The Case for an All-Ireland Approach to International Development and Global Education

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Introduction

The international development sector and its sub-sector, global education, have come under greater scrutiny and financial pressure, both in Ireland and across the world, as the far-right has sought to displace multilateralism with national self-interest. This has been destabilising for the international development sector in the island of Ireland which has had to contend with the outworkings of the substantial cuts to the USAID budget (Sandefur and Kenny, 2025) and the steep reduction of overseas aid spending by the Labour government in Britain from 0.5 per cent of gross national income (GNI) to 0.3 per cent from 2027 (House of Commons Library, 2025). These cuts, of course, will have their severest impact on the partners of the United States (US) and British aid programmes in the global South, where many countries are also assessing the potential economic fallout from US tariffs imposed by the Trump administration that are targeting several low-income and highly vulnerable economies (Paz and Clarke, 2025). Meanwhile, Ireland's government and international non-governmental sector (Irish Aid, 2025; IDEA, 2022) continues to frame its policy objectives for international development in the context of the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN, 2025) which are deeply flawed (Alston, 2020) and completely off-track for delivery by their completion date of 2030 (UN, 2024: 2). Ireland's international development policy context is also deeply fractured by a partitioned island governed in the north by a devolved Assembly with no official remit or resources for overseas development assistance (ODA) or global education (NI Assembly, n.d.).

In the south of Ireland, the international development and global education sectors are severely under-funded with the ODA budget sitting around

half of the UN's 0.7 percent of GNI target for overseas aid agreed 55 years ago (OECD, 2024). This article considers the impact of partition on Ireland's international development and global education sectors and argues that an all-island approach would benefit development partners locally and globally. Rather than adhere to a flawed, neoliberal SDG-driven policy framework, an all-island international development policy could be solidaristic, empowering and transformative.

International Development in the north of Ireland

The international development sector in the north of Ireland has regularly found itself caught in a policy limbo between Dublin and London (McCann and McCloskey, 2024). While many of the international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) based in the north operate on a cross-border or East-West basis, they are normally headquartered in Dublin or London where resources, staff and policy formation are usually concentrated. Although a local Assembly was established by the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement in 1998 (NI Assembly, 1998), international development has been a reserved matter meaning that policy in this area remained in the purview of Westminster and was not devolved to Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA's). Similarly, global education, which is a sub-sector of international development with the aim of increasing public understanding of the root causes of poverty and inequality in Ireland, was not devolved to the local Assembly.

However, as formal education is a crucial carrier of global education through the schools' curriculum in subject learning areas such as Geography, Science and Local and Global Citizenship, the Department of Education in the north could have created a policy framework for global learning in schools. It has instead opted out of policy formation in global education, deferring to the Northern Ireland Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) as the policy leader in this area. This has left a policy vacuum in global education beyond the classroom that encompasses all aspects of formal education including teacher professional learning (TPL), initial teacher education (ITE), extra-curricular activities, and community links.

Local delivery of overseas aid and global education in the north is, therefore, heavily dependent on international development policy at Westminster. Between 1970 and 1997, the British ODA budget mostly hovered around 0.40 per cent of GNI and declined to 0.26 percent by 1997 (FCDO, 2023). However, the election of a New Labour government in 1997 heralded a period of expansionism in both overseas aid and global education. Labour established the Department for International Development (DFID) which had a seat at the cabinet table and the resources to match. It formulated a strategy for global education called *Building Support for Development* and increased spending on global education in England, Scotland Wales and the north of Ireland from £1.5 million in 1998/99 to £24 million in 2009/10 (COI, 2011: 12). It also increased overseas development assistance to 0.57 per cent of GNI in 2010 (FCDO, 2023) and launched a White Paper on International Development called *Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century* (DFID, 1997). This interventionist period from 1997-2010 resulted in innovative global education practice in formal and informal sectors such as schools, youth, trade union, minority ethnic, community and voluntary. Whilst the policy agenda was set by government, there was a degree of consultation with partners through sectoral panels and grant schemes were made available that supported both large and small-scale projects.

The interventionist period ended with the election of a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government in 2010 which immediately commissioned a review 'to identify whether DFID should continue to use aid funds in the UK to promote awareness of and public involvement in development issues' (COI, 2011: 4). The review concluded that:

> "…raising awareness of development issues in the UK is *likely* to contribute to reducing global poverty but it is not possible to establish a direct link or quantify the contribution made by DFID-funded activity. Therefore, a decision to continue funding activity in this area cannot be entirely evidence-based" (Ibid.: 4-5).

On the basis of the review, the global education funding instruments created by New Labour were discontinued with just two UK-wide formal sector programmes

resourced by Westminster in the decade that followed: the Global Learning Programme (2014-18) (Centre for Global Education, 2018) and Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning (2018-2021) (British Council, 2022). The UK policy environment deteriorated further when DFID was merged with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in 2020 and the ODA budget cut from 0.7 per cent to 0.5 per cent of GNI (Gov.UK, 2020). Writing in *The Guardian*, economist Larry Elliott described this cut as 'wilful political vandalism' (Elliott, 2020). This was partly because the amount saved, £3-4bn, he considered 'chickenfeed' in the context of a budget deficit running at 20 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) but mostly because it completely undermined 'the idea of aid as global public investment for the common good' (Ibid.). This folly was compounded by another major aid cut from 0.5 to 0.3 per cent of GNI in February 2025, this time by a Labour prime minister, Keir Starmer, to increase defence spending by 2.5 per cent from 2027 (Nevett, Francis, and Beale, 2025). This cut was self-imposed without any economic logic with the apparent aim of gaining political traction with the newly elected Trump administration in the US and its unilateralist world order. The moral bankruptcy of this approach was particularly evident in billionaire Elon Musk, Trump's unelected administrator of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), gleefully posting on X a few weeks before Starmer's aid cut was announced, that 'We spent the weekend feeding USAID into the wood chipper' (Musk, 2025).

Britain's alignment with that deeply damaging and shortsighted approach to international development disregarded the fact that the aid budget is calculated as a percentage of GNI which means that if the economy contracts so does ODA. But beyond that, aid is a form of soft power, that can build solidarity with partners in the global South and as Irish Aid has understood it, contributes to 'a more equal, peaceful and sustainable world' (Irish Aid, n.d.). Starmer's redeployment of aid for defence spending reduces Britain's capacity to respond to humanitarian crises and accelerates militarisation in a period of heightened conflict in Europe and the Middle East. For the north of Ireland, there is no immediate prospect of a resumption of Westminster funding of international NGOs or restoration of global education programmes.

International Development in the south of Ireland

Irish Aid is the arm of the Irish government responsible for ODA and global education although it uses the term global citizenship education (GCE) which it defines 'as a lifelong educational process, which aims to increase public awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, inter-dependent and unequal world in which we live' (Irish Aid, 2021: 4). Ireland's aid programme has been a core component of foreign affairs since 1974 and maintains strong cross-party consensus. However, it has yet to reach the UN's 0.7 percent of GNI target for ODA, coming closest in 2008 with 0.59 per cent (€920.66m) (Irish Aid, 2023: 76). But since the 2008 global financial crisis, the aid budget declined to as low as 0.30 per cent, rallying somewhat to its current level of 0.38 per cent (€1.467.2bn) (Ibid.). The government considers expenditure on providing refugee support for 100,000 Ukrainian people since 2022 as ODA-eligible which raises the total aid spend to 0.67 per cent or €2.604bn (Ibid.: 75).

The cut to USAID funding has already had a significant impact on the Irish aid sector with the development agency, GOAL, informing 900 of its 3,250 staff that their jobs are at risk owing to abrupt funding cuts in the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Britain and, particularly, the US (Reuters, 2025). USAID contributed 50 per cent (€103 million) of Goal's income in 2023 but Dóchas, the Irish association of non-governmental development organisations, has warned that the 'interdependent' nature of the aid system means that organisations not directly funded by USAID will also be impacted by its reduced support to multilateral bodies like the UN (Fox, 2025). Unlike its European partners, Ireland does not have former colonies that absorb most of their aid spending, and its top five aid recipients are: Ethiopia (€39m), occupied Palestinian Territory (€36m), Ukraine (€28m), Mozambique (€26m) and Tanzania (€25m) (Irish Aid, 2023: 81). In term of multilateral funding, Irish Aid contributed €368 million to the European Union's ODA budget which in 2023 represented 42 per cent of global aid funding (Ibid.: 37). The NGO sector received 18 per cent of the Irish Aid budget in 2023 or €267.4m with €2.1 million set aside to support 33 organisations working in the global education sector (Ibid.: 42).

Irish Aid's global citizenship education funding is available to NGOs in the north of Ireland with the proviso that their projects must be cross-border.

Irish Aid's Global Citizenship Education Strategy 2021-25 operates strategic partnerships in a range of education sectors: primary education, post-primary, adult and community, higher education, youth and minority ethnic sectors (Irish Aid, 2021). With the exception of their post-primary programme, WorldWise Global Schools, which was introduced to the north in the 2024-25 academic year, the other programmes are restricted to the south of Ireland. There is a missed opportunity here to support closer collaboration between schools, youth groups, civil society organisations, universities and colleges, and INGOs on an all-island basis. While schools are operating under the auspices of different curricula, north and south, there is enough common ground in both to support the sharing of good practice and resources. Similarly, teacher training institutions, colleges and universities could benefit from closer collaboration in areas such as research, methodologies and publications in international development and global education.

There is a degree of cross-border working already in place through all-island networks, including:

- The Development Studies Association of Ireland (DSAI, 2025), 'a community of over 800+ researchers, practitioners, and interested parties, who share a passion for international and sustainable development cooperation research and practice'.
- Dochás, a network of international development and humanitarian organisations, has 46 full members and 11 associate members across the island of Ireland (Dóchas, 2025).
- And, the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) which has over 120 individual and organisational members engaged in global education in the north and south of Ireland (IDEA, 2025).

But within all these networks there is an imbalance in membership with the majority from the south of Ireland which reflects the stronger concentration of resources, staff and government intervention in both international development and GCE.

The policy environment for the international development sector in Ireland and across the world has been dominated by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a 15-year programme agreed by the United Nations in 2015 with the ambitious aim of 'eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions' (UN, 2015a). The next section argues that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) created by the 2030 Agenda have not been equal to the challenges they have been set because they are complicit with the same neoliberal approach to 'development' that has precipitated most of the world's social and economic problems.

The Sustainable Development Goals

The 17 SDGs and their 169 targets have been described by the UN as 'a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future' (UN, 2025). The Goals address a range of development areas including hunger, health, gender equality, climate action, clean energy and oceans, and peace and justice. The Goals' colour coded posters, icons and sound bite aims are a common sight in schools and universities seemingly representing an irresistible tide of public support for 'sustainability'. But the Goals are a flawed endeavour because of what they omit from their framework as well as the approach to poverty eradication adopted within it. The Goals fail to acknowledge the history of colonial expropriation by European powers, and later by North America, in the global South that propelled their industrialisation (Murphy, 2020). The root causes of poverty in the global South, both historical and contemporary, found in the patriarchy, racism, sexism and exploitation of resources and labour, often indentured, inherent in capitalism and later the more aggressively deregulated neoliberal economics, are missing from Agenda 2030. Far from being consigned to history, Oxfam's latest global inequality report finds that colonialism is a 'powerful force driving extreme levels of inequality today' (Oxfam, 2025: 10). The insidious structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) of the World Bank and IMF impose neoliberal 'reforms' on low- and middle-income countries as conditions for loans or debt restructuring (IMF, 1999). These economic constraints on the global South maintain the peripheral position of low-income countries in terms of trade and development.

But beyond the historical omissions of the SDGs are the current interventions that align with the same growth-driven model of development that has precipitated the climate emergency, polluted our rivers with toxins and plastics, and accelerated wealth accumulation by the richest one per cent of the world's population. In a withering and wide-ranging critique of the SDGs, Philip Alston, the former UN Rapporteur for Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, found that the Goals' claims in relation to human rights to be illusory (Alston, 2020). 'Despite almost 20 mentions of human rights in the text, there is not a single reference to any specific civil and political right', argues Alston, 'and human rights in general remain marginal and often invisible in the overall SDG context' (Ibid.: 12). Alston is scathing of the SDGs' reliance on the World Bank's flawed 'international poverty line' of $2.15 per person per day – it was $1.90 when Alston compiled his report – which is a 'staggeringly low standard of living, well below any reasonable conception of a life with dignity' (Ibid.: 5). Even using this ridiculously low level of poverty measurement, Alston found that 700 million people were living on less than $1.90, which is 'abhorrent' (Ibid.: 8). Moreover, where it not for the fact that the number of people in China living below the international poverty line had decreased from 750 million to 10 million between 1990 and 2015, the global poverty count would hardly have changed (Ibid.: 7).

In regard to the monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs, Alston found that 'instead of promoting empowerment, funding, partnerships and accountability, too much of the energy surrounding the SDG process has gone into generating portals, dashboards, stakeholder engagement plans, bland reports and colourful posters' (Ibid.: 14). He criticises progress toward gender equality which is the focus of SDG 5 that aims to 'achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls' (UN, 2015b). 'Closing the gender gap in economic opportunity', argues Alston, 'is projected to take 257 years' (Alston, 2020: 12). But, perhaps, the main criticism directed by Alston at the Goals is their dependence on the same tried and failed neoliberal growth model that 'can have devastating effects on the well-being of poor people and the state's capacity to reduce poverty' (Ibid.: 15). Drawing upon the example of SDG 8.1 (UN, 2015c) which has the target of achieving '7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries', Alston argues that 'Economic growth is at the core of the SDGs, the engine relied upon to lift people out of poverty'

(Alston, 2020: 15). The failure of most countries to decouple economic growth from fossil fuels is making 'it almost impossible' to achieve the Paris Climate Accord target of limiting global warming to 1.5°C by the end of this century' (United Nations Climate Change, 2015).

Given the fundamental flaws in the Agenda 2030 framework, it will come as no surprise that the 2024 UN SDGs' Report finds that 'only 17 per cent of the SDG targets are on track, nearly half are showing minimal or moderate progress, and progress on over one third has stalled or even regressed' (UN, 2024: 2). As the clock ticks down to 2030 and the assured failure of the SDGs as a means toward poverty eradication, we are reminded by Philip Alston that 'poverty is a political choice and will be with us until its elimination is reconceived as a matter of social justice' (Alston, 2020: 20). With that in mind, it is imperative that the international development sector in Ireland reflects on what it means by 'development' and how it can create a policy environment that is coherent across the island and informed by solidarity with the global South.

An all-island international development approach

Stopping tax evasion

Overseas development assistance is always likely to be a necessary component of development policy because of the accelerating climate emergency and the resulting increase in weather-related disasters causing forced displacement. For example, in 2022, 32 million people were internally displaced by floods, storms, wildfires and droughts (UNHCR, 2023). Forced displacement is also likely to increase as a result of conflicts such as that in Sudan where 12.5 million people have been internally displaced and 3.3 million have fled for safety to neighbouring states (UN News, 2025). But the importance of ODA as a development instrument has always been inflated by countries and INGOs in the global North which rarely acknowledge that aid flows to the global South are dwarfed by resources lost by unequal exchange. So, for example, for every dollar received by countries in the global South in aid they lose resources worth $30 dollars through 'drain' to the global North (Hickel et al., 2022). The popular narrative that countries in the global North are helping to 'develop' poorer nations in the global South has been well and truly punctured by the continued appropriation of

resources in the global North through debt repayments, tax evasion and the use of transfer pricing (Tax Justice Network, 2025a). The latter is used by multinational corporations to shift profits out of the countries in which they operate using tax havens where they can pay much lower taxes. Indeed, the Tax Justice Network (2025b) has named Ireland as ninth on its list of global corporate tax havens and estimates the tax loss inflicted on other countries by Ireland's facilitation of global tax abuse at $20bn. This represents 4.08 percent of global tax losses with $11 billion of the total representing corporate tax abuse and $9 billion resulting from private tax evasion (Ibid.). As a country which prides itself on stalwart solidarity with the global South, Ireland's facilitation of tax losses to developing countries through its use as a tax haven sits uneasily with its standing as a proud development actor on the world stage.

A new all-island approach to international development needs to be solidaristic, which means ending Ireland's tax haven status that facilitates the hoarding of wealth by the super-rich and corporations. This status was revealed to the world when the European Commission found in 2016 that Ireland gave the tech giant Apple 'illegal tax advantages' amounting to €13 billion between 2003-2014 (*The Journal*, 2024). The Commission found that Apple was routing profits made on product sales across Europe through its Irish entities which 'were not technically liable for tax in any jurisdiction' (Ibid.). Apple joined Ireland in appealing the Commission's finding but lost the appeal in September 2024 (Croft, 2024). According to the Tax Justice Network (2024: 8), $492 billion is lost to tax havens every year; $347.6bn is lost to cross-border corporate tax abuse and $144.8bn to offshore tax evasion by wealthy individuals. Although global North countries lose larger sums to tax evasion, low-income countries lose 'five times as much of their public health budgets compared to higher income countries' (Ibid.: 12). In order to address tax evasion, the International Institute for Sustainable Development is urging all countries to implement a UN Convention on International Tax Co-operation which would 'close gaps in existing tax systems that prevent many countries from collecting much-needed tax revenues' (Mutaba and Rita, 2025). Such an initiative should be central to Irish development policy to ensure that low-income countries are not denied valuable income streams that can resource key public services like health and education.

Increasing ODA

Overseas aid is never going to be a panacea for addressing the polycrisis created by neoliberalism, militarism, the climate emergency and tax evasion, but is needed to provide emergency assistance to low-income countries. The taxes and duties collected by Ireland in 2024 amounted to €107bn, which means we could afford as a country to be more generous and finally reach the 0.7 percent of GNI target for ODA (Irish Revenue, 2024). In 2023, Ireland invested just €2.1m or 0.96 per cent of the Irish Aid ODA budget to global citizenship education which is well below the European benchmark of 3 percent of ODA (IDEA, 2024: 6). The Dublin government needs to expand its support of the global education sector in the north which is starved of funding and lacking a policy framework. This means increasing the global education budget and extending the purview of existing programmes to participants in the north such as schools, community and voluntary groups, minority ethnic organisations, youth groups and INGOs. There are existing all-island networks that can support a more integrated all-island approach to policy-making and practice in global education if the necessary resources are made available to them.

Neutrality and the triple lock

As a neutral country with a distinguished record of maintaining a continuous presence on UN-mandated peace support operations since 1958, Ireland needs to maintain the triple lock which is a central component of our neutrality. The triple lock means that Irish Defence forces can only be deployed on overseas missions that have been approved by the government, Dáil Éireann and a UN mandate. There are concerns that proposed changes to Ireland's defence and security policy could include amendments to the triple lock (Purdy and Lawrence, 2025). However, the Transnational Institute argues that:

> "The Triple Lock provides Ireland with a unique opportunity to show decisive leadership, to reassert itself as a neutral state and to actively use its voice and its leverage in the multilateral sphere to advocate for justice and peace, and for the protection of international law" (Ní Bhriain, 2025: 14).

In a period of escalating conflict, militarism and global instability, Ireland's neutrality, triple lock and peace-keeping missions can help to bring 'about stable conditions necessary for sustainable development' (DFA, n.d.). That neutrality means Shannon Airport should not be used as a transit point by the US military (McNally, 2024) and Israeli war planes should not be transiting munitions to Israel through Irish territory (The Ditch, 2025), particularly when it is prosecuting a genocidal air and ground offensive on Gaza (Albanese, 2024) and imposing a complete siege including food, water, fuel, medicine and aid on 2.1 million Gazans (McKernan, 2025). Facilitating Israel's use of Irish airspace to transit munitions runs contrary to Ireland's support of human rights and civil society organisations in Palestine as part of its aid programme and funding of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestinian refugees. Ireland's development programme needs to align with an ethical foreign policy based on its longstanding neutrality and multilateralism. It needs to support efforts toward conflict de-escalation and military disarmament and, in regard to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza and the West Bank, the government needs to fulfil its promise (Molony, 2024) to sanction Israel by implementing the Occupied Territories Bill (House of the Oireachtas, 2024).

Meeting climate emission targets

According to the Climate Change Performance Index (2025), Ireland occupies a medium rating in renewable energy, energy use, and climate policy, but a low ranking in greenhouse gas emissions. Implementation of Ireland's Climate Action Plans remains 'problematic' and it could be on course to pay a staggering €8-26 billion bill (Frost, 2025) to other EU member for failing to meet binding national targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions as part of the EU's Effort Sharing Regulation. Ireland's Environmental Protection Agency projects that the country is well off track to meet its agreed target to cut emissions by 51 per cent by 2030. Meeting this target and transitioning to a climate neutral economy, is not only essential to protecting Ireland's natural environment and the health of its citizens, but mitigating the impact of global heating on low-income countries in the global South most vulnerable to the impact of climate related weather events. An all-island international development programme must be informed by climate justice and meeting internationally agreed targets for reducing carbon emissions.

Tackling neoliberalism

But the most essential component of a future all-island approach to international development is tackling the economic root causes of poverty and inequality in neoliberalism. In 2022, the Centre for Global Education and Financial Justice Ireland commissioned research into the extent to which the international development and global education sectors in Ireland 'incorporate a critical analysis of the currently dominant form of economics, i.e. neoliberalism, in their education work with the public' (Fricke, 2022: 8). The research found 'that little consideration seems to be given to systematic explorations of global economics or of root causes of poverty, inequality and injustice' (Ibid.: 7). What is evident in the research is a lack of systems thinking in the sector that would support analysis of how single issues are connected through the dominant economic system of neoliberalism. The research was based on the assumption that:

> "in order to effectively contribute to sustained change that addresses and aims to overcome poverty, inequality and injustice, the international development sector needs to give public attention to the global processes and structures that cause, exacerbate or maintain poverty, inequality, injustice" (Ibid.: 8).

What it found instead through an analysis of web site content, policy statements, a survey of practitioners and interactive seminars was that most INGOs do not consider development issues within a broader global economic framework which limits their understanding as to how these issues are connected and can be addressed. For an international development strategy to be successful and effectively tackle inequality, it has to include an analysis of neoliberal economics using systems thinking. The unpalatable alternative is the chaotic, patchwork approach represented by the SDGs which only pay lip-service to poverty eradication.

Conclusion

The International development sector and its global education sub-sector are under severe financial pressure owing to a succession of cuts announced over the past decade (CONCORD, 2024). In 2023, ODA from EU Member States amounted to €82.4 billion, or only 0.51 percent of GNI with Britain, France,

Italy and Spain announcing cuts to development aid spending in 2024 (Ibid.: 6). These cuts preceded the announcement in late March 2025 that USAID was to be absorbed into the state department, with a cut of 83 percent of its programmes and loss of 1,600 jobs (Omer, 2025; Faguy, 2025). So far, the Irish government has indicated that it will not follow suit and cut its aid budget (*The Ditch*, 2025) but Trump's unilateralist 'America First' agenda is resonating across the world and squeezing ODA spending. This dysfunction is compounded by Ireland's fractured approach to overseas aid and global education in the north and south of the island. Britain's dramatic slashing of its aid budget removes any short-term prospect for a return to the kind of expansionist policy platform we saw between 1997 and 2010. As international development is a reserved matter and not in the purview of the Assembly, there is a policy vacuum in the north of Ireland and scarcity of resources. In the south of Ireland, both international development and global education are under-funded, and most Irish Aid Global Citizenship Education programmes are not extended across the island. Moreover, the failing SDG agenda continues to dominate the policy environment in international development despite serious flaws in their capacity to address the systemic causes of global poverty in neoliberal economics.

The Irish international development sector is in urgent need of a solidaristic and transformative agenda that tackles the fundamental causes of poverty in the global North and South, including: the closure of tax loopholes that facilitate corporate and super-rich tax evasion in Ireland; supporting multilateral efforts to cancel the unpayable debt saddled on global South countries by international financial institutions and private lenders; a bold and effective approach to climate mitigation that meets emission reduction targets; a maintenance of Irish neutrality and the triple lock, and a commitment to demilitarisation. This requires a systemic approach to development that recognises the neoliberal origins in the polycrisis enveloping our world. We need an approach to development rooted in solidarity, not charity. As the film director Ken Loach (2017) put it:

> "Where there is injustice, oppression or exploitation there will be solidarity from those who stand with victims. Solidarity may do charitable things, but it is not the same as charity. Charity makes the

intolerable become bearable and perpetuate it; charity can normalise the unacceptable. Solidarity is concerned with redressing injustice and supporting those who need allies".

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