is soon disabused by reading the reflections of various authors, at least as far as this subject goes.

“Because it’s a school classroom, there are particular expectations and conventions about what can and cannot be done. There’s a fixed period of time” (Richardson, 1977:5).

Even more stridently Pike and Selby, admittedly post-National Curriculum but not so long after, state bluntly:

“We have argued that schools are human potential dustbins: the prevailing condition of extremely limited consciousness is manifestly dominant in the way in which the learning process is organised and structured in schools” (1988:47).

It would appear that whilst the pre-National Curriculum environment offered the potential for a greater freedom in terms of curriculum content and pedagogical practice the reality was actually one of schools and teachers feeling constrained by common practice and values. Although Stansfield appears to have felt that there were great opportunities just around the corner for the expansion of development education arising from a change in approach towards both curriculum and teaching and learning initiatives - ‘...the era of centralised curriculum projects appears to be over’ (1979:7) - and she foresaw an increase in locally tailored methods that suited the role of development education centres as well as a shift towards “...the affective domain, participatory learning, team teaching and interdisciplinary studies” (ibid.:12). This now reads like the curriculum version of idyllic accounts of that long Edwardian Indian summer before the outbreak of World War One and implies that there never was a ‘golden age’ when teachers, and schools as a whole employed their freedom to construct participatory and democratic teaching and learning.

Participants at the International Conference on Development Education held in Ghent in 1982 would have been left with the thought that although speakers acknowledged that strides had been taken in the previous decade to shift the focus of development education from a stance of charitable support to ‘Third World’ countries to one of a more critical engagement of pupils and society in general, there was still plenty of ground to be covered and challenges to be met:

“An examination of timetables, curricula, syllabi, and examinations illustrates this fact and shows that development education in schools is a marginal if non-existent issue in curriculum terms” (CIE, 1982:6).

And in reference to the UK in particular, it was noted that although development education appeared to be on the verge of a breakthrough in the 1970s ‘...many worthwhile enterprises are actually in danger of complete extinction...’ (ibid.:10). The main issues highlighted by the conference seemed to be that NGOs of themselves did not have the power to create major changes in schools and that schools needed to take on the challenge by rewriting curricula, producing materials and training teachers, the latter being viewed as perhaps the most crucial factor in the success or otherwise of the enterprise. Very few school authorities or governments Europe-wide were supporting such initiatives.

Presumably, the conference delegates would be highly gratified, at least on certain levels, to see the much more central place that the Global Dimension has occupied in the school curriculum over the last decade and would be delighted with the sheer weight of supportive material available to teachers and schools through a variety of NGO and official government documentation. Moreover, the encouragement given to teachers to integrate this strand throughout the whole curriculum and across the wider school context (for instance ‘Fairtrade’ schools) would have given them cause for celebration. The Global Dimension could no longer be described as it is in the conference report as being marginal, if not non-existent, in curriculum terms.

So is there a trade off between this broadening of engagement and a more radical/critical approach? The Oxfam materials analysed above would seem to indicate not. They refer to inequitable and unsustainable use of resources, the need for basic human rights to be met and call for pupils as citizens to be ‘outraged’ by social injustice and to ‘act to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place.’ (Oxfam, 2006:3). Likewise the Cambridge Review (Fairbairn, undated) speaks of ‘darker visions’ of globalisation and the need to develop pupils’ understanding of human rights, social justice and conflict resolution. In this they appear to broadly reflect the viewpoints of the earlier documents with their emphasis on the need to give students the opportunities and skills to engage with a critical debate about not only what particular injustices and challenges typify the contemporary world

but also questions as to why these exist and what might be done about them from a perspective of social justice and human rights rather than from a purely charitable viewpoint.

However, these two contemporary exemplar documents carry no official weight with regards to the delivery of the Global Dimension in the National Curriculum, that role being carried out by the government-sponsored DfID document ‘Developing the Global Dimension in the School Curriculum’ (DGDSC) (DfID, 2005). While the latter publication provides fairly extensive scope for teachers and schools to incorporate a development education perspective right across the curriculum, the extent to which this realises a truly critical engagement with core issues of injustice and equality is rather more contentious. Indeed, Andreotti identifies the single greatest shortcoming of this official policy document as being one of having a questionable conceptual framework, thus:

“While DGDSC depicts the problem as the poverty or helplessness of the ‘other’, resulting from a lack of development, education, resources, skills, knowledge, culture or technology, a post-colonial perspective presents the problem as inequality and injustice originating from complex structures and systems (including systems of belief and psychological internalizations), power relations and attitudes that tend to eliminate difference and maintain exploitation and enforced disempowerment” (Andreotti, 2008:59).

So while it can be argued that there is currently sufficient scope for educators to embed a development education perspective in the mediation of the curriculum, the extent to which there is latitude for a robust engagement with the root causes of inequality and powerlessness is rather more limited, at least if one relies upon official documentation. Nevertheless, as identified above, there are other resources and teaching materials which offer alternative development paradigms for educators to adopt.

## **Conclusion**

This research has revealed that there may have been a diminution in the radical perspectives as evidenced in earlier policy documents addressing issues of development. However, over time it is clear that the mainstreaming of development education has impacted significantly and positively on the opportunities that are available for all learners to engage with issues of equality,



identity, social justice and development. In contrast, there are questions regarding the potential impact of interventions which do not overtly challenge inequality and injustice. For example, one of the findings in the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study identified that, 'there has been a hardening of attitudes toward equality and society, a weakening of attachment to communities and fluctuating levels of engagement, efficacy and trust in the political arena' (DES, 2010:1). It is questionable whether such shortcomings will be addressed in forthcoming revisions of the curriculum which appear to place more value upon 'the learning of facts and (equipping) children with essential knowledge' in both history and geography rather than enabling them to engage critically with ideas and concepts (*Guardian*, 20 January 2011). Moreover, it is entirely possible that teaching of subjects such as citizenship may not in future form any part of a core curriculum leaving it to the discretion of individual schools as to whether or not to incorporate elements of citizenship and a global dimension in the school's curriculum.

Without doubt, there have been advancements in the provision of teaching and learning in the field of development education and it is arguable that these may have come at the expense of of more radical critical engagement with development issues. However, it is likely in the current climate of market-driven changes in the educational landscape that impending debates regarding the place of development education in the formal curriculum will more likely be dominated by a desire to maintain momentum made through mainstreaming rather than being focused upon further radicalisation of current policies or strategies.

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## CHALLENGES TO PRACTISING DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS (INGOs)

Over the past year, Children in Crossfire (CiC) has been involved in a strategic planning process to focus the overall work of the organisation, from the international context to local fundraising campaigns. During this process, the development education team recognised that it had not adequately collaborated with the fundraising and international departments, and had been operating within a ‘silo culture’. They identified an opportunity to reflect as an organisation, and to reconsider the approach to development education to ensure it is ‘rooted in and informed by the overseas development programme...and to seek coherence across the work of CiC through ongoing coordination among the development education, fundraising and international teams’ (Children in Crossfire, 2010:1). In this article, **Helen Henderson** and **Grainne O’Neill**, two development educators working in Children in Crossfire, examine the importance and benefits of working collaboratively across departments within INGOs and the relevance for development education specifically.

### Introduction

Children in Crossfire’s understanding of development education has moved beyond raising awareness for overseas projects, towards an education that promotes critical thinking and action for change. This involves challenging structures that have maintained inequalities between the global North and global South. Irish Aid defines development education as:

“...an educational process aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing interdependent and unequal world in which we live. It seeks to engage people in analysis, reflection, and action for local and global citizenship and participation. It is about supporting people in understanding, and in acting to transform the social, cultural, political and economic structures which affect their lives and the lives of others at personal, community, national and international levels” (Irish Aid, 2007).

The strategic review process that Children in Crossfire (CiC) underwent in 2010 highlighted the benefits of working more collaboratively with the other departments within the organisation, but the authors also

recognised the implications for development education. For example, there was a danger that their practice could become increasingly embedded within a traditional development charity framework. This would limit focus of the development education work to raising awareness of the overseas projects and encouraging actions that only involve fundraising, rather than a practice that strives to 'focus attention on the need for structural change, based on a reformulation of the global North's political-economic relationship with so-called developing nations' (Bryan, 2008:75). It should be noted that the authors are not claiming that their current development education practice can provide clear evidence of its impact on structural change. Nevertheless, there have been attempts to engage in a practice that 'challenges the perception that the developing world is continually in need of saving or intervention, and that we in the global North have all the solutions' (Andreotti, 2006, quoted in Bryan, 2008:76).

Due to the aforementioned concern, and indeed the wider challenge of government cuts in development education funding, the authors decided to engage with practitioners working within development education and fundraising. The aim was to better understand the relationship between development education and the wider CiC departments, and to help clarify if, and how, to maintain a critical perspective on the structural causes of poverty whilst working within the context of an NGO with respect to the international programmes and fundraising departments. A further aim was to address how the current economic climate and government cuts to development education might impact on the practice of development education in general.

## **Interviewees**

Four conversations were conducted: the first with an INGO fundraiser; the second with a development education practitioner (both of whom will remain anonymous and will be referred to as NGO1 and NGO2, respectively); meanwhile, the two remaining conversations were with people working outside an INGO; Seamus Farrell (freelance educator) and Nora McQuaid (Global Dimension in Schools Co-ordinator for Northern Ireland). Each interviewee was known to the authors, and was specifically selected based on experience. The authors believed that not being directly located within development NGOs, Farrell and McQuaid might bring more objective voices to this paper. NGO1 and NGO2 were selected because they were located in the development arena; and the authors wished to explore whether they had experienced similar challenges within their respective organisations, and to engage them on

questions of how they addressed these issues. Although the authors consider Farrell and McQuaid as objective voices, they do not consider NGO1 and NGO2 to be solely subjective. This article is not intended to compare findings from both sets of participants. Only one of the four interviewees is from a fundraising background, which limits this article in drawing conclusions about the sector in general, particularly regarding an adequate exploration of the possible relationship between development education and fundraising within an INGO. The analysis is not claiming to be in any way representative of development INGO practice overall, but is merely intended to include a range of voices contributing to the arguments raised throughout and reflections from the four participants and the authors in order to kick start the debate on development education within the context of INGOs.

## **Conversations**

In our conversations we focused on two main themes. These are:

- The relationship, if any, between development education and the wider work of the INGO;
- Current wider challenges for development education.

The authors used the method of semi-structured interviews to help inform the investigation. Semi-structured interviews introduce a variety of topics, and employ a flexible and conversational approach to allow for any other data to emerge outside initially identified topics. However, no other data emerged, other than that which related to the topics outlined above.

## **Relationship between development education and the wider work of the INGO**

Throughout the CiC strategic planning sessions, the authors engaged with the wider staff around the issue of collaborative work between development education, the community fundraising team and the international department. Ultimately:

“...CiC exists in order to implement its programme of support to children and communities living in the crossfire of poverty in Africa. The primary area of the organisation’s work is operating this overseas

programme. This is supported and enabled by the organisation's fundraising work" (Children in Crossfire, 2010:2).

The organisation is committed to a minimum of one full-time post for development education with or without external funding sources. For CiC, the development education team should be willing to:

"engage CiC supporters and the wider community in the North West of Ireland in examining the issues affecting children in the countries where CiC operates and explore what the programme is doing to tackle these issues" (Children in Crossfire, 2010:2-3).

The premise here is to raise awareness of CiC's overseas initiatives whilst drawing on case studies from the projects to explore the underlying causes of poverty, highlighting the need for such CiC projects, and inspiring action, including that which might be fundraising-focused. Development education aims to empower people to take action to challenge injustice; however the fundraising approach presents a risk particularly if people feel that it is the only action they can take. Fundraising is the life blood of the organisation, but there are dangers when mixed with development education as it could reinforce the charity model of development 'which is negatively related to concern for the developing world constructed around *servicing out help*' (see Heerde & Hudson: 2010:397). For instance, the messages used by fundraising initiatives are short, simple and attention grabbing to maximise donor response from a short intervention, and the images used often reinforce the idea that the problem is located in the developing world rather than here in the 'developed' world. Hence, such an approach runs counter to development education as it 'tends to blame the victim - that is, it places the problem with the poor themselves, rather than on the structure that forces them to live a particular way: the growth of poverty is dependent on the growth of wealth' (Renner, et al., 2010:45). Development education, on the other hand, utilises a questioning approach intended to enhance critical thinking skills and subsequent actions that challenge the wider structural causes of poverty. Here two questions are raised: the first looks at whether development education can collaborate with the wider work of CiC whilst ensuring that its practice does not become embedded within a charity model of development; the second examines whether the opportunities outweigh the drawbacks in this collaborative approach.

NGO2 recommended that the fundraising aspect of CiC should have a strong development educational element, and that management be supportive



of the partnership in this context. In other words, management should support development education as a process. This is intended to ensure critical understanding, so fundraisers such as ‘young people know what they are fundraising for and why, so they have a more critical approach to aid and understanding it’ (NGO2, 2010). Similarly, Farrell states that:

“Fundraising provides a real opportunity to do development education - provided that it is this way round. Very often it gets turned round the other way; development education is used as a means to do fundraising. When it is made to serve fundraising it can severely limit its authenticity and its capacity to engage with critical issues” (2010).

Indeed, the authors were concerned that collaborating with the fundraising team would limit the capacity of development education to engage with critical issues, such as locating the problems of poverty within the context of policies and practices in the global North that need to be challenged through specific actions, rather than simply highlighting why CiC needs to work overseas, and how it depends on fundraising actions to support its overall work. As Farrell puts it:

“Children in Crossfire are responding to an unjust reality. Development education within CiC is about working for systemic change - which must begin with a change of mindset in this part of the world. The problem is located here, not overseas. The issues being addressed in our overseas programme have their origins on this side of the planet...and people here need to know that aid by itself is inadequate while global systems, structures and policies remain unfair/unjust” (2010).

When talking about international development Farrell refers to Einstein, and states that ‘the problems that we now face, cannot be solved by the same kind of thinking that existed when we created the problems’. He highlights the need for ‘getting a different conversation going about the world that confronts us about the legacy of colonialism and racism’, and challenging the patronising attitudes towards poor people and poor countries.

Fundraising is an essential part of an INGO and yet the agenda to raise money can have implications in terms of portraying people from the developing world as needing our financial assistance and as being dependent on our charity. Subsequently, this positions the developing world as ‘basically bystanders in their own affairs, [and] depending on our beneficence as benign

aiding dispensing Westerners...this situation amounts to a continuation of colonial ideologies of the Black Other' (see Dodd, 2005, quoted in Mahadeo & McKinney, 2007:18). However, the earlier statement by Farrell highlights the possibility for the fundraising and development education relationship to be viewed as an opportunity for both sides to rethink existing approaches and do things differently.

A challenge for NGO2 is that 'development education is too complex to be integrated into fundraising. So often fundraising is about communicating with the public in short, simple messages'. NGO2 referred to the paradoxical equation of 5:50:500 that highlights the fact that rich countries take more money than they give in aid, through unfair trade, debt repayments (see [www.developmenteducation.ie](http://www.developmenteducation.ie)). The statistics below highlights this disparity:

- \$5 billion has been given to the developing world by non-governmental agencies (voluntary aid) every year for the past 10 years;
- \$50 billion has been given to the developing world by governments (official aid) every year for the past 10 years;
- \$500 billion is what the developing world has lost every year for the past 10 years as a result of the operation of the current unjust international economic system (this includes interest on debt, trade barriers and brain drain).

It was this equation that eventually gave the authors and Children in Crossfire clarity in terms of how the fundraising, international programmes and the development education could co-exist within the same organisation and with the same purpose. Children in Crossfire is committed to challenging poverty and injustice and each part of the organisation has a different role to play. The first part of the equation is necessary because the \$5 billion in aid that NGOs fundraise and coordinate is vital in this hugely unequal world and makes a real difference to people's lives. It is also important that NGOs hold governments accountable in terms of the promises contained within the \$50 billion donated in official aid. However, it is imperative at the same time to address the \$500 billion that is taken back as this is where there is most potential to challenge the structural causes of poverty. Within Children in Crossfire, all the staff do not have to do the same work; development education does not have to be fundraiser-fuelled and vice versa, but development education and fundraising need to co-exist, communicate and work with a knowledge and appreciation of the other's role.

NGO2 uses this equation in his or her development education work but said that:

“It is complex, we would be getting them to explore the 5:50:500 which is so complicated. NGOs are bringing this debate to the fore. A fundraiser maybe wouldn’t want you doing this session as it might make people think what is the point? Therefore NGOs should be putting more effort in pressurising and lobbying for the 500 bit. Development education could let the public know about this aspect.” (2010)

However, the authors have not experienced pressure from the CiC fundraising department to avoid the issues raised in 5:50:500 for fear it might create apathy and discourage donations. Furthermore, despite the complexities of presenting this equation to the public, the authors argue that it is important for development education to work towards making these topics accessible, in order for the public to grasp the extent to which aid actually addresses the issue of poverty, or rather, the extent to which aid might disguise the fact that wider global North policies and practices actually perpetuate poverty. Nevertheless, NGO2 further highlights that ‘by putting them [development education and fundraising] together you are telling them that the action you want them to take is fundraising. You are limiting the actions that they can take’.

NGO1, a fundraiser, mentioned that fundraising is the priority for INGOs and ‘whatever education we offer is always tied to a fundraising ask’. For NGO1, development education could enhance such fundraising work by highlighting the stories behind the development work carried out by the wider NGO, since ‘sometimes the message people are hearing is just give us money but they do not hear the story behind it’ (NGO1). This statement is familiar to the authors, who are encouraged by CiC to tell ‘the story behind’ the overseas projects, and highlight why these projects are necessary by drawing on individual case studies. This approach, however, perhaps views ‘development education as a means to do fundraising’, which as Farrell puts it, ‘can severely limit its authenticity and its capacity to engage with critical issues’ (Farrell, 2010).

However, McQuaid mentions that the relationship building between fundraising and development education is an:

“opportunity to...demonstrate why [CiC overseas work] needs to be done in the first place. I think that the promotion of the organisation itself and education could go hand in hand”.

In this respect, perhaps it might be possible to present CiC overseas work as a starting point to highlight why development NGOs exist in the first instance, the extent to which such NGOs can actually affect change, and perhaps, most importantly, exploring the potential for affecting wider structural change in the global North.

McQuaid also mentioned that ‘international NGOs are obviously going to want to fundraise with the public and for global educators that can be a challenge’. Perhaps, however, the above discussion highlights how development educators might address such a challenge.

### **Current wider challenges for development education**

Recently, development educators have noticed increasing challenges to the development education sector coming from wider financial pressures and a political shift to the right. The Irish Development Education Association (IDEA), in the 2009 position paper on the overseas development aid (ODA) cuts, outlines how development education in Ireland is currently facing many challenges, particularly in regard to funding and the strategic and changing nature of the priorities within the main funding bodies such as Irish Aid. On the island of Ireland, the funding available for overseas development assistance (ODA) has been reduced, which has meant a subsequent reduction in development education funding. In Northern Ireland, changes in the criteria for funding from the Department for International Development (DfID), has impacted upon access to resources for development education projects. Andrew Mitchell (Secretary of State for International Development) stated that certain DFID-sponsored development education projects ‘risked the credibility of international aid by not showing a clear link between funding and poverty reduction’ (DfID, July 2010). Funding policy has now moved closer to awareness-raising of DfID-sponsored projects overseas, with development education supported through a percentage of the aid budget. This might have implications for development education in relation to challenging the charity model of development, since it highlights that ‘there is a tendency by DfID to frame development assistance to the poor in the language of *both* self-interest *and* morality’ (Heerde & Hudson, 2010:390). Consequently, this will frame

development assistance to the poor in terms of delivering aid, as opposed to challenging the structures which create poverty and injustice in the first instance.

NGO 1 referred to how, in the recent challenges to fundraising for NGOs, resources have been diverted from development education projects towards public information and fundraising. This is not the case in Children in Crossfire as the organisation has committed at least one full-time post to development education. NGO1 states that ‘the current recession has meant that the priority has been fundraising and bringing in money for the overseas projects resulting in the development education work being squeezed out of some areas.’ McQuaid confirms this further in her statement:

“...a lot of the actual agencies and organisations have cut education departments because of the recession...obviously they are maybe getting pressured by the public and they are holding on to the overseas work” (McQuaid, 2010).

Farrell further elaborates:

“...in recessionary times, the slogan ‘charity begins at home’ tends to get louder; what about the poor people living here? There is something of a paradox here in that the people who are most generous towards the poor, whether at home or abroad, are more likely to be those who are themselves struggling to make ends meet. How much do the rich people here help the poor here? The challenge to be addressed requires a different slogan, poverty at home as well as abroad; the focus of development education is a fairer world. It is not either/or, it is all together” (Farrell, 2010).

Perhaps such concerns highlight the possibility that the timing of writing this article is significant and appropriate to reflect on the purpose and role of development education in the current context of the economic crisis. It might be argued that the limits to unending economic growth have been exposed, and with it an acknowledgment of the unsustainable nature of the way in which we presently live our lives. As Farrell puts it:

“I find it paradoxical that while we in this part of the world are flooded with news and information we seem increasingly ignorant about global realities. The period of affluence that we came through was a bubble, and inside that bubble there was little understanding of what life was like

for the vast majority of the human race beyond the exotic images of tourist brochures or images created through patronising approaches to fundraising. We need, for our own sake, to understand how life is for all the passengers on spaceship earth. The problems which affect the poorest of the world have their origin here rather than there. They are dependent on this part of the world coming to its senses so that we can work together to address those problems”.

From this perspective, it might be argued that rather than development education becoming embedded into the wider work of the overall INGOs, there is actually a need for development education to move away from raising awareness of overseas projects, and move towards highlighting that ‘the problems which affect the poorest of the world have their origin here rather than there’ (Farrell, 2010). Thus, the authors believe that there is an urgent need to empower people locally to recognise the existing global interdependence, understand the structures of the world that have created excessive wealth - and with it continued poverty - and to make sense of our role in making changes. In fact, the general public has a desire to understand the structures that have created the current financial crisis in their efforts to answer questions that concern the economy, governance, accountability and power. Development education needs to harness the public desire to understand the issues; to transform this into a deeper understanding of the underlying structural causes of poverty; and to recognise the roles we can play individually and collectively in global justice issues. As Farrell says,

“Following a period of affluenza people in this part of the world are now experiencing grim realities - of a kind that offers the possibility to connect people here with what has been the persistently grim reality for people in other parts of the world for all of their lives. International NGOs need to connect with issues of poverty at home, and use this as an opportunity. The realities of the developing world are coming into view here in this part of the world. This is a key context for development education work in our time” (Farrell, 2010).

## **Conclusion**

This article examined the challenges for conducting development education within the context of INGOs and the current economic and political context. The difficulties of embedding development education within the context of fundraising and international programmes have been addressed, and it has been

pointed out that this may result in locating the problems in the global South, rather than emphasising that the causes of poverty are located here in the global North. Despite the difficulties, development education has the potential to make connections to the international and fundraising aspects of the INGO. In this respect, the authors argue that this would ensure that their development education practices can maintain a critical edge, while working within the context of an INGO. NGO2 recommends that 'senior staff and board members need to be engaged in debates and discussions about what exactly development education is about. While not everyone in an INGO needs to deliver development education it is important to know that it is more than just awareness raising'. In this respect, NGO2 suggests that wider INGOs are not clear as to the purpose of development education, and should be informed that its focus is wider than just awareness raising.

Over the past two years, Children in Crossfire have been proactively engaged in a process of reflection on the role of development education within the organisation. In order to better support the development education team throughout the organisation, they: trained all staff in development education over a four day intensive course; involved board members in discussions around the relationship between development education and fundraising; and are currently supporting the development education team on a logical framework of action. Fundraisers are committed to value-led fundraising, incorporating more complex aspects around the structural causes of poverty into their messages and offering a range of actions that people can take in addition to fundraising. The development education team are starting to utilise some of the fundraising contacts in business and the general public to engage new audiences in development education.

The authors aim to collaborate more with the international projects and partner communities to get information and perspectives first hand, to learn more about the wider social-economic context of the issues and tease out the interdependent aspects of these issues to connect this to people in this part of the world. However, it is important to be aware of the challenges of engaging with the international projects due to power imbalances and the 'donor' relationship.

This article also highlighted how the current economic and financial crisis has implications for development education, which might have been a variable in CiC's decision to embed development education within the context of their wider work, since government funding depends on such criteria.

However, the authors have argued that due to such an economic and political climate, it is essential for development education to move away from awareness-raising of overseas projects, and move towards highlighting ‘the problems which affect the poorest of the world have their origin here rather than there’ (Farrell, 2010). This is considered essential in order to highlight the ways in which ‘the wealth of the global North has been acquired and maintained through a history of exploitation, and examine how it continues to shape contemporary discourses and institutions’, and ultimately has led to the unsustainable living standard that we find ourselves in today (Rizvi, Lingard & Lavia, 2006, quoted in Bryan, 2008:16). Thus, it is recommended that the authors also further address this issue within the organisation and highlight how this is an important aspect of development education.

The overarching question addressed by this article was how can the development education team collaborate with the wider work of CiC, enriching the respective departments and creating a good model of development education, fundraising and international development within an NGO? The outcomes of our research and the internal strategic process around development education undertaken by CiC may not be representative of the overall population of INGOs. However, it could be considered an important step to helping clarify the position of development education within CiC and other INGOs, and perhaps open wider debates around all the issues discussed. If development education is required to focus on awareness raising of overseas projects, whilst being tied to a fundraising task then this will call into question the extent to which it can maintain a critical perspective on the structural causes of poverty. Nevertheless, it might be concluded from this article that development education can collaborate with the wider work of INGOs, if it highlights what INGOs do, but most importantly, if it highlights what else can be done to evoke active citizenship amongst the general public to address these issues.

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# Perspectives

## ONE WORLD: WHY IRISH DEVELOPMENT EDUCATORS SHOULD COURT CONTROVERSY AT HOME

Andy Storey

### Introduction

“Egypt Supports Wisconsin: One World, One Pain” – placard carried by a protestor in Tahrir Square, Cairo (<http://www.alternet.org>, 19th February 2011).

Action from Ireland (Afri) each year holds a ‘famine walk’ in Mayo that seeks to highlight issues concerning global justice and poverty. Willie Corduff – a prominent protestor against the Shell-led Corrib Gas project (also in Mayo) – was one of the walk leaders in 2009. In the promotional literature for the walk, Afri highlighted what it saw as parallels between the Corrib Gas situation and Shell’s activities in the Niger Delta. In particular, it drew what seemed a legitimate comparison between state and corporate abuse of Willie Corduff (he has been both imprisoned and beaten up for his non-violent opposition to the Corrib Gas project; see Siggins, 2010) and the treatment meted out to the late Ken Saro Wiwa (executed by the Nigerian state for his opposition to Shell’s activities). Afri’s position was – and is – that such comparative analysis is good practice in development education because it allows people based in Ireland to better understand, and empathise with, the realities of the global South. When people are able to identify similar processes at work ‘at home’, the issue becomes more real and less abstract, no longer something that is happening ‘out there’. Furthermore, it facilitates a more equal learning process: rather than seeing the global South as helpless and in need of Western knowledge and help, such approaches open up the possibility that the South might have something to teach the West – for example, on resistance to corporate resource exploitation.

However, another development organisation objected to the comparison, seeing the situations in the Niger Delta and surrounding Corrib Gas as qualitatively different in scale and seriousness (and that is true to some extent – for example, no one has yet died because of this conflict in Mayo). But

the objection also centred on the validity of a development education group addressing 'local' issues, especially issues relating to Irish government policy. And yet this objection is not even raised. The previous year, the famine walk had been led by campaigners calling for a ban on cluster munitions - an issue that also concerned Irish government policy - the difference being that on this occasion the Irish government *supported* the campaign; no objection was raised. Many questions are begged by these events, but the issue I wish to focus on in this short article is that an opportunity is being lost from a development education perspective when issues of struggle, conflict and opposition in Ireland are excised (or an attempt is made to excise them) from the Irish development education agenda. Nowhere is this now more apparent than on issues of debt and economic austerity.

### **Debt and structural adjustment**

For many years, Irish development non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have highlighted issues surrounding 'Third World' debt and International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank structural adjustment, including the erosion of sovereignty in the global South and the devastating socio-economic consequences to name a few. When the IMF arrived in Ireland in late 2010, it therefore seemed obvious (to Afri at least, and to some other individuals) that the development sector was well placed to provide some analysis and critique of the IMF (and European Union (EU)) programme. This seemed to be especially the case given the striking parallels between some of the more controversial IMF operations in the global South and the Irish intervention.

Specifically, Ajai Chopra, the head of the IMF team negotiating the Irish 'bail out', previously worked in the IMF's Asia-Pacific department and led its 'rescue' mission to South Korea after a financial collapse in 1997. In South Korea, state interventions were curtailed and the government budget was slashed (leading to massive redundancies), despite the fact that government overspending had nothing to do with the Korean crisis. Between 1996 and 1999, South Korea's unemployment rate tripled and the proportion of the population identifying themselves as middle-class fell from 64 per cent to 38 per cent (Klein, 2007:272). Korean trade unions and other forces opposed these policies but they were quickly assured that their opposition would count for nothing, as documented by Naomi Klein:

“...the end of the IMF negotiations coincided with scheduled presidential elections in which two of the candidates were running on anti-IMF

platforms. In an extraordinary act of interference with a sovereign nation's political process, the IMF refused to release the money until it had commitments from all four main candidates that they would stick to the new [IMF] rules if they won. With the country effectively held at ransom, the IMF was triumphant: each candidate pledged his support in writing...[Y]ou can vote, South Koreans were told, but your vote can have no bearing on the managing and organisation of the economy" (Klein, 2007:270).

The similarity with the situation in Ireland is evident, with figures such as EU Commissioner Olli Rehn and European Central Bank president Jean-Claude Trichet insisting that whatever new government the Irish people elected it would still have to implement the previously agreed economic plan. And yet, with exceptions (Afri, 2010), it is not the development or global justice sectors in Ireland that have highlighted the tension between the claimed commitment to democracy and the denial of democratic choice regarding the economy. It has been left to writers such as Fintan O'Toole (2011) to make the point:

"The coalition parties interpret the 'democratic revolution' of February 25th as a popular mandate for a radical renegotiation of the EU-IMF deal. They believe this mandate includes a revulsion against the basic inequity of shovelling billions into the banks while increasing child poverty. But they have effectively nothing to say about how they will implement that mandate. The first two years of the existing fiscal strategy will continue, with no notion of what happens then. The transfer of public resources into the banks will be postponed until after the current stress tests – which are likely to lead to a demand for more, not less, cash. What we're promised, then, is a great new surge of power to the people, with one small condition – that they don't use it in areas such as the economy, fiscal policy or social justice" (O'Toole, 2011).

It should surely be those organisations who have long been monitoring such situations in South Korea and elsewhere that would have been best placed to draw attention to such matters and help Irish people understand what is happening to them. Instead, a representative of an Irish development NGO told a (private) meeting on the issue that 'I don't think the IMF in Ireland is the same as the IMF in developing countries'. If an opportunity for education *from* the South is being lost here, then so also is an opportunity for education *about* the South. A perennial problem facing development educators is the difficulty of getting Irish people to place themselves in the shoes of those

in Africa, Asia and Latin America, to make the imaginative leap necessary to truly understand their situations. The fact that similar processes of structural adjustment are occurring now in Ireland should surely allow that leap to be more easily made. Conversely, ignoring what is happening in Ireland and interpreting one's mandate as to exclusively focus only on the South is to pass up a massive opportunity to better educate Irish people on global justice issues.

## **Learning about resistance**

To return to the theme of integrating the 'local' and the 'global' in such a way as to open up a more equal learning process through which the South might have something to teach the West, the current crisis is also an opportunity – especially with respect to innovative strategies of resistance to economic austerity. For example, the process whereby democratically organised projects of popular power forced the Argentinian government to default on part of its debt in the early 2000s is one that could prove highly instructive for Irish people (Sitrin, 2006). At a time when Irish civil society remains strangely quiescent about the costs being imposed upon them by debt repayment, such examples of successful resistance might prove invaluable. The Latin American Solidarity Centre has been drawing attention to these parallels, but few others in the Irish development sector have attempted to do the same.

Another such parallel concerns debt audits, which have been used across the global South to allow civil society to hold to account those responsible for the damage caused by their countries' indebtedness. The example of Ecuador is perhaps most striking here (McWilliams, 2011). In 2007, Ecuador's President Correa established a debt audit commission, which reported in 2008 that a portion of the country's debt was 'illegitimate' and had done 'incalculable damage' to Ecuador's people and environment. Ecuador then defaulted on the 'toxic' (illegitimate) portion of its debt. Despite predictions of economic disaster, the country registered 3.7 per cent economic growth in 2010 and the forecast is for growth in excess of 5.1 per cent growth in 2011. Indeed, there is now strong demand for Ecuadorean bonds again which means that the country can access the international financial markets despite a repudiation of its past debt. The salience of this example for current public debates in Ireland is glaringly obvious and the ability of development organisations to bring that experience into the domestic discourse equally obvious, and yet, for the most part, it is happening in only a very marginal way (Storey, 2011).

A call for a debt audit *has* happened in Greece. As one of the organisers of that call puts it:

“Can we be certain that the bulk of Greek public debt is legal, given especially that it has been contracted in direct contravention of EU treaties which state that public debt must not exceed 60% of GDP? The creditors – mostly core European banks – were fully aware of flouting this legal requirement when they lent to the Greek state. Is Irish public debt legitimate, given that much of it is speculative bank lending with a public tag placed on it? Is debt in both countries ethically and morally sustainable if servicing it implies the destruction of normal social life?”(Lapavitsas, 2011).

A number of prominent Irish academics, writers and activists have backed the call to audit Greece’s debt, and there have been suggestions that such an audit might also be required in Ireland (*Irish Times*, 4 March 2011). Development organisations that have monitored, or even participated, in such audits in the global South are surely ideally placed to lead such an initiative. They would thereby place themselves at the heart of debates on public policy in Ireland, could simultaneously raise awareness among Irish people of the lived realities – the setbacks and the victories – of people in the global South.

## Conclusion

This article began with an account of an NGO being chastised for tackling a ‘divisive’ issue in Ireland. But it is precisely when such issues are tackled – and precisely because they are ‘cutting edge’ and conflictual – that the greatest space is opened up for real development education. By integrating such ‘local’ perspectives into development education and advocacy work, opportunities are created to truly educate Irish people about what people in the global South are going through (precisely because it is not that dissimilar to what they themselves are experiencing) and to learn *from* the global South instead of following the common, patronising pattern of ‘them’ learning from ‘us’. This article therefore endorses the argument made by McCloskey that ‘development NGOs need to adopt a more overtly political role in society and align themselves more strategically with civil society groups that share their vision for a more egalitarian and just society’ (2011).

The article began with an example drawn from the Corrib Gas saga, and will end with another. Development organisations are acutely aware of the

phenomenon of the ongoing ‘enclosure of the commons’ in the global South, including the opening up of sectors that were (typically) not previously subject to market forces – education, health, transport, water supply, and public services in general (Harvey, 2003). The structural adjustment programmes imposed on Africa, Asia, Latin America and the former Soviet Union through the auspices of the World Bank and IMF were key mechanisms of this transformation. And now the process extends to life forms themselves – genetically modified plants, even the human genome itself, an enclosure movement in which the World Trade Organisation (WTO), through its protection of the ‘intellectual property’ of corporations, plays a vital role (Shiva, 2007). Many development NGOs devote considerable time and effort to trying to educate Irish people about these trends and their negative consequences, and urging Irish people to take action against them. But those efforts are inevitably limited by the perception that these things, awful as they are, are happening to other people in other places.

But the Corrib Gas affair brings these concerns much closer to home. The ‘new dispossessions’ – including the commodification of life itself – generate revulsion and a fierce energy to ‘reclaim the commons’; this, among other things, is at the heart of the opposition to the project, a feeling that certain things should *not* be for sale. Fisherman and protestor Pat O’Donnell (who, like Willie Corduff, has been imprisoned and assaulted) explains his refusal to accept money from Shell to stop fishing in Broadhaven Bay:

“The sea was there for me all along, I’d like it to be there for my children, you know? And for me to put a price on letting them f\*\*\*\*\*s in now, let it be a million or more, it’s not up to me, leave it, I’ll be gone out of here, God only knows when, but it cannot be said that I destroyed what nature, what God left us” (O’Donnell, quoted by Storey, 2010).

By integrating Pat O’Donnell’s experience into development education work, Irish development organisations could make the experience of the global South more readily accessible to Irish people and also allow them to feel a real relationship with people in the global South – as joint participants in common struggle. One world, one pain, one struggle.

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# DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND THE GLOBAL RESPONSE: TRADING PURPOSE FOR PROFESSIONALISM

Son Gyoh

## Introduction

Development education is a knowledge-based process aimed at challenging the root causes of underdevelopment. 'Underdevelopment' is used here to refer to the persistent circle of constrained capacity, low productivity, poverty and stagnant economic growth. While this article is not intended as a critique of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) per se, it makes reference to specific MDG goals in substantiating its arguments. MDG 1, 6 and 8 in particular illustrate fundamental gaps between the framing of global responses and the defining goals of development education (DE) on competencies that challenge the 'root causes of global inequality'. There is a need to embrace other approaches to learning that aim at perspective transformation beyond awareness on global issues as well as methodologies that enable the synthesis of DE discourses with policy processes that promote a more critical engagement with global responses such as the MDGs.

This article critiques the extent to which development education, as a system of knowledge, has influenced recent global responses to development challenges. It interrogates the nature of development education's (DE) current engagement with global responses, particularly the MDGs, by asking whether DE is merely reacting to global responses like the MDGs or helping to shape them? Could its adoption into formal education and an ideologically-framed policy arena constrain its proclivity to remain critical of dominant structures of global inequality without being branded radical? The article concludes by arguing the need for DE to critically engage with the MDGs (and similar responses). It also cautions against the shift in focus from purpose to professionalism that limits DE's capacity to expand its constituency beyond a growing elite of experts. With particular reference to the MDGs, this article will explore specific ways in which DE can promote a sustainable partnership between the global North and global South in following up on MDG 8 in the years ahead.

## Context

The difficulties faced by less-developed countries to provide basic services and infrastructure for the majority of the world's population, coupled with rising debt, prompted a variety of global responses to reverse the current structure of global interdependence. The adoption of the eight point Millennium Declaration action plan (2000-2015) under the aegis of the United Nations was the highpoint of international responses to global development challenges in the global South ([www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals)).

It was also at the dawn of the millennium that the emerging field of development education encountered heightened debates on new and changing perspectives in its theory and practice: notably the concepts of global civil society, global citizenship and global partnerships, and the diversity in 'learner-centred' approaches to perspective transformation aimed at mobilising action (Kaldor, 2003; Smith, 2004). In an influential article on the fundamental shifts occurring in DE since the 1980s, Arnold analysed how NGOs' dominant role in public education on global awareness had been largely transformed by the incursion of official development cooperation in the arena of development education (Arnold, 1992).

By the early 1990s DE had effectively lost its 'radical roots' of action framed on knowledge and taken on a more liberal foundation (Huckle, 2004; Bourne, 2003). This has promoted the emergence of an elite group of professionals that seek to define DE more as an intellectual discipline ('body of knowledge') than as an intellectual discourse rooted in personal and social transformation. The latter can be regarded as a 'system of knowledge' that aims at specific goals and competencies. This professionalisation effectively situates knowledge and learning in DE within the domain of dominant 'modernisation' epistemology that recognises its moderation along ideological lines as hierarchies of knowledge. This appears to be at the heart of the current inward critical reflection in DE today.

## Millennium Development Goals and development education

Development education is widely defined as a system of knowledge that promotes critical thinking, reflection, action and empowerment that seeks change at local and international levels (Tormey, 2003:2; Regan, 2003; [http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/development\\_deveducation.asp](http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/development_deveducation.asp)). The Centre for Global Education describes it as a participative learning process that aims to

tackle the underlying causes of global poverty and inequality through action (<http://www.centreforglobaleducation.com>).

The remit of DE therefore includes the following: critical awareness on development issues such as aid, debt, trade and the environment; fostering understanding of global interdependence; developing skills in analysing development issues; promoting values and attitudes to diversity and motivating individual action (<http://www.deep.org/whatisde.html>). These values embedded in its objective to engender solidarity/alliances and critical reflection aimed at competencies in social transformation has come to be branded 'radical', the word being used as an adjective linked to irrational or extreme views, and therefore politically suspect.

Beyond responding to forms of global injustice, DE is also concerned with critical thinking on the pattern of global interdependence as currently structured (Ní Chasaide, 2009:28-32; DEA, 2010). It is however difficult to determine if or how much recent global responses such as the MDGs are influenced by DE. What is apparent however is the underlining commonality of purpose between the MDGs and DE to raise awareness and mobilise action in tackling pressing development challenges as broadly represented in the MDG framework. The concept of global citizenship and global civil society which resonates with MDG 8 have also emerged as very central themes in development education and structural mechanisms for articulating and mobilising global responses to development challenges.

It is reasonable to suggest that current global responses to development challenges are important to DE because these responses should mirror the pattern and level of DE influence on public understanding and perspectives on development issues. While it is probable that development education may be increasing awareness of global development issues in the industrial countries of the North, it is difficult to determine what influence such an awareness may have in framing current global responses to development challenges at institutional level. Available studies have only indicated continued public support for aid to developing countries. It appears however that DE has served more as a knowledge tool for promoting awareness of the MDG action plan and reviewing mechanism than as a knowledge system for critical reflection on the pattern of global response.

It could therefore be argued that rather than driving the framing of global responses, DE has tended to engage in a more reactive and less critical

way with greater emphasis on public awareness of global responses when they happen. It would also seem that the current focus of DE on pedagogical processes framed on cognitive learning as the ‘approved approach’ to knowledge/pedagogy has limited its reflexive capacity to engage new sources of knowledge and forms of learning. Its dialogue on global dimensions has had difficulty transcending the micro- (good practice) level to macro-level policy discourse and it is currently in danger of losing its social transformation element.

The Millennium Development Goals (looking at Goal 1 on poverty reduction; Goal 6 on HIV/AIDS and malaria eradication; and Goal 8 on global partnership) offer clear illustrations of how global responses to development challenges are framed on approaches that address the symptoms rather than the root problem of underdevelopment.

### **Illustrating gaps in the framing of global responses**

MDG 1 aims to eradicate extreme poverty and halve the proportion of people living with an income of less than a dollar a day by 2015 ([www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals)). The 2009 MDG 1 review blamed its modest gains on the failure of donors to meet overseas development aid (ODA) targets following the global recession ([www.un.org/esa/policy/mdggap/mdg8report](http://www.un.org/esa/policy/mdggap/mdg8report)). The report stated ‘...the crisis will leave an additional 50 million people in extreme poverty in 2009 and some 64 million by the end of 2010 principally in sub-Saharan Africa and South Eastern Asia’ ([www.medindia.net/news; www.UN.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.medindia.net/news/www.UN.org/millenniumgoals)). However, a major weakness in the implementation of the goal as a poverty reduction strategy is its primary focus on aid flowing from the North, rather than on institutional interventions at improving capacities, or on access of global South economies to global markets (<http://www.un.org/millennium/pdf/mgd/report>). For example, the World Food Programme (WFP) provides food assistance including cash and voucher transfer to the hungry, a laudable yet unsustainable venture. Imports from developing countries increased to 80 per cent in 2010 from 54 per cent in 2007. However, these imports were from a single region and tariffs remained high on clothing and agriculture with any processing of these items resulting in an increase in tariffs further (<http://www.mdgmonitor.org>). With projects targeting food price stabilisation and curbing child undernutrition, it is not clear how aid can eradicate extreme poverty and increase income levels where it is not applied in supporting the strengthening of institutions and access to global markets (United Nations, 2010).

Beyond the ability and willingness of donor countries to meet their quota, there is increasing criticism of the aid model in contributing to development. In *The Bottom Billion*, Paul Collier (Oxford economist and consultant to the World Bank) argued that aid is just one part of the necessary methodology for tracking underdevelopment in the global South. He also argued that developed countries could do more through institutional intervention projects and bilateral compacts that encourage market access and concessions for developing countries. The detached nature of aid from the wider national development plan of recipient countries is also identified as a major weakness. According to Collier, it is difficult to identify any one country that has experienced a long-term development impact when compared to the \$600 billion USD Africa has received in aid between 1960 and 2003 (Collier, 2008). Collier also argued that the persistence of poverty in certain countries with incomes beyond what aid in-flows could ever offer discredits the framing of aid programmes and responses to development challenges.

For DE, the challenge would be communicating better global awareness on causal issues and gaps in achieving landmark bilateral agreements/measures such as the Doha round of talks on trade that leveraged better access to global markets and support for institutional capacity development. It needs to critically examine the conditionality imposed by financial institutions in accelerating the pace of privatisation, and focus on institutional capacity building and provisions that would compel multinationals to act responsibly in meeting their obligations in terms of tax liabilities.

With MDG 6, recent reviews indicate that the MDG goal of reversing the HIV/AIDS and malaria pandemic by 2015 is not likely to happen despite the increase in annual global funding totalled at \$1 billion USD (World Health Organization figures on malaria, 2008). The experiences of Rwanda and Nigeria demonstrate common features of the bigger picture on context and sustainability issues regarding the malaria programme (<http://www.malariaenvoy.com>).

Rwanda is one of the acclaimed success stories of the Insecticide-Treated Net (ITN) programme, where approximately 2.5 million nets were distributed between 2001 and 2006 at an estimated cost of \$25,600,000 USD (\$10 per net) excluding cost in medication. In 2007 Rwanda achieved the 60 per cent mark for children sleeping under nets. While this figure would seem remarkable, it fell short of the 80 per cent threshold coverage 'experts' suggest for elimination of the vector (<http://www.rollbackmalaria.org/gmap/>). The fact

that this protection did not meet the 80 per cent benchmark and then dropped to 50 per cent could be interpreted as a failure or at best a partial temporary relief. The reliance of this programme on external supply and replacement render it dependent on external aid and therefore unsustainable. Today there is little indication that the malaria status in Rwanda has changed in any significant way compared to 2001. Similar shortfalls in coverage are experienced in highly prone infection countries as Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Tanzania (<http://www.globalhealthreporting.org>; <http://www.kaisernetwork.org/health>; Bill and Belinda Gates Foundation).

Nigeria tops the list of highly infected malaria countries and provides evidence of the weak link between the MDGs and a local context. A malaria progress report revealed that Nigeria requires 72 million nets, of which 15 million nets were delivered in 2009 at the cost of \$150 million USD (Office of the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Malaria: <http://www.mamariaenvoy.com>). Within the same period the UK Department for International Development (DfID) supported Nigeria's national malaria programme by £50 million GBP with little evidence of a real fall in the malaria menace. The big issue here is the shortfall in what is required to attain the 80 per cent ideal coverage and sustain any gains made in lowering the pandemic. In order to achieve the 80 per cent threshold necessary for a marked reduction in Nigeria for example, the cost of 72 million nets amounts to \$720 million USD which the programme could not put into one single country. An intervention in improving drainage and sanitation conditions linked to Nigeria's national development planning would have more sustained impact on the root problem with a wider and more integrated impact in improving public health even beyond the malaria menace.

There is also a country context issue highlighted in a national demographic and health survey report which suggests that of the mere 17 per cent households that had nets, only 6 per cent of children actually slept under nets (National Planning Commission NPC). When put in context of how much has been spent on the programme, this report raises the question of the sustainability and efficacy of the project in terms of being accepted locally beyond awareness on usage of the nets.

What these examples show are the contradictions and gaps in framing of global responses that coalesce dominant institutional perceptions of development issues that are currently being completely divorced from a wider public understanding. The challenge to DE therefore lies not only in public

awareness of the root problem but in developing competencies for action at discourse and policy level.

The last and perhaps most important MDG 8 aims at developing a global partnership for development, which seeks to address the special needs of least developed countries and an open ruled based non discriminatory trading and financial system. Although developed countries have lowered tariffs for selected imports from developing countries, the process has been less than transparent and discriminatory as only a selection of less developed countries enjoy the preferential tariff of 1.6 per cent compared to the 8 per cent tariff applied to other developing countries ([www.un.org/millennium/pdf/mgd/report](http://www.un.org/millennium/pdf/mgd/report)). The Doha agreement was drafted to secure and achieve further reductions on tariff hikes in agriculture textile and more transparent access to markets of developed countries, but has gained very little mileage. The Doha agreement also aimed at discouraging the practice of higher tariffs applied as the degree of processing commodities increases ([United Nations, 2010](#)).

## **Development education and NGOs**

Development education has the unique advantage of being closely linked with NGOs that enjoy recognition and endorsement within global institution processes, giving it direct access to civil society network and policy structures. However, DE discourse, patterns and approaches to learning has tended to be driven by funding opportunities which have encouraged a dichotomy between social learning and structured cognitive education. Today the relationship between DE and NGO work around knowledge-based advocacy has remained underutilised in building a constituency of active global civil society. While social theories of learning may be often non-formal and self-directed, they are linked to larger communities of solidarity and the co-construction of meaning (Parks Daloz, 2000:116-118). This approach has the potential to influence discourse modalities at the practice and policy level of DE and therefore redefine how knowledge is produced and applied to development issues. Still, NGOs provide a valued link for DE in building a truly global alliance that could serve to minimise the influence of state ideologically-driven policy and discourse patterns in challenging structures that sustain current forms of global injustices.



## Conclusion

It would seem that DE is confronted today by two overarching internal tensions: a crisis of legitimacy that looms in the face of questions on deliverables and the distance between the DE target audience and its mission. The reluctance in DE to embrace and engage with forms of social learning that could provide the space to analyse and understand the use and dynamics of power in the allocation and distribution of global opportunities remains a fundamental weakness in its capacity to drive global responses in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The temporal and provisional mode of DE means recognising competing perspectives and theoretical instability in its constitution as a body of knowledge. DE needs to be conceptualised as a system of knowledge constantly influencing and receptive to new forms of knowledge occurring in multiple learning sites and striving to drive rather than be driven by global responses. DE needs to embrace social and transformative learning approaches that privilege advocacy as an evidential knowledge domain. This will offer learners space to negotiate meaning and a mechanism for action in influencing policies aimed at challenging current forms of 'global interdependence'.

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# PROFESSIONAL AND RADICAL: THE ROLE OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION CENTRES IN DEVELOPING CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

Mary McGillicuddy

## Introduction

This article will focus upon how development education (DE), through the operation of a development education centre (DEC), can support members of civil society bodies who become actively involved in global North - global South development projects. It will look at the role a DEC can play in North-South development initiatives, particularly those projects whose operational base is located in the centre's geographic catchment area. A centre can encourage people to reflect upon their experience in the light of critical theory and act on the insights gained. Allowing people to reflectively deconstruct and reconstruct their social world enhances the capacity of citizens to bring about more equitable and sustainable development. The opportunities and challenges for a DE centre will be explored and connections between research, advocacy and activism will inform the exploration. This discussion of a DEC's operations is designed to provide food for thought about effective strategies for DEC measures targeted at members of civil society. It will reflect on how and why DE should remain a professional and radical endeavour that does challenge the social and economic causes of inequality and injustice despite the current closer integration with education and government policy and practice.

DE and research on development initiatives can play an important role in the inception and operation of a North-South development endeavour and help ensure that its structures, procedures and intended outcomes are informed by good practice. Some of the opportunities and challenges facing a DEC in engaging with and continuing to provide professional support to such ventures will be discussed.

## Civil society and citizenship

Poverty eradication and sustainable development are key concerns for the 21<sup>st</sup> century in a globalised, interdependent and rapidly changing world. The public is increasingly engaging with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and participating in global activism through campaigns such as the Global

Campaign against Poverty. NGOs are a key component in civil society and its expanding range of social movements. New social movements have been seen by some social theorists as reactions against bureaucraticisation, statism, corporatism and technocratic interference in all aspects of civic life and existence (Frankel, 1987:21).

The 'European Consensus on Development: the contribution of Development Education & Awareness Raising' recommends that:

“civil society organisations give explicit attention to the importance of Development Education and Awareness Raising in organisational strategies, budgets and public communication programmes, projects and activities, enabling the public to gain increased critical awareness of development and increased knowledgeable and skilled participation in development - globally and locally” (DEEEP, 2007:12).

A DEC can be a key source of expertise to assist a civil society body to accomplish integration of DE into its operations.

The discourse on 'active citizenship' is quite topical at present and there is much written about encouraging 'responsible global citizenship'. Murray (2006:1) speaks of the challenges of educating people to be responsible global citizens whose ability to impact outside of their national boundaries is growing. She opines that the aim of development educators to produce knowledgeable, informed, skilled and, above all, active responsible citizens can be deemed successful if the end result or outcome of that education is their action for positive change (Murray, 2006:3).

Murray also warns, however, that repeated tales of global poverty can lead to a sense of superiority rather than solidarity (Murray, 2006:1). Finlay observes that citizens should not be encouraged to act in a way that is based upon a charity approach, but rather in a way based on justice and entitlement which overrides issues of borders or nationalities. This is different from the traditional charity/humanitarian approach which does not require any special relationship between the donor and recipient. The justice approach to development implies the recipient's right to dispose of development aid and resources as one sees fit, showing solidarity rather than a pretence of superiority from donors (Finlay, 2006:7).

Ditshego (1994:9) highlighted the 1990 Bulawayo Appeal, a statement by people from the global South on the subject of linking, in which they rejected the word charity and any emphasis on dependency. They called for accountability and an emphasis on dignified human relationships. Echoes of similar sentiments can be found in Irish history, as illustrated, for example in a song of Irish labourers which was written in a colonial political, economic and societal context, 'Do Me Justice, Treat Me Fair', wherein the chorus runs 'Do me justice, treat me fair, and I won't be discontented; do me justice, treat me fair, and I'll not be laughed at anywhere, but highly represented' (Hart, 2005). Controversial viewpoints on development need to be aired and debated and a DEC can contribute to such exploration, thereby enabling critical reflection by actors in civil society bodies.

Vanessa Andreotti (2006:48) refers to 'soft and critical' models of citizenship education and stresses the need for educators to be 'critically literate' in order to avoid the pitfalls of the soft approach. She explains the goal of global citizenship from a 'soft' perspective is to 'empower individuals to act (or become active citizens) according to what has been defined for them as a good life or ideal world' whereas critical global citizenship education aims to 'empower individuals to reflect critically on the legacies and processes of their cultures, to imagine different futures and to take responsibility for decisions and actions'. Critical approaches promote engagement with global issues and perspectives and an ethical relationship to difference, addressing complexity and power relations.

Andreotti highlights possible benefits of the soft approach, such as a greater awareness of the issues, support for campaigns, greater motivation to 'do' something, and a feel-good factor. The critical approach, however, can engender independent/critical thinking and more informed, responsible and ethical action. Action is defined by Andreotti as a choice made by an individual after careful analysis of the context of intervention, of different views, of power relations (especially the position of the intervener) and of short and long term positive and negative implications of goals and strategies (Andreotti, 2006:48).

Importantly, if educators are not critically literate, it follows that they run the risk of reproducing the systems of belief and practices that harm those they want to support (Andreotti, 2006:49). Hence, a current challenge for DE practitioners and DECs is to ensure learners maintain a radical edge of critical literacy within the current context of closer integration with education and government policy and practice.

## Development NGOs

Development NGOs have been depicted by Korten (1990:117) as having been engaged in a gradual transition from naïve to sophisticated conceptions of their work. His 1990 four generation model for strategies of development-oriented NGOs saw the first category as: 'a relief and welfare approach, the second generation focusing upon community development, the third category as sustainable systems development and the fourth as people's movements'.

Ditshego (1994:9), as a 'Southern voice', described the residual effect of the hegemony of colonialism where some Southerners see 'West as best' and conversely, others distrust everything associated with the global North. He criticises the patronising approach of much development aid, which exemplifies the modernisation theory where one part of the world feels it can develop the other. He asserts that Northern money and material should be used on projects developed by African peoples and initiated on the basis of locally generated resources, with the North taking a back seat and playing a supportive rather than leading role. A DEC can facilitate the circulation of perspectives such as this in a spirit of critical reflection upon the process and procedures of a development/aid undertaking.

Connolly observes that 'most Irish NGOs are shifting their primary focus from direct service delivery to supporting Southern civil society either through funding service delivery or through capacity building and support for advocacy'. However, she observes that there is 'little evidence of widespread internal debate by Irish NGOs about the power relationships involved in working in partnership with Southern civil society organisations and formal policies and strategic management remains underdeveloped in this area' (Connolly, 2007:17).

Sen (1987:166) comments that in addition to measuring their work in terms of impact and efficiency, there is a need for ongoing implementation analysis and critical self-evaluation by NGOs of their role and work in the overall development and societal context as an important exercise to remind themselves of their original purpose. Of course, no organisation wants to be classified as what Handy (1988:7) describes as a 'disabling organisation'; he credits Ivan Illich with identifying it as disabling its clients in order to enable them, creating thereby a spurious dependency. Some voluntary organisations, sure of themselves and what they offer, need opportunities to help people and people to be helped. And, as Johnson (1992:296) has emphasised, DE cannot

leave it all to Northerners to articulate and interpret global development issues. It is easy to know what Northern NGOs think they are doing, but not what Southerners think of NGO efforts and their effects.

## **Challenges for development education centres**

DE grew from a charity vision which initially generally ignored 'Northern' involvement in creating 'Southern' problems, whereas current socially critical forms of DE try to identify and tackle misconceptions and prejudices inside and outside of the sector, as part of the process of 'liberating education' (Yarwood & Davis, 1994:132). A DE centre can undertake social education in what Giroux (1983 in Huckle, 1991:54) has described as the emancipatory model, which seeks to empower people so that they can democratically transform society. It can do this by encouraging learners to reflect upon their experience in the light of critical theory and act on the insights gained. As a form of praxis it allows people to reflectively deconstruct and reconstruct their social world. This assists in the development of critical and active citizens capable of bringing about more equitable and sustainable development.

A major challenge for a DE centre is to create what Andreotti (2007:49) describes as an 'ethical relationship' with learners (and with the South), wherein development of critical literacy occurs. This criticality, she emphasises, does not judge something to be right or wrong, but is an attempt to understand the origins of assumptions and the consequent implications. A DEC can provide the space for those involved in a project to reflect upon and explore how they came to think/be/feel/act as they do and the impact of their systems of belief locally/globally vis a vis issues of power, social relationships and the distribution of labour and resources (Andreotti, 2007:49).

DECs need to encourage their target groups to be aware, as Ponting (1991:222) has highlighted, of the consequences of unbalanced development effects for industrialised countries in the North and those of the South. Political and economic control of a large part of the world's resources has enabled the industrialised world to effectively live beyond the constraints of its resource base.

For Freire, being fully human implied being active and reflective. People who are passive and unthinkingly accepting of their situation are often subject to oppression, and education has a potential to liberate them from this mindset so long as it is 'dialogical' and problem posing. DECs can stimulate problem posing for those involved in overseas development activities and

thereby help to ensure that reflection on actions is undertaken in a critically reflective manner here in the North. Also, as Finlay (2006:11) remarked, thinking about criticisms of development that emphasise the ways that developmental discourse controls and constructs ‘undeveloped’ countries and subjects as inferior helps to stimulate critical discussion and can instil a heightened awareness of the role of language and discourse in many aspects of our lives.

DECs can support people to become increasingly conscious of the impact of any overseas aid measures, be they those of their government or of their own locally-developed NGO or charity. Even if the aid does not have strings attached in terms of trade or economic conditions, it may be structured in such a way that it creates needs and destroys ‘normal’ social patterns of behaviour in the host society and even in the donor society where a paternalistic mentality may be engendered or further reinforced. One international debt cancellation activist described her recommended tactical strategy as a two handed ‘pair of gloves’ approach, wherein it can be effective to donate urgently needed aid, while ensuring the other hand is also covered, i.e. addressing structural change issues through campaigning/advocacy measures resulting in effective action (Reilly, 2007).

Key questions for a DE centre when engaging with civil society bodies include:

- How can DE and DEC support members of civil society who become involved in actions addressing global development issues?
- How does a DEC translate relevant academic discourses into comprehensible concepts and constructs in order to increase dialogue and ultimately understanding of the challenges and dilemmas of any North-South endeavour?
- How can a DEC assist members of civil society involved in North-South actions to engage consciously and respectfully with their fellow human beings in a country in the South?
- How can a DEC effectively include Southern voices and perspectives in its education work?

A DEC must strive to ensure that local NGOs are aware of relevant research and conscious of the potentially positive and negative impact of twinning, linking, or aid actions as they take their projects forward. It is necessary, of course, that there is adequate understanding of and respect for the



work of DEC's by NGOs in order for DEC's to effectively reach and engage with these bodies. Good working relationships need to be developed and maintained with its target groups and funders and effective methods of communication and education must be employed. Challenging assumptions and creating space for debate can be difficult, but not impossible.

## Conclusion

Development education centres must vigilantly question their frames of reference and examine the assumptions operative in their organisational structures, policies and practices and encourage the local NGOs with whom they interact to do the same. There is a tension in the social sciences between discussion of abstracted social processes or metanarratives and discussion of lived experiences or small scale examples. Ultimately, it is effective to start on a small scale and develop strategies and alliances that address over-arching structural problems (Redclift & Benton, 1994:5-6). This discussion of a DEC's operations provides food for thought which can result in further debate and research into effective strategies for DE measures with members of civil society. This debate can result in recommendations for positive action in the future, ensuring that DE remains a radical endeavour that challenges the social and economic causes of inequality and injustice.

**Note:** This article is a revised version of a paper titled 'Developing Civil Society Participation' presented at the National University of Ireland Galway's 'Development's Futures' conference held on 24-25 November 2007.

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# INTRODUCING DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION INTO PRACTICAL DESIGN CURRICULA

**Alan Costello**

## Introduction

This article discusses some of the professional concerns of a vocational college tutor in the process of integrating development education issues into graphic design and digital media programmes at Ballyfermot College of Further Education in Dublin. The article highlights some of the difficulties faced when introducing development education into pre-existing design modules and presents some of the briefs given to students that introduce aspects of development education in a relevant and transparent manner.

## Some initial concerns

As a college tutor the primary commitment is to the fulfillment of one's professional obligations to the student. Students in further education programmes in a vocational college often intend to progress to degree level study (with advanced entry where possible), while other students intend moving directly into employment, a less certain objective in the current economic climate. The relationship that exists between the tutor and the student is such that the realisation of the student's educational and career goals must be one of the tutor's principal concerns. Equipping students with the hard and soft skills necessary for the attainment of their goals is of primary importance. On the Higher National Diplomas in Graphic Design and Digital Media (each of two years' duration), emphasis is given to the development of skills in a wide range of industry standard computer applications and developing the student's sensitivity to form and function in a broader sense through a wide variety of realistic and challenging projects. Traditionally development education is rarely a feature in the education of these students.

In the context of graphic design and digital media one must first ask whether development education can be integrated into the curricula at all without detrimentally affecting the primary goals of these programmes. The next question is how development education might benefit the student in the context of their chosen design-based specialism. If development education is to be integrated into courses such as the Higher National Diplomas in Graphic

Design and Digital Media it must not vie with the primary function of these courses. Indeed, it must add a positive dimension to the students' design education, if this is the tutor's remit.

## **Introducing development education into practical design-based curricula**

The development of specific technical skills to a requisite level is intrinsic to graphic design and digital media courses at third level. In some instances the sole purpose of an exercise or a project is the transmission of technical skills. In many instances the introduction of development education issues at this stage would serve to detract from the job at hand. In these instances there is little room for development education. However, as these courses progress and as the students become more confident in their technical abilities, opportunities do exist for exercises and projects that allow for the introduction of development education issues. Graphic design and digital media projects at this stage usually require the solving of conceptual, informational and/or presentational problems, often with respect to a client, whether real or hypothetical. The acquisition of soft skills in the form of research, concept development and participation in class discussions, critiques and tutorials allows for development education issues to be discussed where relevant to the content or the context of a given project. It is in the formulation of these projects that development education issues can be written in as either content or included in a broader, more contextual sense.

### **'Mother Tongue' poster competition**

The International Indigenous Design Network (INDIGO) is an International Council of Graphic Design Associations (ICOGRADA)-led initiative of the International Design Alliance (IDA). An explanation of the rationale behind the INDIGO network, as quoted from their website, states that:

“The notion of indigenous and local design [...] often includes themes of colonization, migration, politics, language, history, identity and conditions such as the economy and natural resources. To address this notion and to further explore its meaning and interpretation throughout the world INDIGO was born. Through its participants and projects, INDIGO seeks to gain some insight into what makes design distinctive to its home, the connections to the place where it is made and for whom it is made”.

Recently INDIGO ran the ‘Mother Tongue’ poster competition. This competition required students to produce a poster in a given format that responded to the following text:

“Language is not only a product of human life – it is a pre-requisite that humans require to form relationships. As a fundamental form of expression, language binds us together. A language can be visual – made up of complex ideas of truth deeply rooted in symbols, custom and imagery. Mother Tongue is about the power of language – verbal and visual, formal and informal. First language. Native language. It honours languages at risk of being lost in our globalising society and those that have survived the forces of colonisation”.

For graphic design and digital media students this exercise presents an interesting challenge. Firstly, there is no discernable client. Secondly, there is no specific communication ‘problem’ to solve. The question then is how best to present this exercise/project to students in a manner that the students can see its relevance to their ‘design’ education?

In a professional context visual communication problems can initially lack form and/or clarity. Meetings are often required between clients and designers to discuss the nature of a given job. At this stage goals can be identified and strategies developed. The ability to develop a thoughtful solution or sensitive approach to a broad and perhaps initially ill-defined problem is a valuable skill. Through group discussions, class presentations and individual tutorials students get the opportunity to consider the various subject areas inherent in ‘Mother Tongue’ for themselves; they partake in dialogue and begin to identify strands that both interest them personally and ‘answer the brief’.

Presenting the project in this manner allows the student adequate room to consider the great many issues alluded to in the text of the brief, and affords ample time for the discussion of these ideas in class. From a practical perspective the student’s analytical and conceptual skills are developed, their capacity to articulate their understanding of the issues implied in the text is tested and their presentational skills are refined. In this project the tutor has handed responsibility for learning back to the student to a degree.

During in-class discussions and presentations the tutor can deliver information on aspects of development education, can challenge student’s preconceptions and misconceptions, and can encourage refinement in the

student's research techniques, encouraging a more sophisticated analysis of relevant issues. This is as much a challenge to the tutor uninitiated in every aspect of development education as to the student. However, if an open and informed climate can be created in the classroom much can be learned from each student's interpretation of the project, the range of issues implicit in the text, the variety of approaches considered and the research presented.

While in no way unorthodox in design teaching generally, this approach runs parallel to the 'critical literacy' discussed by Vanessa Andreotti (2006), in which an understanding of development education and change is promoted:

“without telling learners what they should think or do, [but] by creating spaces where they are safe to analyse and experiment with other forms of seeing/thinking and being/relating to one another. The focus is on the historical/cultural production of knowledge and power in order to empower learners to make better informed choices, but the choices of action and meaning [...] are never imposed, as the 'right to signify' is recognised and respected [...]” (Andreotti, 2006).

Furthermore, this open, dialectical approach to class discussion is based upon:

“[...] the strategic assumption that all knowledge is partial and incomplete, constructed in our contexts, cultures and experiences. Therefore, we lack the knowledge constructed in other contexts, cultures and experiences [...]” (Andreotti, 2006).

It may even be helpful from a development education perspective if this dialectical approach is made explicit during class discussion.

Other projects this year that have provided access to development education issues for graphic design and digital media students at Ballyfermot College of Further Education have included 'World Day Against Death Penalty' ([www.posterfortomorrow.org](http://www.posterfortomorrow.org)) and 'Water Is Life' ([www.posterart-waterislife.com](http://www.posterart-waterislife.com)).

## **Conclusion**

Fundamental to the role of the graphic designer is dialogue: principally the dialogue between content and form, and words and images. Graphic designers

operate at the point where meaning is engineered and content takes shape. As a professional graphic designer one can claim to have developed a sophisticated approach to the presentation of information and consequently the construction of meaning (without putting it too grandly). However, one cannot also expect to be expert in the area of development education. Informing oneself in this regard is an on-going project. In introducing projects such as those above and working closely with the students one hopes that these projects can at least contribute to the creation of ‘informed and engaged citizens [...] best placed to critically address complex social and economic issues linked to development’ as suggested in Irish Aid’s Development Education Strategy Plan for 2007 – 2011. If we can achieve this aim, whilst fulfilling our primary professional obligation to our students, our efforts will not have been in vain.

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# HISTORY AND THE DEVELOPMENT AID DEBATE IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Kevin O'Sullivan

## Introduction

In September 2006, more than thirty-two years after its publication was first discussed, the Irish government issued its *White Paper on Irish Aid*. Designed to encourage a greater public understanding of the official aid programme, the document contained more than a passing reference to the role of the past in shaping Irish Aid's present. In the preface, the Minister for Foreign Affairs Dermot Ahern and Minister of State in charge of Development Co-operation and Human Rights Conor Lenihan drew on the strength of precedence and Ireland's traditions in the field of development aid: 'It is important to realise that we are not starting with a blank slate. Irish Aid, which has been in operation since 1974, has been very favourably reviewed by independent institutions and other international donors' (DFA, 2006a:5).

Experience, they implied, was vital - not least in building brand longevity. But also implicit in their comments was a conviction that the lessons of the past were important in informing decision-making in the present. The message of the conclusion was simple: history matters. Yet the question remains: just *how* does a better understanding of the past make for better judgements in the present? This article, drawing on the author's research into the history of Irish foreign aid since the late 1960s, explores the discipline's use in understanding the development sector today. It is divided into four parts. The article begins with an outline of the rapid expansion in the study of aid history over the past decade, before briefly analysing how history contributes to contemporary policy-making and society. The final two sections document the practical uses of historical insight: in explaining the influence of the European Economic Community/ European Union (EEC/EU) on aid in Ireland and the EU's newest member states, and in helping to shed light on the impact of economic recession on donor behaviour. The article concludes by outlining some of the lessons history offers to today's decision-makers.

## Writing aid history

For a country well versed in the official adaptation of the past to suit present agendas, Ahern and Lenihan's remarks in the *White Paper on Irish Aid* were hardly a radical departure. In his foreword to the document, Taoiseach Bertie Ahern linked Ireland's past directly with its contemporary attitudes to aid: 'Because of our history, Ireland can rightly claim to empathise with those who are suffering from disease, poverty and hunger every day around the globe' (DFA, 2006a:3). But the Taoiseach was simply the latest in a long line to make this assertion. From the aid sector's emergence in Ireland in the mid-1960s, official policy-makers and NGOs drew heavily on what they saw as the twin pillars of their country's relationship with the global South: a 'shared legacy with developing countries [that] has helped to create a strong bond of understanding and empathy' (DFA, 2002:15); and the argument that Irish attitudes to aid – as Trócaire director Justin Kilcullen put it – were 'very clearly built on the missionary tradition' (Kilcullen, 2010:17).

In spite of these consistent references to the past, however, the study of aid history in Ireland has received limited attention. Articles by O'Neill (1999; 2002) and this author (O'Sullivan, 2007) have traced the evolution of official aid. Books by Farmar (on Concern; 2002) and Maye (on Trócaire; 2010) have broadened our understanding of Ireland's vibrant non-governmental development sector. But the study of Ireland's relationship with the developing world has largely been the preserve of other disciplines, led by the journal *Trócaire Development Review* and books by Kirby (1992) and Holmes, Rees and Whelan (1993).

This limited treatment of Ireland's aid history is not unremarkable. When economic historian Richard T. Griffiths reflected on almost a decade of international research into the history of foreign aid in 2008, he accompanied it with a call for the rapid – and necessary – expansion of the sub-discipline (2008). His comments came at a time of transition for academic histories of foreign aid. At the turn of the twenty-first century, it had been left to social scientists like David Lumsdaine (1993), Terje Tvedt (1998) and Alex de Waal (1997) to provide the narrative and theoretical frameworks for mapping the evolution of the development sector. The study of aid history flourished only from the early 2000s, prompted by the groundbreaking contributions to a special edition of the journal *Contemporary European History* dedicated to the subject (Schmidt & Pharo, 2003) and extended in research projects in the United States, Canada, the Netherlands and the Nordic states.

Carol Lancaster's wide-ranging monograph *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics* (2007) led the way: a brilliant introduction to aid-giving across five countries - Denmark, France, Germany, Japan and the United States. At the heart of Lancaster's monograph lay a simple but important lesson: since aid is an inherently global undertaking, its history must be understood in a similar context. Others were quick to follow. A two-volume study detailing the national dynamics of aid-giving in the Cold War appeared in 2008 (Pharo & Fraser), and is to be followed this year (2011) by a volume documenting the rise of foreign aid as a norm in international relations (Olesen & Pharo, 2011).

The prominent role taken by non-state actors in an increasingly globalised aid environment since the late 1960s sparked further research into the rise of the NGO sector. Scholars like Matthew Connelly (2008), Gilbert Rist (2008) and James Vernon (2007) traced the evolving norms of development and human rights in the twentieth century. Historians in Australia (Rugendyke & Ollif, 2007), Britain (Saunders, 2009; Crowson & Hilton's *NGOs in Britain* project at the University of Birmingham), and the Netherlands (Smits, 2008) joined them in recent years, charting the fortunes of NGOs at national level and adding to a small body of research on individual organisations like *Médecins sans Frontières* (Vallaey, 2004) and Oxfam (Black, 1992).

## **History, society and policy-making**

At the end of his 2008 article, Griffiths was clear about the potential for this body of work to contribute strongly to contemporary debate. By analysing the expansion of the international aid regime since the 1970s, he argued in respect to the effectiveness of Western aid policies, and the successes (or not) of their endeavours in the global South that historians will have 'major contributions to make to the academic discourse and the public debate on development assistance' (Griffiths, 2008:48-49). Yet Griffiths was less expansive in describing just *how* that would happen. Now that we have begun to write these histories and make them available to a wider audience, what are they to do with them? What use is history to the aid practitioner or policy-maker?

A number of patterns present themselves easily from the histories of official aid completed to date. Comparing the evolution of the aid sector in Ireland and Finland, for example, with post-imperial donors like Britain and France, and even with non-aligned states in Scandinavia, it is abundantly clear that memories of foreign rule and late industrial development elicit a particular

response to the needs of the developing world. Social and political structures are also important, since, as Noël and Thérien's study from the mid-1990s showed, '[w]elfare principles institutionalised at the domestic level shape the participation of developed countries in the international aid regime' (1995:552). Money matters: Ireland has always – apart from a brief spurt in the early 2000s – lagged behind more affluent, if politically like-minded, states like Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden in the level of its official development assistance (ODA). Foreign policy concerns are also a determining factor, whether as part of an attempt to extend American or Soviet influence in the Cold War; as part of Chinese and Indian soft power in the post-September 11 period; or as part of Irish, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, Norwegian or Swedish attempts to link aid to international justice and co-operation through the United Nations (UN).

How to make the leap from these broad conclusions to the practical world of foreign aid is another issue. How we apply the lessons of history in contemporary practice is a subject of continued conjecture among academic historians. The problem, as John Tosh asserted in 2008, is that 'professional historians are strangely reluctant to adopt the role of expert. If they reach out to the public, it is usually to popularise academic history of a conventional kind; and most historians prefer to address only their academic peers' (Tosh, 2008a:4).

Their reluctance may, on one level, have something to do with the historian's role 'to point out that things weren't quite as simple as is usually claimed', since it may all-too-readily feel like 'tiresome nitpicking' (Reisz, 2009). Yet the discipline's importance remains indisputable. For analysts of the contemporary foreign aid sector, history's emphasis on causality and long-term processes of change is important in highlighting patterns of aid-giving and aid-effectiveness. For example, individual lessons can be extracted – what works, what doesn't, and what has yet to be tried – and applied to a variety of present-day circumstances.

At the same time, however, history's contributions are often difficult to contextualise. Historian Ruth Harris commented in 2009 on the difficulty of untangling the message from the medium: 'Occasionally, a history of banking or recent foreign policy might provide easy, transparent lessons. But the "big" lessons are harder to extract' (Reisz, 2009). It is not, however, impossible to do so. The discipline's contribution goes far beyond a collection of precedents: it helps to shape the culture in which policies are made. At its most basic level,

history contributes to the development of institutional memory, with a positive knock-on effect for contemporary decision-making. It is arguable, for example, that the criticisms of the administration of Ireland's aid programme in the late 1980s – the rapid turnover of staff within a small division in the Department of Foreign Affairs and the considerable difficulties caused by the almost total absence of 'corporate memory' that resulted (ACDC, 1988:8) – may have been alleviated, if not negated, by a better understanding of the programme's past.

History also provides us with the tools to analyse and appreciate how we arrived at our present state. Understanding the past, as John Tosh put it, 'can open the door to a broader sense of the possibilities of the present' (2008b). At the heart of this assertion is the emphasis placed on context. Context does away with an over-emphasis on precedent, allowing us to appreciate that familiar-looking opportunities or problems require a response shaped to suit the situation. It teaches us that the constant process of change means that every event, as Tosh and Lang have argued, 'is as a result of a unique combination of circumstances, and the strategies we adopt must have regard primarily to those circumstances' (2006:39). Importantly, however, this emphasis on context does not preclude the historian from pointing out possible sequences of events based on our knowledge of the circumstances that have brought us to our present position. Instead, it is the combination of context with history's discussion of *process* that makes the discipline so valuable to our understanding of the contemporary world.

### **Leading by example**

The remainder of this article explores the uses of history in explaining the contemporary aid environment. It focuses on one important case study: the lessons from the evolution of the Irish aid sector since the mid-1970s and their applicability to the new member states (NMS) that have joined the EU since 2004.

In an unusual interpretation the comparison begins with a practical discussion of precedent and the lessons of history. At an informal meeting of European development ministers in Luxembourg in February 2005, Irish Minister of State for Development Co-operation and Human Rights Conor Lenihan met with his counterparts from the NMS to discuss a proposal from his government 'to share...the lessons we have learned since setting up Ireland's official development assistance programme more than 30 years ago' (DFA, 2006b:41). The NMS, for their part, believed that they could 'best learn from

experiences of the other donors, from their mistakes and successes', examples of which Ireland was hardly lacking (Slovenia Centre, 2008:20). Over the following two years officials from Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Slovakia and Malta visited Ireland for separate two-and-a-half day periods, during which they met with representatives from the Irish government and a number of Irish NGOs and discussed problems and solutions in the structure and direction of their own aid programmes.

For the NMS, the most useful lessons of the Irish experience were in building a development aid programme almost from scratch and, at the same time, responding to institutional pressures at European level. The European Commission had already noted the NMS's need for assistance 'to enable them to accomplish their new obligations on development' (2005:111). Two years before accession, the Commission had initiated a programme of work to prepare them for their responsibilities in the field, and later reflected that support might even have been initiated 'at an earlier stage' (European Commission, 2005: 112).

The context of the NMS's accession was, of course, radically different to Ireland's. The European Economic Community (EEC) that Ireland joined in 1973 lacked the kind of bureaucratic structures to deal with aid-giving at supranational level that came with successive Lomé conventions and parallel structural reform, and the global aid industry itself was still in the early throes of expansion. Yet the essential lessons of the Irish experience were undeniably salient for the NMS. On accession, Ireland had been marked out as the only member state without an official aid programme, at a time when the EEC had just begun to seek out the means of living up to its responsibilities as a global economic power. The immediate financial implications - notably Irish contributions to the Community's food aid programme and, later, to the European Development Fund - were matched by the strong pull of peer pressure. The unfavourable contrast between Ireland and its European counterparts placed considerable pressure on Irish policy-makers to conform. So too did the EEC's adoption of the 0.7 per cent target in 1974, set by the UN as part of its Second Development Decade.

The result was a significant widening of Ireland's responsibilities in the field of foreign aid. The outline of Ireland's first official aid programme was announced in April 1974 at a Council of Ministers meeting in Luxembourg, and was followed by the development of a bilateral aid programme and a considerable increase in Irish contributions to a number of multilateral

agencies. Membership of the Community also exposed Irish policy-makers to issues on which they had little or no prior experience. In 1975, for example, Irish officials presided over the final negotiations for the Lomé Convention, signed during their country's first Presidency of the EEC.

The EEC/EU has proved an enduring influence on small member states. Austrian accession in 1995 brought a visible and immediate increase in multilateral spending (mainly through the EU), accompanied by a concurrent expansion in its development horizons (Obrovsky, 2005:117, 127, 133). In Finland, a recession-induced fall in overseas development assistance (ODA) in the early 1990s was reversed only after the country joined the EU and pressures from that source became too vociferous to ignore (Koponen with Siitonen, 2005:225). Even Sweden, which entered the EU in 1995 as one of the leading advocates of development aid, was forced to adapt to the increasing integration of its development policies into those decided in Brussels, taking on considerable extra responsibilities not only in its contributions to the construction of policy, but in the large amounts provided to development through the EU budget (Danielson & Wohlgemuth, 2005:528). In 2006 Irish Aid described EU development assistance as 'an integral part' of its structures, recognising its 'norm-setting role', the importance of 'coherence', 'co-ordination' and 'harmonisation', and working with 'like-minded' EU donors (DFA, 2006a:81). It did not stop there: EU security concerns, trade agreements and foreign policy goals all exerted a considerable influence on the direction and extent of aid.

For the NMS, the lesson was to recognise the enduring power of international institutions in setting norms of behaviour in the field of development aid. But the story of Irish adaptation to membership of the EEC/EU also offered an important example of how small states operate in that environment: how to respond, adjust and expand according to European demands, but also – and equally importantly – how to retain their independence in so doing.

## **The economics of aid**

In Dublin, the 'mentoring programme' – as it came to be known by Irish officials – served as an important indication of just how far the country's aid programme had come in thirty years. Yet the lessons of more than three decades of bureaucratic practice within the EEC/EU told only half the story. The parallel experiences of Ireland in the 1970s and the NMS in more recent

years – particularly the attempt to maintain ODA levels at a time of economic recession – underline a simple, though no less compelling, lesson from the history of foreign aid: the economy matters.

In the Irish case, the oil crisis of 1973 and subsequent recession threatened first to derail proposals for an official aid programme (narrowly agreed by the Cabinet in April 1974), then seriously inhibited its growth (O’Sullivan, 2007:101, 103-104). Irish ODA levels rose from 0.036 per cent of GNP in 1972-73 to 0.104 per cent in 1976, but by the end of the decade had reached only 0.18 per cent of GNP (Sutton, 1977:76; O’Brien, 1980:16). Ongoing battles between the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Finance – not least Minister for Foreign Affairs Garret FitzGerald’s later assertion that Finance had deliberately misinterpreted the formula set out in 1974 for reaching 0.35 per cent of GNP by 1980 (Interview with FitzGerald, 2005) – underlined the essential conflict between domestic economic priorities and efforts to build a foreign aid programme.

Allowing for national and regional disparities, the NMS experience has proven remarkably similar. The early years of EU membership were accompanied by a steady growth in ODA. Yet the slow pace of that growth indicated that political and economic priorities remained elsewhere. A 2007 report by the Prague-based Policy Association for an Open Society to the European Parliament’s Committee on Development took a critical tone in discussing the new member states’ ODA contributions and their commitments to the EU. It argued that ‘[d]espite the economic growth experienced by the NMS in the past decade, many of them are not on course to meet those targets [to reach 0.17 per cent of GNI by 2010 and 0.33 per cent by 2015]’ and suggested that the states’ economic development was not being matched in their commitment to development aid (PASOS, 2007:1). In the recession that followed, the NMS’s commitments to aid have continued to falter, falling well short of the EU targets.

Although it is difficult to compare Irish economic development in the 1970s with the current situation in the NMS, it is possible to point to one important parallel in the link between economic under-development and ODA: self-perceptions remain critically important. A June 2008 meeting of aid officials from the NMS held in Ljubljana noted that many of those states ‘still perceive themselves as recipients of development assistance’ and view their aid contributions in those terms (Slovenia Centre, 2008:7). In Ireland nearly twenty-one years earlier, when the new Fianna Fáil Minister of State in charge of



Development Aid, Seán Calleary, re-stated his government's commitment to reach the 0.7 per cent target in July 1987, he included the oft-repeated caveat: 'as soon as our economic circumstances permit' (Pyle, 1987). That mentality proved central in shaping what officials believed their country should and – most importantly – *could* give. Three months later, the government announced its intention to cut ODA by £11 million (25 per cent) and in the succeeding years the cuts introduced across the different sectors of public spending continued to fall heavily on the ODA budget, which dropped from 0.28 per cent of GNP in 1986 to 0.18 per cent in 1990 (OECD, 1988:58; OECD, 1991:126).

Yet the fundamental difference between the Irish and NMS experience of recession – the continuing strong public support for, and interest in aid, particularly non-governmental aid, that existed in Ireland in the 1980s – carries important lessons for the survival of the aid sector in each of these countries. The absence of any significant links between the NMS and the developing world, along with their largely under-developed NGO sectors has further limited public support in those countries for development aid. In spite of considerable pressure from the European Commission and visible improvements in their aid policies, this lack of public support resulted in limited political will to expand aid or to reach targets set for them by the EU. In Ireland, by contrast, public interest in, and support for aid – fuelled by a long history of Catholic missionary activity, together with the frequent references to a shared colonial past with the developing world – remained strongly in evidence: for example in the £7.5m contributed to Live Aid in Ireland in 1985 (FitzGerald, 1988:333), or in the consistently high levels of support for NGOs and the concept of aid (ACDC, 1985; ACDC, 1990).

There were, admittedly, some caveats to that picture. Public support for NGOs and aid in times of emergency proved difficult to translate into support for long-term development aid in Ireland. In November 1990 Campaign-Aid – a group that drew together Irish NGOs, TDs (members of the Dáil, the Irish parliament) and trade union representatives, and was strongly critical of government's cutbacks in ODA – collected 21,000 signatures on a petition urging the government to increase ODA, but was refused a meeting by Taoiseach Charles Haughey (Yeates, 1990). The argument that Ireland was itself under-developed and so could not afford to donate its much-needed resources to external problems was also openly in evidence. In August 1986, the organisation for returned development workers, Comhlámh, devoted a special edition of its newsletter, *Third World Now*, to the link between under-

development in Ireland and the developing world. The picture it painted reflected the priorities of many in Irish society in the middle of that decade. 'Mary', who had no steady employment since leaving school eight years previously, wondered if anyone was concerned 'about the conditions of poverty that exist in this country, the Third World that exists here. One can't be concerned about the one and then ignore the other' (Comhlámh, 1986).

Whether these arguments will have any additional gravitas in our new recession is difficult to tell. However, comments made by the chairman of Glen Dimplex, Martin Naughton, in December 2010 - 'it's crazy for the Government to borrow money and then give it away in overseas aid' - were not simply a repetition of a debate frequently returned to in the 1980s (McCaffrey, 2010). Context, history teaches us, is important. However rapid the country's decline, there has - as yet - been no return to the argument that Ireland is 'a Third World country'.

## Conclusion

This article began by posing the question: how can a better understanding of the past make for better judgements in the contemporary aid sector? It showed that aid history - in the academic sense - is still in its relative infancy. Yet its contributions are already being felt. Sunniva Engh's work on Swedish aid and population control, for example, has been important in forcing a re-assessment of that country's policies in the sector (2008). Bureaucrats have also got in on the act: exchanges between Irish policy-makers and their counterparts from the NMS helped to shape the latter's assimilation into the EU's development structures.

But it is in the less tangible - though no less potent - understanding of process and context that history provides where the influence of the discipline is most keenly felt. Economic crises may have a similar limiting effect across time, but the depth of their impact on official aid depends very much on individual social, political and cultural factors. Comparing the history of Ireland with the present-day trials of the NMS, for example, reminds us that self-perceptions of wealth and obligation are vital in determining individual generosity towards the developing world. But it also reminds us of the complexity of these identities. The strong Christian and moral obligations towards the developing world cultivated by Ireland's missionaries, allied with the less easily measured though no less apparent cultural memory of

colonialism, have consistently produced a positive attitude towards the developing world – regardless of economic circumstances.

What then of Ireland and the future of aid in these uncertain economic times? History teaches us that, in contrast to the 1980s, Ireland has a lot to fall back on: a large and highly developed official aid bureaucracy, a vibrant and professional NGO sector, and continued strong public support for the concept of foreign aid. But it is a comparison with the Finnish experience of the 1990s that proves most telling. The expansion of the Finnish official aid programme during a period of sustained economic growth from the mid-1970s until the early 1990s, during which ODA reached 0.8 per cent of GNP by 1991, was decimated in the deep economic recession that followed. By 1994 Finnish ODA had dropped by more than half, to just 0.3 per cent of GNP (Koponen with Siitonen, 2005:222). Yet the institutions created in that decade-and-a-half of growth, along with pressures from the EU (which Finland joined in 1995) and its Nordic neighbours reduced the scope for the complete collapse of the aid industry. The lessons for today's policy-makers and aid watchers, therefore, are less in the size of the fall, but rather in the cushion below.

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# KODE: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES FOR DEVELOPMENT WORKERS

**Deirdre Healy**

## **Introduction**

Established in 1974, the mission of Kimmage Development Studies Centre (DSC) is to promote critical thinking and action for justice, equality and the eradication of poverty in the world. It aims to do this through facilitating the education and training of individual practitioners and groups working for social, economic and political change in society, enabling all practitioners to work effectively for the holistic development of all. Kimmage DSC has offered Bachelor of Arts and post-graduate programmes to students from around the world for 38 years. This article discusses the introduction of a new distance learning programme by KODE and considers its benefits for students based on skills-based, focused programmatic content and delivery.

## **Background**

Around 2005, Kimmage DSC made the courageous and enterprising decision to invest in and develop a range of distance learning courses for development workers. The rationale for this exploration of previously untested waters was the recognition that, given the declining number of fellowships and the emerging global economic down-turn, fewer students would be able to travel and study on the Kimmage DSC full-time programmes. Kimmage DSC therefore wanted to provide quality alternatives to studying in Dublin so that a greater number of development workers would have access to the courses that have been so popular over the previous decades. Kimmage DSC's Strategic Plan 2009-2013 states:

“...given that the modes of delivery of learning transcend national or regional (or institutional) boundaries and facilitates study for participants in the widest possible range of venues and locations, we believe that KODE will become an ideal ‘bridge’ between our Irish-based and overseas-based activities”.

Given that the primary aim of the distance learning programme was to provide access to high quality courses, after much research and piloting, it was



decided that the most efficient and effective method of providing course materials was on CD-ROM. The rationale was that CDs can be used in older computers; are not susceptible to computer viruses; and accessing the content is not reliant on an internet connection. Therefore each unit of study can be printed out or viewed on screen. This was decided as the best course delivery option for our potential learners, many of whom are based in remote areas and/or do not have access to reliable internet service. KODE was launched on 3 March 2009 just as the impact of the current economic recession was being felt across Ireland, and Irish overseas development agencies were not immune to its effects. Consequently uptake of the programme in our first year, 2009, was understandably slow. However, we continued to work with full confidence in KODE's ability to respond to, and meet the needs of development workers who often operate within the confines of busy schedules.

## **The KODE model**

The KODE model uses a 'blended' learning package based on the convenience of CD-ROMs, which also includes specialised tutor support and a dedicated website to facilitate discussion. The learning model adopted by KODE facilitates independent study for participants allowing them to work through the course programme at their own pace as they gain understanding and key skills in each subject area. Throughout the course, tutors are available to give guidance and support to participants.

One key to the success of the KODE learning experience is that each participant is assigned a personal tutor. Tutors are graduates of the Kimmage DSC programme and are therefore familiar with the processes that guide the KODE experience. The tutors' continued dedication and commitment to the programme post-graduation is essential to the positive learning experience of participants. One tutor in Tanzania, Ombeni Sakafu, recently commented that 'all the units are useful to development workers. Besides empowering them with new knowledge, they also give them challenges and the opportunity to see the development arena in a wider perspective'. Profiles of each of the KODE tutors are available on the KODE website: <http://www.kodeonline.com>.

The first three KODE courses were based on the existing core project management modules within the Kimmage DSC BA programme. In addition, there is now a course on 'Sustainable Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction', and a globally unique course on 'Gender-Based Violence and Development' which will be finalised and launched later in 2011. KODE courses range in length

between five and ten weeks. Courses include a number of assignments and, crucially, on-line discussion forums which facilitate discussion among the course participants in different countries on issues of common concern related to the course content. Beatrice Elachi, Executive Director of the League of Kenya Women Voters, commented that ‘the discussions also opened our minds and the wealth of knowledge we have received will guide us to the next level of our careers’.

All KODE courses have a set start date and are run simultaneously in a number of countries so that participants can benefit from group interaction regardless of how geographically dispersed they are. The KODE learning model provides balance between structured instruction and guided discovery which ensures the engagement of the students from beginning to end.

The course content engages participants through the use of case studies and additional exercises that allow participants to monitor their own learning throughout. Each course also has a 'toolbox' of real life resources from established development organisations willing to share their expertise. Sophia Chayalew Kassa, Early Childhood Development Officer at ChildFund in Ethiopia, stated after completing the KODE Monitoring & Evaluation Course: ‘KODE perfectly met my objectives. The material provided was easy to read and understand and supported by practical examples’.

## **Participant feedback**

Although promoting a new training programme during bleak economic circumstances does not go without its challenges the feedback from course participants in the two years since the launch of KODE show how they have applied their learning to their development work which has made the effort worthwhile. Vincent Bukenya, Senior Programme Assistant at the World Food Programme in Uganda commented that:

“Unit by unit, and reference material after another, the course package gave ample time towards each of its objectives. The course stood out as ‘learner-friendly’, enabling a participant to understand the complexities of sustainable development and to critically reflect on their experience. I highly enjoyed the Sustainable Livelihoods course”.

Almost one hundred development workers based in eight countries completed KODE courses in 2010. These participants utilised the interactive website to

learn about and meet others working in the development sector during and after each course. This gave them the potential to communicate and identify as a community of practice. The programme has been adapted to meet expectations, facilitating maximum numbers regardless of geographic location so KODE courses are now available globally. KODE has the capacity to supply participants with course packs including subject CDs and detailed study guides anywhere in the world. In order to aid the distance learner, we also have short instructional videos available on the website to guide participants through the functions of the on-line discussion forum etc.

KODE's approach has a practical focus which appeals to development workers on the ground, including Veronica Kabasomi, Social Worker, Caritas Fort Portal, Uganda:

“I can now assure you that through the *Project Management, Governance and Accountability* course I am comfortable with issues about governing projects, accountability, income and expenditure accounts, budgeting and balance sheets. KODE courses are very relevant to our needs and the skills they are given are practical, applicable and not abstract”.

Shadrack Musyoka, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer for the Diocese of Kitui, Kenya also commented:

“KODE's approach is more practical than theoretical. At this point in my career, I did not think I needed more theory but rather practical ideas that I could apply to work. The flexibility is refreshing and the access to the tutor wonderful. I enjoyed asking questions and discussion it was intellectually exhilarating”.

The courses have great benefits in developing the capacity of individuals and potentially the organisation within which they operate. An excellent example of how a participant has brought the benefits of KODE to her organisation's beneficiaries was demonstrated through the following comment from Jacinta Mwangi from the Live With Hope Centre, Kenya:

“My organisation supports people with HIV/AIDS and there are a lot of activities to be monitored and evaluated to ensure these people get the best services and improve their quality of life. KODE really helped me so much and reading through those case studies I was able to measure my

organisation and learn a lot from them. I still continue to refer to the materials”.

In the future, KODE intends to further its geographical reach to continue providing access to Kimmage DSC where there was none previously. The KODE educational experience is continuously fine tuned and hopes to attract high-level practitioners and academics to join in the on-line discussion forum so that learners can have first hand access to a wide range of experience and knowledge.

## Conclusion

KODE has a vital role to play in providing skills-based, focussed, programmatic content which, according to the feedback from our 2010 participants, is both personally and professional transforming. Graduates are also returning to KODE programmes in other areas of study: Sr Patricia Hanvey, despite being based in a remote, difficult to access part of Zambia, has now undertaken all four KODE courses and may also participate in our *Gender Based Violence and Development* course. This is an advantage of KODE courses being available globally with additional face-to-face one-day introductory workshops in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Ethiopia. KODE courses include: project planning and proposal writing; monitoring and evaluation; project management, governance and accountability; and sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction. KODE will launch its new *Gender-Based Violence and Development* course in April 2011. Application forms, details of course fees, course outlines, tutor profiles, recent participant feedback are all available on the KODE website: <http://www.kodeonline.com>.

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# OLDER VOICES IN DEVELOPMENT: MAKING VISIBLE THE INVISIBLE

Adrienne Boyle

## Introduction

The first International Plan of Action on Ageing was adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1982, with 1 October designated as the UN's International Day of Older Persons. This was followed in 1991 by the UN Assembly's adoption of the United Nations' Principles for Older Persons (independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity), which encouraged governments to incorporate older people into national development programmes. 1999 was designated as the Year of Older Persons with the theme 'Towards a Society for All Ages' and the key principle of 'Active Ageing'. A second and major World Assembly was held in Madrid in 2002 and a second International Plan of Action agreed; in 2007 a mid-term review of progress was conducted. The general sense from much of the literature that came out of the review is that little progress has been made in putting older people substantially on the development agenda and implementation was viewed as 'patchy and inconsistent' (Help Age International, 2009c:4). For example, in Europe and North America only 31 of 56 United Nations member states submitted country reports on progress (United Nations, 2002). In recent years, there has been a move towards the adoption of a Convention on the Rights of Older Persons which would lend more legal binding mechanisms to the implementation of rights for older people.

The 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing also offers aid agencies, governments and other institutions an opportunity to place older people alongside others in the centre of development discourse. It offers a clear statement about how and why older people need to engage with, and be engaged by, those working in the aid sector. It pledges to extend the right to development to older persons and to halve their poverty by 2015 in line with the first Millennium Development Goal. The Action Plan sets as the decade's priorities: the participation of older people in policy making; advancement of health and well-being into old age; and ensuring enabling and supportive environments for older people (United Nations, 2002). It can be used both as an advocacy and an awareness-raising tool. However despite the achievement of adopting such a Plan, older people remain a low priority for governments, donors and aid agencies: '[w]here there are policies, they often emphasise older

people as passive recipients of benefits and medical services rather than promoting active ageing with full participation in society' (Help Age International, 2007a:4). The needs, rights and contributions of older people, especially in the global South, are not well understood in comparison with those of other population groups. The stereotype of older people as a 'burden' versus a 'resource' seriously hinders opportunities to harness the contribution of an active older generation to development. As Aurelina Curay, Director of the Geron Foundation indicated: 'We need to stop treating everyone over 60 as a weak passive recipient of benefits (Help Age International, 2007a:20)'

## **The practice context**

A number of key issues have begun to actively inform development discourse with regard to ageing. Not least of these is often described - pejoratively - as the 'demographic time bomb'. This debate almost exclusively focuses on pressure on the labour force, old age dependency ratios, and most vocally, the high cost of pensions and health care provision. It fails entirely to acknowledge the remarkable cultural, social and professional capacity of older, more experienced, people. Their on-going role, often unpaid in support of families and communities, is almost completely overlooked. Policy makers tend to be negatively influenced by stereotyping, pre-conceptions, prejudice and ageism.

## **The facts**

The world's population is experiencing exponential and unprecedented change in relation to ageing. One of the latest United States Department of Commerce's Global Ageing Reports, *An Aging World 2008*, draws attention to the historic transition that is currently taking place. It states that in less than 10 years, there will be more people aged 65 and older than children under 5 years. The number of people aged 80 and over is estimated to increase by 233 per cent between 2008 and 2040. Currently 64 per cent of older people live in 'less developed' regions; by 2050 this will be 80 per cent. Even in the 'least developed' countries, adults who survive to 60 can expect to live an additional 15 years. Globally the 60-79 and 80+ age groups are growing the fastest. In less than a decade, Latin America and Asia will have the highest proportions of over-65s than Europe and North America have today, and Africa will have reached the same level of older people as Europe had in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century (US Department of Commerce, 1993). This is primarily happening due to sharp increases in life expectancy accompanied by substantial falls in fertility all

over the world. The myth that most older people live in 'developed' countries is simply incorrect.

## **Barriers to the engagement of older people as active actors**

Older people are alienated from society for a whole range of reasons, not least being their forced exclusion from the labour market. They have a distinct lack of access to the new opportunities that social, and sometimes political, change has afforded younger people, such as social networking. The shift to the information age has left many older people behind, as re-training opportunities are rarely extended to those over 50 years of age, further alienating them from an ever-changing world. Discrimination at institutional level translates into the dismissal of older people as a 'vulnerable' social group, and their omission from powerful national strategies. 'A social protection of the ageing population has...largely escaped the international donor agenda, which in turn has left little resources for NGOs to address the problems (of poverty and exclusion) effectively' (Help Age International, 2007a:21).

One of the main obstacles to the low prioritisation of ageing on the policy and funding agenda is the 'stubborn image of older people as passive recipients of benefits' (ibid.:22), with solutions centred on services and medical supports. Interventions ignore the concept of active ageing, active participation in society, policy development and access to information. For example in Colombia, with 3.5 million people displaced, data is not desegregated by age and older people 'are almost completely absent in policy and programmes by governments and NGOs' (Help Age International, 2009b). Responses to the needs of older people has often been developed in terms of 'service delivery' which rarely embraces an advocacy role. New responses need to embrace advocacy as a key vehicle for improving both policy and practice.

"Some cars come by and just threw the packets (of relief aid). The fastest get the food, the strong one wins. The elderly and the injured don't get anything. We feel like dogs" (Perumal, India, aged 75).

"Staff at the district hospital made older people wait longer than younger patients. They said it was a waste of time seeing older people. We arranged to meet the medical office in charge. Since the meeting health staff have treated older people with some respect" (Mukima, Kenya, aged 76).

In Bangladesh, Abdul Rab still works as a bicycle rickshaw puller at the age of 82: 'I am still fit enough. I use my wages to pay for family expenses such as rice and clothing. I also pay for one of my grandchildren's education, as her father is dead' (Help Age International, 2009a). Across the world, in Ireland and elsewhere, older people are making an invaluable contribution to society. 40-60 per cent of orphaned children in Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Namibia are cared for by their grandmothers while in Mozambique, where older people make up 5.4 per cent of the population, they care for 54 per cent of orphaned children (Help Age International, 2007b). However these same older people are invisible when it comes to allocating resources in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Their contribution goes largely unrecognised and their issues are rarely included in political debates or development plans. The general view that older people do not really matter is pervasive. Migrant policy in most countries fails to recognise those left behind, the most vulnerable older people and children. And the UN Programme on Ageing has a staff of just four (Help Age International, 2007b:4). A study by Help Age International (Help Age International, 2009c) showed that treaty bodies tasked with monitoring how human rights conventions are implemented rarely ask countries to observe the rights of older people in their review.: 'The special rapporteurs and independent experts whose role it is to examine specific rights or geographical areas have failed to consider older men and women in their work' (ibid.:5). Older people also remain invisible in the new Universal Periodic Review system, where every UN member state reports to the Rights Council on its human rights record:

"It is important that we tell the society we exist as individuals and as members of the society. Many forgot about us: people that we used to work with, newspaper sellers, children from the neighbourhood. Only through our active participation...can we tell them that we are here and we work for ourselves as well as for other people and other generations" (Help Age International, 2007a).

### **Implications for development**

The global phenomenon of ageing requires international, national and local action. 'In an increasingly interconnected world, failure to deal with this demographic imperative and rapid changes...in a rational way in any part of the world will have socio-economic and political consequences everywhere (WHO, 2002)'. With older people immediately increasing as a major population cohort, their contribution to development, through their cultural, political,



professional and social wisdom and skills can make a major impact on developing to a globe for all ages.

Global research indicates that poverty among older people is high, and with growing numbers, this will be a critical element for governments, donors and aid agencies in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and in particular MDG 1 – the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. Because of poverty and limited economic security in older age, more than 70 per cent of older men and around 40 per cent of older women in the least developed countries continue to be economically active, mainly in the informal sector. Many lack access to basic services such as pensions, health, water and sanitation. Many are illiterate, do not have identity papers in place or face tremendous barriers to accessing their entitlements. Older people are often excluded from decision-making processes because of their age, gender, ethnicity and class. In addition, people can suffer overlapping forms of discrimination throughout their life course which influence their lack of opportunities and advantages in old age.

### **Poverty of older people compared to other age groups**

There needs to be an acknowledgement by governments, donors and aid agencies that global poverty reduction, and the goals in relation to these, cannot be achieved without recognising older people as (a) proportionately the poorest social grouping and (b) a uniquely vulnerable and rapidly expanding group. They also cannot be achieved without changing the way data is collected on the older cohort. The failure to recognise older people, such as in the collection of data on HIV/AIDS, has enormous implications. This is not collected for people over 49 years of age, resulting in the exclusion of older people to any kind of response and directly discriminating against them (Help Age International, 2009c). The MDGs and the majority of development interventions are ‘old age-blind’. For example, MDG progress indicators are not desegregated by age group, although age-specific targets do exist:

“While the MDGs have specific targets on children and youth, they are silent on the issues of age, disability and ethnicity...If the MDGs are to deliver fair and equitable development that reaches the very poorest, they can no longer ignore the unprecedented demographic change that is presently taking place” (Help Age International, 2008).

Solutions overall have to be developed at both strategic international and national levels – Social Protection and a Convention on the Rights of Older People - as well as practically at local and programme levels. Aid agencies and governments can play key roles in making a difference to a just and equitable world which centrally includes older people.

## Action points and strategic solutions

There are many action points that can be taken at a practical or programme level, within organisations, governments and communities. Some are listed below:

- **Promote intergenerational initiatives.** Encouraging and facilitating such initiatives promote mutual, productive exchange between generations, focussing on older people as a resource and making more visible the interdependence between generations. Such initiatives can combat prejudice, challenge ageist stereotyping and provide mutually pro-active exchanges so that wisdom gained can be transferred across generations. Intergenerational work can also bring a sense of equal value and solidarity across the generations and promote strong community and social cohesion.
- **Review your base line and monitoring databases.** How visible are people over the age of 60? How much are the needs and interests of older people visible in databases and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms?
- **Review the Madrid Action Plan on Aging.** Use the Action Points (United Nations, 2002:S11 Recommendations) to adapt and adjust policy and practice to include the visible and structured inclusion of older people
- **Identify the tools used and needed in increasing visibility of ageing communities.** Explore the types of tools needed, such as guidelines or age proofing mechanisms, to increase recognition of the contribution of aged people to an organisation's policy and practice. Link in with agencies experienced in working with older people, such as Help Age International, Age Action Ireland, Active Citizenship Groups in Ireland for guidance and inspiration.
- **Recognise how ageism is at work at your agency, both organisationally and operationally.** How much of the policies and practice in reality see older people as a 'burden' and not as a 'resource'? Consider the

language used: ‘older people’, ‘seniors’, ‘elders’ versus ‘the aged’ and any other language which has connotations of ‘the other’. Promote a development approach that is focused on active ageing, and bring positive images of active citizenship into the organisation confronting negative ageist stereotyping.

- ***Work with governments.*** Bring the social protection needs of older people centre stage in responses focused on poverty by working with agencies such as Help Age international to inform the debate on older people.
- ***Support the adoption of A Convention on the Rights of Older People.*** Link in to agencies promoting the strengthening the international mechanisms which ensure the inclusion of older people in global development.

## Conclusion

Inadequate participation and visibility of older people in development policy making, and lack of structured mechanisms to allow older people to participate in development discourse will continue to slow down the building of societies which are relevant for, and inclusive of, all ages. Aid agencies and governments alike need to move beyond attitudes of older people as passive beneficiaries to seeing them as active and aware agents of change. Changing the views of older people from recipients of charity to individuals with rights, knowledge, power and expertise will increase respect for older people and will improve the relationships between generations. Discrimination against any group in society is unacceptable. As the world experiences rapid population ageing, the pressure to discriminate against older people is likely to intensify; therefore does the imperative to address such discrimination. Respecting people’s rights results in better development, since respect, dignity and representation underpin good development practice and ultimately promote strong community cohesion.

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# Resource reviews

## WHY IT'S TIME TO LOOK TO LATIN AMERICA

**Stephen McCloskey**

Peadar Kirby, in his article 'Latin America: the region that Ireland forgot' bemoans the 'astonishing neglect of the region by the Irish state, by Irish civil society and by the Irish private sector right down to the present day'. 'This disinterest', he said, 'is mirrored throughout education and in the Irish media, further reinforcing the marginalisation of Latin America in the Irish consciousness' (Kirby, 2008). According to Kirby, evidence of this institutional neglect includes Irish Aid directing a 'miserly part of its resources to the region' and the government opening just three embassies south of the Rio Grande compared to programmes in Africa and Asia. A major incentive in addressing these disconnects between Ireland and Latin America, suggests Kirby, is that 'there is arguably no region of the world whose development has so paralleled that of Ireland and from which we have so much to learn'. There has hardly been a better time for bridging that gap given the depth of crisis besieging the Irish economy and the collapse of public trust in the model of development that underpinned the so-called Celtic Tiger. For many development practitioners in Ireland and the global North, Latin America has become a focus of serious analysis and a source of inspiration given its effective experimentation with and implementation of new paradigms of development that reject the failed orthodoxy of the neo-liberal ethos which arguably spawned the global recession in 2008.

Latin America is shedding its role as history's perennial loser. In his book *What if Latin America Ruled the World? How the South will take the North into the 22<sup>nd</sup> Century*, Guardiola-Rivera offers a fascinating, if at times frustrating, reflection on the region's history and contemporary social movements. He speculates on a future 'United States of Latin America' when it is predicted that Latinos will be the largest ethnic group in the United States. This is not a conventional history of the region but rather a challenge of the revisionist version of the origins of globalisation and Latin America's part in that process.

From the book's reflections on pre-Colombian Amerindian societies to its outline of the popular social movements of today there emerges a clear sense

of the value of common ownership and sustainable stewardship of the natural environment. It also questions the accepted wisdom of political theorists and commentators that the purpose of governments is ostensibly to provide security and protection. Drawing upon evidence found in Peru and elsewhere in Latin America, it appears that in their earliest forms, governments in the region operated on the basis of an ‘exchange that seems to have arisen from collective and spiritual good, made concrete in society-wide efforts to create and sustain the commons rather than to defend ourselves from others and from one another’.

What really propels the text are historical vignettes employed to contextualise and deepen our understanding of key episodes in the various stages of globalisation. These vignettes often revolve around central figures in each period from both sides of the historical coin: the agents of trade and conquest and those who resisted and envisaged another world. We are thus introduced to the Inca ruler Atahualpa who tried to satiate the Spanish appetite for gold and realised it was bottomless; there was also a look at his nemesis Francisco Pizarro, the ‘founder of Lima’.

What emerges from this period of conquest is a definition of societies by commodity: Peru, Mexico and Bolivia were silver; Brazil and Colombia were gold; for Venezuela it was cacao; Chile was identified with copper; and the Caribbean with sugar. Thus ‘the story of globalisation was invented in Latin America during the sixteenth century, on the back of the appearance of the “first world money”: the silver peso’. As ‘rivers of silver’ were mined by ‘a massive influx and sacrifice of labour’, the currency that propelled the global market in commodities, the silver peso, was supplied by Latin America. A staggering 150,000 tons of silver was sourced to ‘Spanish America’ between 1500 and 1800.

Indigenous labour was quickly consumed by the global trade in commodities which necessitated the ‘forced migration of Africans to the New World’. Between the late 15<sup>th</sup> and late 19<sup>th</sup> centuries an estimated 12.4 million slaves were transported across the Atlantic to hundreds of delivery points. As the continent’s towering military and political leader, Simón Bolívar suggested, Latin America has been left ‘in a sort of permanent infancy’ deprived even of ‘active tyranny because we are prohibited from serving it as functionaries’. While the continent was rich in resources, its people were at best ‘simple consumers, clogged with repressive restrictions’ and unable to engage in its own commerce, forced to remain as a commodity reserve for European avarice.

Bolívar's successful military struggle for independence and liberation of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama and Venezuela is largely ignored by the author who in this study is more interested in *El Libertador's* political vision as articulated in his *Letter from Jamaica* (1815), described as 'one of most important foundational documents in Latin American history'. In the letter, Bolívar presents his rationale for revolution and a 'call for regional and global unity against all empires, present or still in the future'. The author curiously ignores Bolívar's legacy to the continent, particularly as embraced by Hugo Chávez's Bolivarian revolution and its mission of helping to unite Latin America and create an independent identity free from the hegemony and influence of the empire to the North. In fact, Chávez warrants just three references (and others like Fidel Castro just six) with the author's contemporary gaze fixed more upon recent events in Bolivia and Brazil.

Guardiola-Rivera devotes most of the second-half of the book to the 20<sup>th</sup> century's 'dark night of neo-liberalism' resulting from Washington's direct and in-direct intervention in the continent both in militaristic and economic forms. The United States' (US) Cold War position to Latin America was summed up by Henry Kissinger when he said of Chile after Allende's election in 1970: 'I don't see why we need to stand by and watch a country go communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people'.

But in the post-Cold War era we have seen a re-awakening of the Bolivarian vision for Latin America that has been robust enough to rebuff a seemingly 'business-as-usual' approach to hemispheric relations from the United States. The book points to the 1994 Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico and to the struggles against water privatisation in Bolivia in 2000 as examples of new social 'liberationist' movements based on community needs and part of an historical lineage of resistance. These examples underscore the author's view that 'for all the conventional wisdom about "global solutions for global problems", actually where you live is where you take a stand'.

But what of the continent's always problematic relations with Washington? Guardiola-Rivera gives due attention to the thorny issue of the rights of migrants in the US and their struggle for recognition and decriminalisation against the political forces of the right. However, he finds comfort in the growing number of Americans describing themselves as Hispanic; 35.3 million in the 2000 census, a rise of nearly 60 per cent. The author argues that the 'steady rise in the Latino population, coupled with a slow

but steady increase in the Latino vote, will have dramatic consequences for the political future of America’.

The question though is whether a projected Latino majority in the US by 2040 is likely to be translated into an improvement in living conditions and access to political decision-making. The author argues that more Latino members of the Democrats will radicalise the party and strengthen the call for more socialised housing, healthcare and education. However, one is bound to speculate if African-Americans have become more empowered and feel less politically marginalised under Barack Obama. Would a Latino president or more Latino votes bring the kind of political and economic change needed to reach what remains a largely marginalised social group? Given the big claims made for a ‘Latino States of America’, these questions need to be more thoroughly considered.

The author is right, however, to point to the impact of globalisation on Latin America in the last century when it was the experiment laboratory of the neo-liberal programmes of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Many of the leading economies in Latin America have consequently rejected neo-liberalism and are faring better than the global North in the current recession. The rest of the world needs to heed the warnings from Latin America about curbing international capital and rejecting the dogmas of the free market. The rejection of the old economic order has enabled many Latin American countries to take charge of their own destinies and resources and chart their own course for development. This is a timely message which the world, and particularly Ireland, should take note.

Guardiola-Rivera has offered us a very accessible, reflective, challenging and encouraging text which performs an important service in challenging stereotypes originating in the global North on the true nature and capacity of Latin America’s pre-Colombian origins and the continent’s role in the history of globalisation. However, while not short in ambition, the book’s structure is too loose and its content too uneven to represent a completely convincing and holistic story of the region’s economic development. The role of the church as an abetter of colonialism is largely absent here together with an examination of gender and the impact of globalisation on women in particular. The contemporary picture outside Bolivia and Brazil is largely ignored, most especially the Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela and the revolution in Cuba now in its sixth decade.



The book is a series of light snacks rather than an appetising meal and is not likely to get a reader from one side of an exam to another, or to textually lead a course. However, it is warmly recommended to those who want to locate contemporary change in Latin America in an historical context and to open their minds to a vital continent still largely ignored in mainstream Irish society.

While Hugo Chávez is very much on the margins of *What if Latin America Ruled the World?*, he is centre stage in Oliver Stone's documentary *South of the Border*. This is Agitprop film-making designed to counter the brazen, irresponsible and highly damaging coverage of Latin America by networks like Fox and CNN which have undisguised conservative agendas and interests. Stone's film begins with examples of reportage from both networks that resort to the personal and ludicrous to question Chávez's fitness for office. These attacks point to concerns in Washington at the emerging influence of Chávez as the hub of a new progressive, leftist hegemony in the continent that refuses to bend to Washington's influence. Evidence of this new hegemony is found in ALBA (*Alternativa Bolivariana para las Américas*), a socially-oriented trading block alternative to the US-sponsored Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Another new structure, Banco del Sur (Bank of the South) is a monetary fund and lending institution that aims to challenge the insidious influence of the IMF and World Bank, the architects of Third World debt.

Stone's film does not explore the ideological underpinnings of Bolivarianism or the history of Washington's engagement with the region in any depth.. His movie settles into a succession of interviews with the leaders of the seven countries most associated with the Bolivarian project - Bolivia's Evo Morales; Argentina's Cristina Kirchner (along with her late husband, former president Néstor Kirchner); Brazil's former President Lula da Silva; Cuba's Raúl Castro; Ecuador's Rafael Correa; and Paraguay's Fernando Lugo. Stone's questioning is light and his analysis shallow although some weightier observations are made by the film's co-writer Tariq Ali who appears as a witness. But the overall tone eschews the more methodical interrogating style of, say, John Pilger and aims for a more casual and often highly engaging form of conversation.

If the teacher or learner is looking for a resource that will provide a rounded history of the US' involvement in Latin America, then seek out Pilger's excellent *The War on Democracy*, his 2007 award-winning documentary; or Naomi Klein's *The Shock Doctrine* (2007) based on her book of the same title. However, one suspects that Stone's less studied, off-hand approach filled with

engaging personal cameos of heads of state may find a larger audience than the works of Pilger and Klein.

The movie was made during the transition between the Bush and Obama administrations so it does not present any views on how US-Latin America relations have changed under the latter. However, ex-President Lula ends the film by suggesting that Obama should do three things upon taking office: end the US blockade of Cuba; invite President Chávez to the White House; and work toward peace in the Middle East. On the basis of these criteria, Obama's presidency has thus far been a disappointment and very much in tandem with the positions of previous administrations to the region.

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## *EDUCATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE: LIVING AND LEARNING IN INTERESTING TIMES*

By David Selby & Fumiyo Kagawa

### Review by John Barry

This is an extremely timely volume which takes the dominant global political issue of the day - climate change (with the exception of the current economic crisis) - and examines it from the point of view of education and learning. It brings together 12 chapters (of varying quality it has to be said, but containing some outstanding and important contributions) and includes an impressive range of authors, impressive not only in their intellectual standing in the field, but also being a genuinely global range of authors, many of whom are also active outside the classroom on civil society and political activities on climate change and sustainability issues.

Topics covered range from: the centrality of 'climate injustice' as a central element of climate change education (Lotz-Sisitika, chapter 4); the contribution of anti-racist education (Sefa Dei, chapter 5); the connection between citizenship education and practice (Davies & Pitt, chapter 7); faith and interfaith educational and learning experience, and the importance of values as well as scientific facts (Toh & Cawagas, chapter 10); public health (Richardson & Wade, chapter 11); emergency/post-disaster education (Kagawa, chapter 6); adult and lifelong learning (Clover and Hall, chapter 9); the centrality of systems, ecological and emotionally-based thinking (Reed, chapter 8); the direct questioning of dominant understandings of 'development' and consumerism (González-Gaudiano & Meira-Cardesa, chapter 1); and the difficult process of preparing people for economic contraction and energy descent as inevitable consequences of successfully dealing with climate change (Selby, chapter 2). An innovative, enjoyable and informative feature of the book is that the editors asked contributors to include scenarios at the end of their chapters, either depicting how social learning may happen in a context of runaway climate change or in a context where the climate threat is being dealt with (2010:6).

Kagawa's chapter also echoes this theme of 'hope' as a key dimension of education in the context of and in relation to climate change. As she puts it, '[c]ultivating a sense of hope becomes particularly important especially when life will be full of incremental and slow decline...as well as the sudden onset of

extreme weather-related disasters' (2010:117). As someone only too familiar with the often depressing and negative empirical evidence for the worsening global ecological crisis and climate change in particular (I sometimes find myself looking for either a bottle of whiskey, a razorblade or a holy book at times!), her call for making hope central is important, as is her (and other contributors to this volume, Davies & Pitt, in Selby & Kagawa, 2010:138) recognition that learning about climate change is not an 'intellectual issue' alone, but can raise psycho-social needs (2010:117) and expose vulnerabilities that need to be attended. This is particularly important when one also considers the important point Selby makes in pointing out the inconvenient truth of climate change as 'a crisis arising from a disconnect from the web of life, especially among privileged populations and hence, *a crisis of exploitation and violence coupled with denial*' (2010:38; emphasis added).

It is also clear that the current formal institutions of education and learning (schools and universities) are not 'fit for purpose' for life and learning in a climate changed world. Different contributors suggest ideas of more 'active forms of learning': engaged and place-based research and learning, i.e. active 'doing'; acting and participating as well as passively receiving knowledge; and an emphasis on informal networks of 'communities of learners' (2010:8). Such education and learning in the context of climate change needs to be thoroughly interdisciplinary and integrate a variety of knowledges, including indigenous and non-Western and non-scientific knowledges, experiences and practices.

All in all, this book makes an important contribution to our understanding of the multidimensional problem of climate change as the dominant issue of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is inevitable that we are in a world affected by climate change and at the beginning of the end of the fossil fuel age. As this volume eloquently points out, education and learning in their widest senses are central to help us cope with these inevitable transitions, if we are to 'manage' that transition and create a sustainable low carbon, high well-being livelihoods for all people on the planet. As one of the contributors (Reed, chapter 8) quotes from Mathew Fox: 'Our species is at a crossroads. Time is running out. We must re-invent the way we are living on earth. Education and learning are a deep and essential part of this change' (2010:141). The editors rightly also note that '[e]ducation can only help allay a threatening condition by addressing root causes' (Selby & Kagawa, 2010:242). And this brings to mind a (hopefully helpful) and evocative way to sum up the challenge and opportunities ahead in relation to climate change and this is that if there are 'automatic' or 'technological' solutions - they will require action, mobilisation

and agency on behalf of citizens across the planet. And it will require major political, economic, and deeper and more difficult cultural and psychological change. The evocative phrase that sums up the challenge and opportunity of climate change and also this book, is the slogan of the Industrial Workers of the World in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century which is perhaps even more relevant today: 'Educate, agitate, organise'.

Kagawa, F & Selby, D (eds.) (2010) *Education and Climate Change: Living and Learning in Interesting Times*, Routledge, London.

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