

# Focus

## ‘THE AUTHORITY OF A LIVED EXPERIENCE’: AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDY VISITS AS A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR POST-PRIMARY DEVELOPMENT EDUCATORS

The Irish development agency Trócaire’s post-primary development education (DE) programme involves the participation of teachers and students in thirty schools on the island of Ireland. Each year participants engage with a specific human rights or development issue, raise awareness and promote action within their community. Teachers perceive involvement as particularly beneficial in engendering student interpersonal, communication, presentation and media literacy skills. However, they also find teaching about complex development issues challenging. In 2007 Trócaire restructured the DE programme, with the inclusion of a study or ‘exposure’ visit to one of the organisation’s programme countries in the ‘developing’ world, thus placing greater emphasis on teacher professional development. In this article, **Mella Cusack** and **Aoife Rush** set out the main research findings from two study visits involving eighteen post-primary teachers from both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in 2008 and 2009. The article discusses findings relating to the effectiveness of short term study visits as a professional development opportunity; the changes in teacher understandings of development towards perspectives emphasising the interdependency and complexity of issues; and the impact of the study visit on classroom practice. The authors articulate the need for longitudinal research into the impact of teacher study visits as a means of assessing the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as teacher education providers, particularly relevant in the current context of contracting state-funded continuing professional development opportunities.

### Introduction

Trócaire was established in 1973 as the official overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland. The organisation currently has 127 programmes across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. Trócaire’s mandate includes awareness raising and mobilisation of the public (Ireland and internationally) to achieve changes in policies, programmes and behaviours which impact on poverty and injustice. To this end the organisation’s Education Unit aims to embed development education (DE) across all education sectors. Trócaire defines DE as ‘an active and creative process which facilitates

critical thinking in relation to global inequality and engages with a variety of perspectives'. This understanding is informed by the 'values of solidarity, participation, perseverance, courage and accountability'. DE is 'built on awareness, analysis, reflection and action for justice and change' (Trócaire, 2009).

Trócaire's post-primary DE programme was established in 2003 and currently involves thirty schools on the island of Ireland. Each academic year participating teachers and students engage with a specific human right/development issue, raise awareness and promote action within their community (Smith, 2007). Schools are provided with case studies and country statistics and students are involved in media literacy, presenting and campaigning training. A visitor from one of Trócaire's programme countries also visits schools, giving insights into their lives, work and country. In some schools the DE programme is run on an extra-curricular basis, with senior cycle peace and justice groups meeting to plan and execute their campaign projects. In other contexts the programme has been allocated a dedicated time period in Transition Year or is delivered through complimentary curricular areas, such as religious education, geography, economics or civic, social and political education (CSPE).

In 2005 a small-scale survey found that participating teachers perceive involvement in the programme as particularly beneficial in engendering student interpersonal, communication, presentation and media literacy skills. However, a number of teachers pointed out that the complexity of the themes of focus, combined with the action-orientated nature of participating young people and of the structure of the programme itself, at times resulted in a superficial engagement with the development themes (Cusack, 2005). It was obvious that those best placed to bridge student's 'knowledge gap' are the teachers themselves. However, the teachers surveyed in 2005 indicated that they sometimes found it difficult to teach about complex development issues. This echoes findings from research carried out by Gleeson, et al. (2007) into the development education levels of knowledge, attitudes and activism in post-primary schools which found that teachers' knowledge of development and aid issues was 'quite low'. Only 18 per cent regarded themselves as well informed about 'Third World issues'. Despite this, 'their sense that they value and engage with development education is quite high' (Gleeson, et al., 2007:27-28, 60).

In 2007 Trócaire restructured the DE programme placing greater emphasis on teacher professional development. A study visit to one of the

organisation's programme countries in the 'developing' world was integrated into year two of the three year cycle of involvement for participating schools, to provide teachers with 'a firsthand learning experience about another country' (UNICEF, 1995). Trócaire recognises teachers as key multipliers who could benefit from 'exposure' or 'study' visits. The study visits are therefore motivated by a desire to equip key multipliers with the knowledge, skills and confidence to be effective development educators. Over the course of their careers participating teachers potentially impact on large numbers of students, communicating how development happens, what works or does not work in development, how financial contributions are spent and why a long term, human rights based approach to development is needed.

Trócaire staff also hoped that the professional development opportunities provided in the restructured DE programme would facilitate a greater sense of ownership amongst participating teachers. Supported by teaching/learning materials, teachers would then be able to facilitate the annual programme – training, research, campaigning and hosting the visitor – with less direct support from Education Officers. As participating schools progress through the three-year cycle of involvement they would therefore become increasingly self-sustaining.

This article begins with a summary of the literature relating to short term study visits and the research methodologies employed in two study visits involving eighteen practising post-primary teachers from both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, organised by Trócaire in 2008 and 2009. Findings and recommendations related to study visits as a professional development opportunity; the changes in teacher understandings of development towards perspectives emphasising the interdependency and complexity of issues; and, the impact of the study visit experience on classroom practice are discussed throughout.

## **Literature review**

The first decade of the twentieth-first century saw a rapid increase in the pace of overseas 'linking' from Ireland. The term 'linking' encompasses a range of possible contacts between people, from non-travelling to immersion activities. Although a number of guides for organisations involved in linking have been produced, only a limited amount of research has been carried out tracking the impact of linking on organising institutions, Irish

participants/volunteers or on partner participants/host personnel (UNICEF, 1995; Comhlámh, 2005; O’Keeffe, 2006; DICE, 2009).

The development education community in Ireland, led by the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA), has initiated a much needed debate about the relative advantages of engaging in linking activities (IDEA, 2007). Until now this debate has tended to focus on identifying good practice in post-primary sector school-to-school linking but has not yet emphasised the need to interrogate linking activities specifically targeting teachers in initial teacher education (short term voluntary placements usually organised by the teacher education provider) or in continuing professional development settings (short term study visits usually organised by a non-governmental organisation).

Limited literature on short-term volunteering placements by primary and pre-service student teachers is available. This research highlights that international cross-cultural experiences, which adhere to recognised good practice, can impact upon participants, their intercultural understandings, and the content and methodologies which they subsequently employ in their teaching (Willard-Holt, 2001; Purves et al, 2005; Martin, 2008; and, O’Dwyer, 2009). However, there continues to be a marked absence of research into the impacts and effectiveness of short-term visits by practicing post-primary teachers to the global South. This article represents an attempt to begin to fill this research gap.

## **Research methodology**

The first study visit process organised by Trócaire involved a residential training session in January 2008, an eleven-day stay in Malawi in February, and a debrief meeting in April 2008. In keeping with Trócaire’s 2008 Lenten Campaign the study visit had a climate-change focus. A researcher (the first author) attended the pre- and post-events and accompanied the eleven participating post-primary teachers and two members of Trócaire’s Education Unit during the study visit. The research element aimed to produce a collaborative record of the experiences of participating teachers and inform good practice in future study visits.

The second study visit process involved a residential training session in October 2009, a week long stay in Zimbabwe at the end of October, and a debrief meeting in February 2010. This study visit had a broader focus than the first, involving visits to projects representing a cross-section of Trócaire’s work

with partner organisations. The researcher attended the pre-event and worked with the Education Officer (the second author) to integrate a research element across the Zimbabwean schedule.

This article draws upon findings detailed in a research report on the first study visit. The article includes quantitative baseline/profiling data but, in keeping with the experiential nature of the study visit, emphasises qualitative findings. Final reports from the eleven participants involved in the first study visit together with outputs from the participatory video (PV) employed on the two study visits, photography, observational notes, extracts from reflective journals, and three semi-structured interviews with Trócaire staff, constitute the qualitative elements of the research process.

### **Study visit destinations**

Malawi and Zimbabwe were chosen as study visit venues for a number of reasons. Trócaire has been working in Malawi since the late 1990s and in Zimbabwe since the early 1970s. The choice of Malawi for the first study visit meant that the pilot process encompassed an element of North-South reciprocity, with the teachers first welcoming a number of Malawians from Trocaire's partner organisations to their schools during the 2007 Gender Equality Lenten campaign. A determining factor in deciding on study visit destinations is the willingness of Trócaire's staff and partners on the ground to facilitate and engage with the group and their capacity to deal with the logistical implications of short term study visits.

### **Study visit participants**

In total eighteen post-primary teachers took part in the two study visit processes. Good practice in the organisation of study visits demands that they are part of a multi-dimensional, experiential learning process. The pre-training and debrief events are necessary for the avoidance of an experience which otherwise could engender or reinforce negative stereotypes or a charity-based approach to development. Eleven teachers participated in the first study visit process and seven in the second. The decrease in participant numbers was a direct result of a recommendation from the first research report which found that too high numbers of participants posed additional logistical challenges.

The majority of the eighteen participants are female (n=12; 66.7 per cent). Four are under thirty years old (n=4; 22.2 per cent); eight are between

thirty-one and forty (n=8; 44.4 per cent); three are between forty-one and fifty (n=3; 16.7 per cent) and the remaining three are over fifty-one years old (n=3; 16.7 per cent). They are all experienced teachers, with all except four having taught for more than five years. Ten currently teach religious education as their main subject but other subject areas include, in order of teaching hours, English, CSPE, history, geography, music, French, mathematics, computer studies, leaving certificate applied (LCA), social and environmental studies (ESS), resource learning support and learning for life and work.

Four (22.2 per cent) of the study visit participants are based in schools in Dublin, three (16.7 per cent) are based in Cork, two (18.2 per cent) in Waterford and two (18.2 per cent) in Meath. The remaining participants from the Republic are based in Mayo (n=1; 5.6 per cent) and Sligo (n=1; 5.6 per cent). The five participants from Northern Ireland teach in schools in Armagh (n=2; 11.1 per cent), Tyrone (n=2; 11.1 per cent) and Down (n=1; 5.6 per cent).

Most teachers in the two study visit groups have experience in teaching development issues and all expressed a belief in the value of development/human rights education.

“I have always been very interested in human rights education and social justice, and really believe it is so important to educate our young people in these issues”.

Of the eighteen participants, ten have been involved in Trócaire’s DE programme for more than two years, five since its inception in 2003. The remaining eight participants included five from Northern Ireland, where the programme is less developed. Through involvement in the programme, teachers and their students have addressed a range of development issues, each year focusing on a particular country.

Academic Year	Country	Theme
2003/4	Rwanda	Genocide
2004/5	Ethiopia	Millennium Development Goals
2005/6	Nicaragua	Child labour
2006/7	Malawi	Gender equality
2007/8	Kenya	Climate change
2008/9	various	People displaced as a result of Conflict
2009/10	Rwanda	Global poverty and hunger

## Impact on classroom practice and beyond

Engagement in a well-planned study visit process should provide teachers with opportunities to network and share information, explore topics of common interest, experience ‘immersion in enquiry’, and ‘engage in the kinds of learning that they are expected to practise with their students’ (Boyle, et al., 2004:48). At the pre-study visit training events teachers spoke about their expectations and highlighted the interconnectedness of personal and professional development. One participant talked about the expected impact on their capacity to be a good parent, while another stated that their ‘world has narrowed because [of] concentrating on family’. The teachers also articulated an expectation that the visit would allow valuable time ‘to reflect on their own professional practice’ (Purves, et al., 2005:546).

### *Learning from other practitioners*

Many participants highlighted the ‘nature and dynamic of the group’ as a professional development opportunity integral to the study visit. Most teachers subsequently reported that expectations regarding group dynamic were fulfilled, with membership described as enjoyable, social and educational. Subject diversity was perceived as an enriching factor in terms of group bonding and in broadening the learning from the study visit experience. One participant commented, ‘I enjoyed finding out the names of the various plants and flowers native to Malawi from [another participant] who is a biology teacher’.

Having diversity within the group was seen to bring a variety of perspectives through which participants viewed the study visit experience. The subject mix provided an opportunity for teachers to learn from professionals beyond their own school, about curricular areas outside of their own sphere of expertise. This type of professional development opportunity is one which seldom arises for post-primary educators.

There was a consensus that inclusion of practitioners from both educational jurisdictions on the island of Ireland was beneficial and ‘energising’ for all. A further advantage of an all-island model was the opportunity to compare education systems, north and south of the border, the opportunity to ‘learn from other educational cultures,’ that of the destination country and also the system across the border (Purves, et al., 2005:546). Participants specifically referred to the opportunity to learn about different education systems and educational approaches as a context within which they would re-examine and re-engage with their own professional world in a more confident way. One teacher

felt that the opportunity to share with professionals from other jurisdictions had the effect of deepening knowledge and awareness of, not just the ‘other’, but also their own education system. The emphasis which participants placed on this aspect of their experience highlights the need for short term study visits to facilitate contact with and between peer groups, ensuring, insofar as is possible, compatibility, shared understandings and equality of relationships.

Since reactions and support from family, friends and work colleagues can vary widely the network created by participation in the study visit is very important in the immediate aftermath of the study visit (UNICEF, 1995:47). Continued communication between group members can help to ease the transition process. Ongoing discussion is an opportunity to voice contradictory feelings and discuss impact and reception of new knowledge and experiences in both a personal and professional sense. Participants need to express or share their reflections in the company of those they journeyed with.

Structured post-meetings are a crucial element in the study visit process. Several participants mentioned the importance of the debrief session as a means of ‘keeping the experience alive’. In line with internationally recognised good practice post-visit debriefings should allocate adequate time and space for sharing and reflection (Comhlámh, 2006:3; UNICEF, 1995:47).

### *Emotional impact and behavioural changes*

The post-visit teacher reports from the first study visit included references to a catalogue of unforeseen impacts and changes both emotional and behavioural. Towards the end of their time in Malawi some participants began to realise that ‘implementing ideas engendered by the visit may not be straightforward’ (Purves, et al., 2005:547). It is clear that upon return a number of participants experienced significant shifts in their perception of lifestyles and societal values. They experienced a type of transitional state where they struggled to find a balance between integrating the study visit experience into their own personal/professional lives and integrating back into their usual daily routines. One participant commented, ‘since I returned reflecting has been constant and an effort was made to try to find some resolution to problems which arose – finding answers in one’s head’.

The transition, or period of ‘reverse culture shock’, was at times very emotional for the study visit teachers (Comhlámh, 2006:1). Several participants mentioned feeling increased levels of awareness, guilt, disempowerment, anger and disgust about the excess availability of, and access to, resources in

Ireland. Unnecessary consumerism was singled out as a particularly distasteful characteristic of Irish society: ‘I am more conscious of the waste generated by all of us and how little appreciation our students have of their textbooks, equipment, etc.’; ‘I felt very angry when I came home, realising how badly the world is divided’.

Emotional responses to global poverty and injustice should not paralyse participants. Study visit participants need support as they ‘integrate’ back into their lives and organisers need to consider ways of channelling emotional energy into worthwhile, feasible educational enterprise. Otherwise there is a danger that participants will be caught up in ‘the tidal wave of global desperation’ and become apathetic about what it is that they can achieve in their personal and professional capacities.

Increased knowledge, firsthand experience of the affect of poverty and climate change on vulnerable populations, and the inventive solutions employed to overcome scarcity led a number of participants to radically change certain behaviours upon return:

“[I am] more aware of living in a self-sufficient way, something I have learned from Malawians who make everything they need. I have observed since my return how wasteful we are in our society. ...I have reduced the amount of ‘stuff’ (mainly unnecessary) that I buy. If I don’t need it, I don’t buy it”.

The sense of community in Malawi/Zimbabwe was often commented upon during and after the visits, and this also impacted on participants’ desire to engage more actively in local communities in Ireland:

“Being influenced by the strong sense of community, I have felt the urge to give something back to my own community. So from next week I will be volunteering at the homework club in the Immigrant Centre in [X] every Thursday”.

In the aftermath of the first study visit three teachers articulated a desire to return to Malawi or another developing world country for a more extended stay. One of these teachers immediately initiated contact with a Trócaire (Malawi) staff member and organised a month-long placement in a secondary school the following July. This unanticipated by-product of the study visit programme obviously has implications for Trócaire (Ireland), Trócaire’s overseas

staff, partner organisations and schools. There needs to be an appropriate strategy in place to ensure that placements of this nature are beneficial to all involved. Organisations involved in short-term study visits need to discuss whether placements are something which they wish to accommodate, taking security arrangements, logistics and additional workload into consideration. A clear message regarding volunteer placements can then be communicated to participating teachers considering this course of action.

### *Understanding of development education*

Most study visit participants had some development education experience before the visit. However, as one participant pointed out, teaching about complex issues like development, even over an extended period of time, does not mean that you ‘know enough about them’. The ever changing nature of development education as a field of study means that even the most experienced development educators can have certain ‘knowledge-gaps’ when it comes to development issues. Upon return most noted a furthering of knowledge combined with an increased sense of the complexities and scope of the challenges involved in overseas development.

Data from the first study visit provides an example of participants’ ‘knowledge gap’. The baseline survey indicated that teachers were not automatically making the connection between climate change and development. Participants’ understanding of climate change was dominated by a domestic focus, a lack of a sense of immediacy and urgency, and a focus on the environmental rather than societal, economic or cultural impacts of climate change. For some participants the visit was their first meaningful introduction to the topic of climate change:

“When Trócaire told me that the [DE Programme] this year was focusing on climate change, I was disappointed as I really wasn’t very knowledgeable about this topic. I had heard about it many times on the news but didn’t pay much attention...now it’s not just a concept but a real issue for millions of people...”

Post-visit teachers commented on a shift in understanding about climate change to encompass a more global focus and increased emphasis on the concept of interdependence. Understanding of climate change also merged with a social justice approach:

“As a result of climate change there are many knock-on effects. For example, drought means family members must walk further still in search of water. This can mean children fetching water instead of attending school, or can reduce the amount of time spent on farming”.

The most common alteration in perception was an increased sense of urgency. Before the visit, although aware of some of the implications of climate change, they had little direct experience of its impact: ‘In Ireland the term is used solely in connection with the weather to complain about a bad summer or an abnormally mild winter. In Malawi it’s about life and death’. The testimony of Malawians about changing weather patterns and the impact that these changes have wrought on their lives brought the issue of climate change to life for the teachers.

In their baseline questionnaires, most (n=16; 88.9 per cent) participants indicated that they expected the study visit to inform their teaching of development issues. Teachers saw the study visit as a ‘natural continuation of what I am doing in class’ and an opportunity to get firsthand experience to ‘challenge mainstream media portrayal of developing countries’, a chance to ‘make my teaching meaningful’. When discussing the aims of development education, the most commonly used word by participants was ‘awareness’: awareness of concepts like social justice, human rights and citizenship; awareness of inequalities; awareness of the interdependent nature of the world and how individual actions can contribute to positive/negative change locally and internationally. This emphasis is perhaps not surprising given involvement with the DE programme, which emphasises student awareness and ability to raise awareness in others through campaigning.

The teachers became increasingly convinced that DE should be a compulsory part of the post-primary curriculum because of the perceived interest levels of, and benefits for, young people and for society generally. The role of DE was seen as particularly important in the current climate of materialism characterised by media reportage on developing countries that emphasised a charity-approach and fund-raising as development solutions: ‘Irish teenagers are much too concerned with mobile phones and hair straighteners and MP3 players and it is a marvellous idea to take them outside their comfort zone once in a while’; ‘I think development education is crucial in Ireland as a way of moving us away from a sense of pity, towards a sense of what can we do to challenge systems that keep people in poverty’.

DE is important not just as a means of sharing the problems of the world but also as a way of celebrating ‘success stories’, ‘what has been achieved to date and what can be achieved when we get involved’. The emphasis on awareness-raising remains evident but, as a result of their experiences, teachers provided more concrete, action-orientated examples of how the aims of development education could be achieved.

### *Classroom practice*

When discussing barriers to the integration of the study visit experience into classroom practice, time was the most commonly cited constraint: ‘once back it is straight back to all the things that have piled up on us while we were away’.

The first study visit occurred in February which meant that teachers arrived back to school at a very busy period. This posed a constraint in terms of what was realistic for them to achieve in that school year and was particularly an issue for those with exam classes. As a result of a subsequent research recommendation the second study visit occurred in October, mitigating some of the timing challenges which arose for the 2008 participants.

The study visits included visits to schools, disaster risk management/livelihoods security projects, feeding programmes, HIV/AIDS programmes, meetings with civil society groups, etc. Teachers therefore experienced a wide range of development terminology in action. Several respondents talked about the subsequent incorporation of ‘appropriate terms into my teaching’, something that they had not previously been positioned to do.

Both study visits involved in-depth discussion about the ethics of collecting visual evidence. All possible care was taken to reduce the risk of exposing local communities to any form of voyeurism. On returning from their visits teachers emphasised the power of images in portraying development issues to students:

“...the greatest challenge here was to communicate my experience in a way which reached my students. In the end it turned out to be far easier than I expected as the pictures, video and telling the story of our visit spoke for themselves”.

The emphasis which teachers placed on visual stimuli as a means of teaching about DE issues meant that the second study visit participants were specifically

trained and involved in the production of a video diary of their experiences which had immediate applicability in their classroom teaching.

After the study visits teachers recommenced work with their DE programme students. In 2008-2009 the focus was on climate change and in 2009-2010 on global poverty and hunger. Several participants specifically mentioned the benefit of the study visit experience for these young people:

“Before I went on the study visit they were not really working that well on the project, they seemed a bit apathetic. When I came back and shared my experience with them, the project just took off. They felt compelled to work at the project, after what they had heard from me”.

The general consensus was that an anecdotal approach to describing development led to richer learning outcomes for students:

“I know that being able to work without a textbook and to describe projects and communities that I visited has made my inputs more interesting. It’s concrete, and I feel that the students appreciate this”.

This growth in confidence to discuss development issues should not be underestimated. This is possibly the most significant professional development emanating from participation:

“...I can now teach from first hand experience and my word carries the authority of a lived experience. This has proved to be invaluable. It is not just somewhere out there, but the country that [X] was in and brought us back photographs and stories”.

Participants commented on the high levels of student engagement and curiosity about the study visit and the reality of life for people in Malawi/Zimbabwe. In one school students raised the topic in classes other than those taught by the participant:

“...colleagues have commented that students have brought up the visit in a variety of contexts in class discussions, reflecting the impact on their learning and understanding of development issues”.

## Conclusion

A recent European non-governmental organisation (NGO) survey on the status of DE in the formal education sector identified limited availability and insufficient levels and quality of teacher education (initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing professional development (CPD)) as the main challenge in member countries (DEF & DEEEP, 2009:23). In the Irish context the current fraught economic climate has meant a restructuring of the Second Level Support Service (SLSS) and a contraction of the professional development opportunities available to practising post-primary teachers. Although a decrease in Department of Education and Science CPD provision is obviously not a welcome development it may involve interesting opportunities for established NGOs, like Trócaire, which has been present within the post-primary system for over three decades. NGOs contributing to the provision of CPD for teachers, through a range of activities, including study visits, may find that their services are increasingly in demand. However, NGOs will need to lobby at a policy level to ensure enhanced recognition of their education remit as providers offering professional support and guidance, training for teachers and other education practitioners, and well researched curriculum and classroom resources. One of the most effective tools in lobbying policy makers will be evidence based research about the impact of this type of work.

An important recommendation from the 2008 and 2009 study visits organised by Trócaire is that research into study visits should be longitudinal. While impacts on classroom practice and beyond were evidenced in the months following the study visits it is unknown whether behaviour changes and altered professional practice will be sustained over time. As a result of this recommendation schools recruited to the DE programme in the 2009-2010 academic year are part of a four year longitudinal study which will track participating teachers/students from recruitment to 'graduated' status, including an investigation of the long term impact of the study visits. Findings from this process will inform the wider debate about effective measurement of development education and will also help to ensure that Trócaire continues to provide quality professional development opportunities for post-primary development educators.

## References

Boyle, B, White, D & Boyle, T (2004), 'A longitudinal study of teacher change: What makes professional development effective?' in *Curriculum Journal*, Vol. 15, pp. 45-68.

Comhlámh (2005) 'Code of Good Practice for Sending Organisations': <http://www.volunteeringoptions.ie>.

Comhlámh (2006) *The Coming Home Book*, Comhlámh, Dublin.

Cusack, M (2005) 'Survey of Trócaire's DE Programme teachers', unpublished internal document.

Cusack, M (ed.) (2009) 'Malawian Memories: Diary of a Study Visit', Trócaire/CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit, Dublin.

Development Education Forum (DEF) & Development Education Exchange in Europe Project (DEEEP) (2009) 'Development Education and the School Curriculum in the European Union: A report on the status and impact of development education in the formal education sector and school curriculum in member states of the European Union', DEEEP, Brussels.

Development and Intercultural Education Network (DICE) (2009) *Volunteering Charter: A charter for volunteer pre-service and practising teachers who wish to work in an educational context in countries of the Global South*, DICE, Dublin.

Gleeson, J, King, P, O'Driscoll, S & Tormey, R (2007) *Development Education in Irish Post-Primary Schools: Knowledge, Attitudes and Activism - Research Report*, funded by Irish Aid, Limerick.

Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) (2007) 'Linking and Immersion Schemes with the Global South: Developing Good Practice', IDEA conference report, IDEA, Dublin.

Martin, F (2008) 'Mutual learning: The impact of a study visit course on UK teacher's knowledge and understanding of global partnerships' in *Critical Literacy: Theories and Practices*, Vol. 2, 1, pp. 60-75.

O'Dwyer, F (2009) 'A Road Less Travelled: The impact of short-term volunteering in developing countries on Irish teachers in a social, emotional and professional capacity', paper presented at the annual DICE conference, February 2009, Dublin.

O'Keefe, C (2006) *Linking between Ireland and the South: Good Practice Guidelines for North/South Linking*, Irish Aid, Dublin.

Purves, R, Jackson, A & Shaughnessy, J (2005) 'A longitudinal study of teachers' professional development through an international exchange' in *Journal of Inservice Education*, Vol. 31,. 3.

Smith, J (2007) 'Development Education in Action: An examination of Trócaire's Development Education Senior Cycle Programme in the context of the formal education

sector', paper presented at Development's Futures Irish Aid Conference, National University of Ireland Galway, 24-25 November, Galway.

Trócaire (2009) 'Education Unit Strategy Plan 2009-2011', unpublished internal document.

UNICEF (1995) *Journeys into global understanding: Organizing a group visit to study development*, UNICEF, New York.

Willard-Holt, C (2001) 'The impact of short-term international experience for preservice teachers' in *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 17, 4, pp. 505-517.

**Mella Cusack** is Manager of the Citizenship Studies Project, a joint Trócaire/CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit initiative, which aims to inform and support the development of post-primary Citizenship Education. Prior to holding this position Mella spent two years working as Research Officer on the Education for Reconciliation Project and six years as a researcher in the field of early childhood/primary education with the University of Western Sydney (Australia). Mella lectures in initial teacher education and adult education programmes (Australian Catholic University, Trinity College Dublin, UCD and NCAD) and in continuing professional development programmes for teachers (through the Second Level Support Service).

**Aoife Rush** is a Trócaire Education Officer with responsibility for the co-ordination of the organisation's post-primary education programme Pamoja Kwa Haki (Together for Rights), a Human Rights/Development Education project for senior cycle students. This position involves the development of post-primary curriculum resources, the delivery of workshops on development issues and the organisation of overseas study visits for participating teachers. Previously, Aoife worked as a post-primary teacher where she taught business, French, maths and Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) for three years.