



## Green-Schools Global Citizenship

### IRELAND IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

Environmental degradation is more often than not, linked to poverty. In terms of aid given to people that are less well off than ourselves, Ireland has always been one of the top donors. At the end of 2008, it was estimated that spent €899 million on Overseas Development Aid (ODA). This would have been partly due to the fact that we had become such a wealthy country and had more to give. **Irish Aid** is the government of Ireland's programme of assistance to developing countries. The Irish Aid programme has as its priority the reduction of poverty, inequality and exclusion in developing countries. Irish Aid works in collaboration with governments in other countries, other donors, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) and international organisations as part of the global effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals<sup>10</sup>. In 2000, Ireland's government signed up to the Millennium Development Goals and committed to achieving 0.7% of Gross National Product (GNP) to Overseas Development Aid (ODA) by 2012. It is currently at 0.52% from a high of 0.59%. Find out more about Irish Aid at [www.irishaid.gov.ie](http://www.irishaid.gov.ie)

Additionally to Irish Aid, there are many other organisations in Ireland that aim to eradicate poverty and improve people's lives, who often work together to be even more effective. Different NGOs concentrate on different areas: some such as the Society of St Vincent de Paul address the impacts of poverty in Ireland. Others address poverty at a global level – e.g. Trócaire's main focus is on long-term development tackling the root causes of poverty. It also responds to emergencies such as the Earthquake in Haiti in 2010. Trócaire also undertakes education and campaigning and lobbying work in Ireland aimed at Irish people gaining a greater understanding of the issues related to poverty and how governments, organisations and individuals can respond both in Ireland and elsewhere. You can find more organisations listed on the contacts page. Your school may already be working with a charity, so find out what good work you are doing already. You can also check out the websites and see if you - or your school and community - can help in any way. Who knows, you might make some new friends; you will definitely have fun trying!



*Top Tip: check out A Question of Aid: Aid in an Unequal World, A CSPE/Citizenship resource for Post-Primary Teachers including a DVD and classroom activities (Trócaire, 2009)*