IDEA
IRISH DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION IN ADULT AND COMMUNITY SETTINGS

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE

IDEA Community Sector Working Group

IRISH DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (IDEA)

Established in 2004, IDEA is a national platform for organisations and individuals engaged in the provision, promotion and advancement of development education throughout the island of Ireland. For more information about IDEA, please visit **www.ideaonline.ie**

IDEA's Community Sector Working Group was established in 2011[1].

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The IDEA Community Sector Working Group members, together with IDEA staff, were instrumental in developing this set of guidelines.

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This document was drafted by Dr. Karen Murphy, in collaboration with IDEA staff and the Community Sector Working Group members. The guidelines reflect the lessons learned by group members through their ongoing work in development education and the document draws on existing development education guidelines produced by IDEA, Comhlámh and the National Youth Council of Ireland for other sectors (as referenced in the bibliography), as well as on an earlier draft set of guidelines for the adult and community education sector developed in 2013 by Jennifer Harris. It also draws on available literature on development education in community and adult education settings (as referenced in bibliography).

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[1] For information about the community sector working group and how to get involved, see appendix 3.

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PART 1

THE ROLE OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION SECTORS

1.1

INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE THE GUIDELINES & WHO ARE THEY FOR?

THIS DOCUMENT PROVIDES a set of good practice guidelines for organisations and individuals working, or intending to work, on development education within the adult and community education sectors. The guidelines are intended for practitioners and policy makers, and serve a number of functions:

- **as an educational tool for individuals and organisations who want to establish, improve or refresh their practice of development education;**
- **as an advocacy document for practitioners and policy makers who would like to showcase the value and relevance of development education within their sector and integrate it as a core element of their work;**
- **as a planning document for policy makers and practitioners who want to develop or revise their internal development education programme or priorities. These guidelines are a stepping stone towards the embedding of good practice throughout a programme of work.**

Practitioners (trainers, tutors, facilitators or teachers) can use these guidelines (i) to develop a development education work-plan/curriculum; (ii) to ensure that development education themes and methodologies are incorporated into their wider teaching/training/facilitation programmes; or (iii) as a tool for consultation on an ongoing basis to provoke new ideas for their teaching/training practice.

Managers and decision makers (such as Adult Education Officers, Community Education Facilitators, Programme & Organisation Managers, Course Coordinators) within adult and community education organisations/networks can use

these guidelines to initiate a development education strategy/framework, or to refine an existing framework for development education.

The diversity of actors, institutions, and learning approaches across the sector should be recognised and applauded from the outset. Indeed, given the variations that exist within the adult and community education sectors, a 'one size fits all' approach is unlikely to be helpful. With this in mind, the guidelines do not set out to present a definitive statement of good practice, and should not be read as a quality standard or blue-print; instead, they offer a starting point for reflection and planning on development education within the work of individuals and organisations. It is intended that policy makers and practitioners reflect on the recommended actions and principles outlined within, and decide which to prioritise at any given time. It is also hoped that the actors who implement development education will support the revision and updating of these guidelines as the practice evolves over time and as lessons are learned and shared.

The document can be read as one comprehensive tool, or readers can go directly to the section that best relates to their work and needs.

Part I sets out the aims and objectives of these guidelines (section 1.1); describes what development education is, and explores the added value that development education brings to the adult and community education sectors (section 1.2) and to learners within those sectors (section 1.3). Part II presents a set of good practice guidelines for organisations (section 2.1) and individual practitioners (section 2.2).

The guidelines aim to:

- **Promote and facilitate the uptake of development education within the adult and community education sector, by demonstrating its relevance and value to policy makers.**
- **Support ongoing and planned implementation of good quality development education in adult and community education settings, by supplying policy makers and practitioners with the tools required to put a development education policy and programme in place.**
- **Support the ongoing evolution, development and streamlining of good practices in development education within the adult and community sectors, by providing a user-friendly set of guidelines that promote a culture of reflective practice and shared learning.**

In meeting these objectives, the guidelines ultimately will contribute to some of the wider goals and ongoing efforts of the development education community within the adult and

community education sector. These goals include: promoting critical thinking about global decision making, supporting active citizenship, and positioning development education within the context and understanding of adult literacy and basic skills. In practice, the guidelines should contribute to the evolution of a vibrant and engaged practice in adult/community settings and the continued growth of an adult population that understands and contributes to decision making locally, nationally and globally.[2] Furthermore, many of the recommendations contained in these guidelines will prove useful for practitioners and managers operating in other sectors, where some of the community and adult education approaches can be adapted and utilised.

Development education has evolved and strengthened in recent years and decades, and practitioners have cited factors such as continued integration of development education in formal and non-formal education, and the development of IDEA as a professional network of development education practitioners as contributory factors in this process. However, practitioners have also cited limitations in the progression of strategic thinking around development education as a challenge that the sector faces. This is compounded by the challenges that exist across sectors, including limited human and financial resources, lack of self-confidence of some educators who feel ill-equipped to tackle subject matters that they perceive to be complex, and limited support structures, such as in training and capacity building.[3] These guidelines intend to contribute in part to addressing this challenge, by providing a starting point for practitioners and policy makers within the adult and community education sectors.

> ***" Our vision is a world based on justice, solidarity, equality and sustainability. Development education in the adult and community sector can empower us to create this world, through enhancing active global citizenship and learning for our interdependent local and global communities."***
>
> ***— Frank Geary, Director, IDEA***

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[2] The IDEA community sector working group is in the process of developing a comprehensive strategy for the wider sector, to reflect these aims and objectives, and it is within this context that these guidelines are being developed. See, for example, IDEA Community Sector Working Group, 'Towards a Strategy for Development Education in the Adult and Community Sector', 2013, and 'Draft Strategy Paper', 2014.

[3] Fiedler, M., Bryan, A., and Bracken, M., *Mapping the Past, Charting the Future: A Review of the Irish Government's Engagement with Development Education and a Meta-Analysis of Development Education Research in Ireland*, Irish Aid, 2011, p. 8–9, and 49–50.

" We believe that there is an opportunity with adults in the non-formal education sector to engage in development education that helps contexualize their local actions within a global justice framework. For example local food actions are connected with local food sovereignty in Ireland and through development education are connected to those issues in the developing world. This new awareness allows adults to truly think globally when acting locally. For us the issues facing people in sustainablity when brought to actions at the local level – no matter where the projects are in the world are – result in similar actions. This allows adults to have an opportunity for empathy and understanding of people acting together in communities throughout the world to solve a shared problem such as climate justice."

— Suzie Cahn, Carraig Dúlra, speaking about work on sustainability through development education

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" The Changemakers programme connects communities across the wide geographical spread, in Ireland, and more importantly to isolated activist groups, through a common agenda. Examples include community gardeners, bee-keepers, and organic growers, who find common ground in their shared concern for global hunger and food supplies."

— Patsy Toland, Donegal Changemakers

1.2

WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION & HOW DOES IT ENHANCE ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION?

Development education takes place in a wide range of settings, with a great variety of participants. Because of this diversity, there is no universally accepted definition for development education. IDEA sees development education as supporting people in understanding, and in acting to transform, the social, cultural, political and economic structures which affect their lives and others at personal, community, national and international levels.[4] Some of its key elements include:

- **Recognition of diverse perspectives in the story of development: including the views and experiences of a wide range of actors, representing different communities and perspectives.**
- **Roots in, and strong links to, civil society at home: working with grassroots organisations to empower local decision making and acting for change.**
- **Participatory, transformative learning processes and a focus on awareness-building and action for positive change.**
- **Recognition of injustice and action and learning to tackle its causes, rather than its symptoms.**

[4] For more detail on definitions, please see appendix 1.

While the adult and community education sectors are two distinct sectors, as the graphic opposite shows, there are significant commonalities between the two, which demonstrates their mutually beneficial and reinforcing aims, objectives, methodologies and concepts. Adult education refers to education for adults which takes place in both formal and informal settings, often with people who have had limited formal educational opportunities earlier in their lives, or that are re-skilling themselves for new work and life situations. Community education and community development take place outside the formal sector and in geographical areas or communities of interest, and can include group development, education and training, and more broadly can be seen "as a process of communal education towards empowerment, both at an individual and a collective level ... an interactive, challenging process, not only in terms of its content but also in terms of its methodologies and decision making processes."[5] In these guidelines, IDEA takes a very broad view of the adult and community education sector, to include all learning undertaken by adults who are not attending mainstream second level or higher education, and development education within these sectors is taken to include any development education work which occurs after second level schooling, but outside the third level system.[6]

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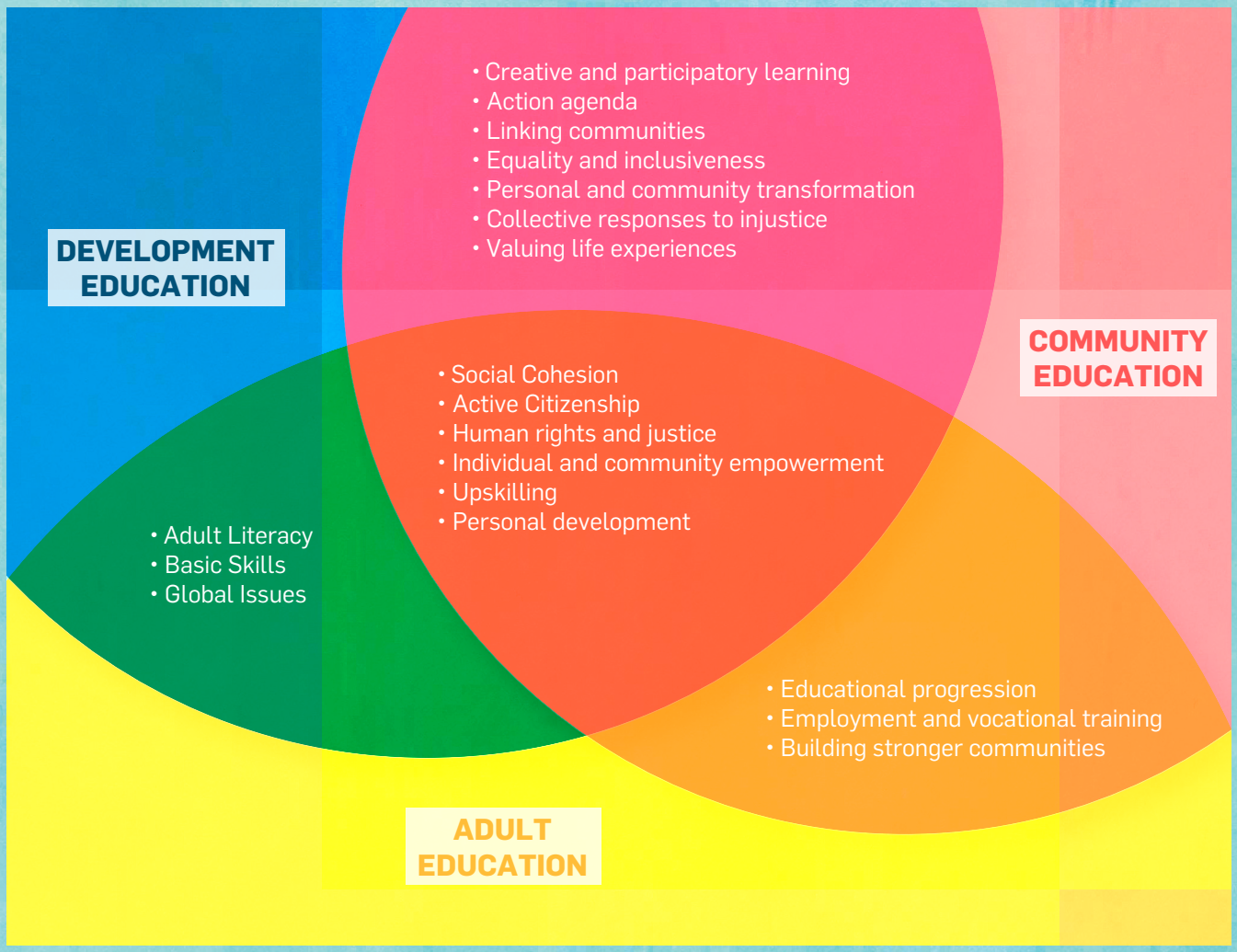
5 IDEA & LYCS, 'Community and Education Sectors: Overview and Trends', Nov 2012 (Powerpoint presentation), citing *Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education* (DES 2000 p. 110).

6 Appendix 1 contains further explanations and definitions for adult and community education.

Development and community education share common core principles, such as equality, justice, empowerment and participation, and "a commitment to human-centred development, an understanding of the structural causes of poverty, radical education models and a belief in action to bring about change".[7] At the same time, development education complements community education: while community development is principally concerned with issues at local level, development education demonstrates that the root causes of local problems are "often located outside the community in broader national and increasingly international economic and political contexts".[8] Further, development education holds that solutions to global issues can begin at the local community level, creating solidarity between local communities worldwide. Development education reinforces the goals of adult and community education for individual learners, by presenting perspectives, methodologies, and topics that are closely aligned to the adult or community education curricula, through a fresh lens.

Commonalities between development education, community education and adult education:[9]



7 McNeill, H., *Connecting Communities: A Practical Guide to Using Development Education in Community Settings*, Lourdes Youth and Community Services, 2005, p. 9.

8 McNeill (2005) p. 9.

9 Please see: McNeill (2005), citing The AONTAS Community Education Network & Buiskool et al, 2010.

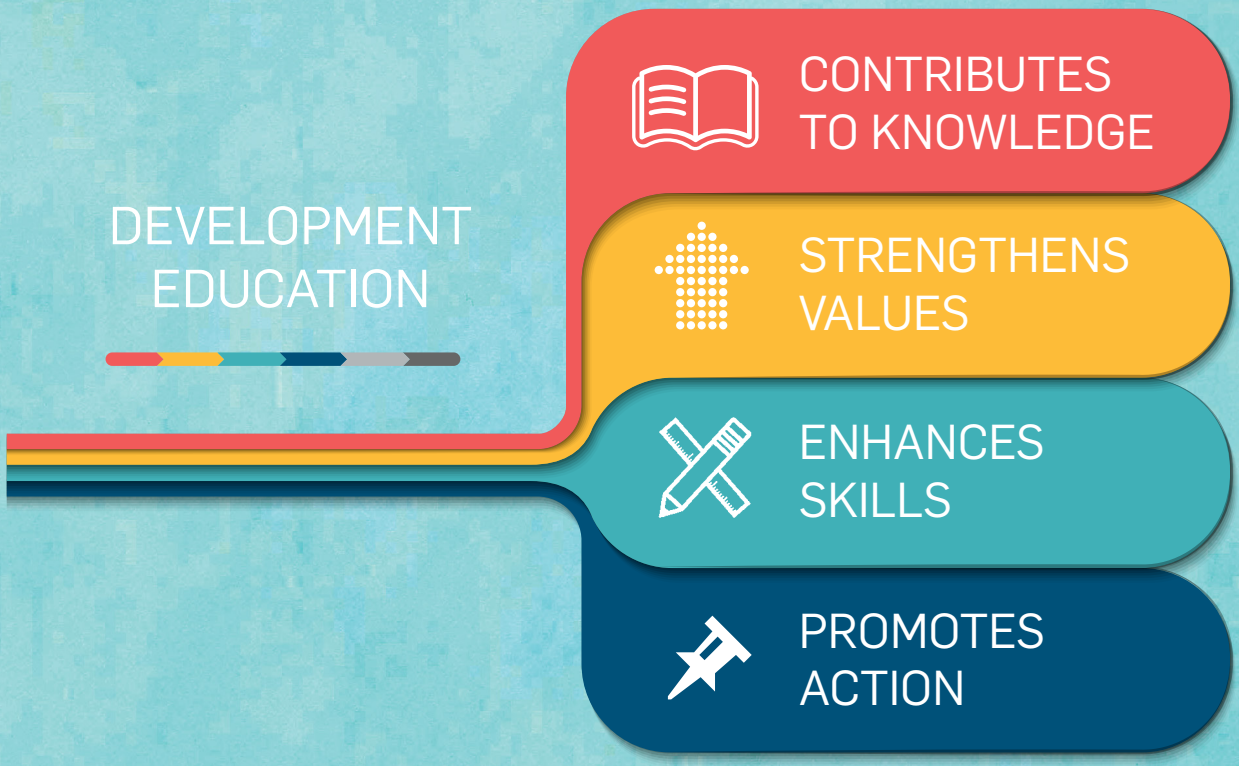
In addition, development education connects disparate groups, communities and individuals, who share common understandings of social justice and empowerment, but who, otherwise, might not interact regularly together.

> ***" The Changemakers programme in Donegal has seen the Climate Justice agenda uniting all three sectors – horticulture students, community garden activists and school teachers all participated in workshops together. Each brought experience, action, education and commitment to contributing to a solution to Climate Change. There was clear common ground and mutual support across the different strengths of each group – horticultural theory and practice, local action in community gardens and the involvement of young people through Transition Year school projects."***
>
> ***— Patsy Toland, Donegal Changemakers***

1.3

WHAT ADDED VALUE DOES DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION BRING TO ADULT AND COMMUNITY SECTOR LEARNERS?

In addition to enhancing the community and adult education sectors overall, development education adds value to the individual learner's experience, in the areas of knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions.



CONTRIBUTES TO KNOWLEDGE

- Provides varied and stimulating topics to integrate into existing education programmes.
- Taps into unexplored synergies, examining global issues and our individual role within them when acting at a local level with awareness.
- Facilitates an enhanced understanding of how these global issues directly and indirectly affect our own lives.
- Develops practical skills that connect learners with similar learners' experiences from around the world.
- Allows for sharing experiences with others.

> *" In recent workshops on 'older people in development' the experience and knowledge in the room came across strongly as an important factor for participants. Many participants cited listening to the life stories and varied perspectives of others as a highlight. As one participant noted, 'I learned quite a lot of information from other people's observations and answers.' "*
>
> *— Lianne Murphy, Ageing & Development Programme at Age Action Ireland*

STRENGTHENS VALUES

- Strengthens an individual's ability to understand and challenge the effects/impact of social inequality and educational disadvantage on communities and their members.
- Provides a safe space in which destructive attitudes and perceptions can be challenged through positive and participatory engagement, thereby challenging marginalisation, social exclusion and inequality.

- **Identifies how an individual participant's own experiences are reflective of (and possibly caused by) global political, social and environmental factors, by connecting local structures and behaviours with global realities.**

> *" The Insight programme changed the way I viewed my life, my goals and what was important to me. It woke me up to injustice and imbalance."*
>
> *— Anonymous participant in the Insight Programme, Ireland/Tanzania, run by Development Perspectives, Dundalk*

ENHANCES SKILLS

- **Supports the development of critical thinking, creativity, communication, intercultural awareness and acceptance, political and economic literacy, and media literacy.**
- **Promotes the ability to question assumptions and the ability to see things from different perspectives, which are transferable skills that will enhance learners' development at a personal, local, national and global level.**
- **Emphasises dialogue, critical analysis and active learning, particularly appropriate for adult learners who lack traditional literacy skills.**
- **Engages learners' interest in basic literacy and vocational education programmes.**

> *" Looking back on this course I am reminded of the saying that 'you won't remember what you were taught, but you'll never forget what you've learned'... this has been a truly powerful, self-reflective and inspirational learning journey for me that I will share with others and help to effect change in others and in my community."*
>
> — Anonymous participant in Global Development Course, facilitated by Lourdes Youth and Community Services

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PROMOTES ACTION

- **Provides a platform which encourages participants to reflect on their own experiences and to connect their lives to the lives and experiences of others, to build solidarity, inclusiveness and a sense of resilience.**
- **Encourages participants to explore and analyse a range of possible responses to the issues they explore, and assists learners to understand how change happens and how power structures can be constructively challenged.**
- **Provides the skills to effectively plan and carry out targeted actions, to build and engage an active citizenry at local, national, and global levels, thereby empowering people with the tools that they need to hold their leaders and representatives to account.**

> *" We explored violence against women, oppression, and human rights and the link between those and trafficking.... I remember being outraged. As a result I felt the need and responsibility to take action. I knew that this was both a local and global issue and that it was a huge injustice.... We began a campaign using the taxi firms, community workers and politicians to raise awarenss and to eradicate human trafficking."*
>
> *— Donna McFeely, Children in Crossfire's Development Education Officer, speaking about the first Children in Crossfire workshop she participated in*

Political, economic and social upheavals in recent years (in Ireland and globally) suggest that there has never been a more appropriate time to collectively and cohesively link local and global issues, and explore our role in creating, sustaining and challenging the structures, systems and behaviours that impact on our lives.

PART 2

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR ORGANISATIONS & INDIVIDUAL PRACTITIONERS

POLICY MAKERS AND PRACTITIONERS are encouraged to be flexible in their application of these recommendations, responding to each organisation's mandate, resources available, goals and priorities. Some of the recommended actions and building blocks will be more appropriate to apply than others.

> ***" Above all, what organisations engaged in development education need to consider is their particular contribution to learning about global issues and questions. It is not about identifying one universal approach but about clarifying what is feasible and possible, and above all ensuring that the organisation has some clarity about its own approach and theoretical basis. There are many interpretations of development education and what is needed is to debate what they are, which approach is most appropriate within a given educational***

arena and on what basis the pedagogy is introduced. Development education should not be seen as some form of monolithic approach to education but as a pedagogy that opens minds to question, consider, reflect and above all challenge viewpoints about the wider world and to identify different ways to critique them."[10]

The key recommendations are presented in two sections: (i) recommendations for organisations, which are best implemented by managers and decision makers; and, (ii) recommendations for development education practitioners, focusing in particular on the individual trainer, facilitator, or teacher that will develop and deliver a development education programme directly to participants and learners. The reader may read the guidelines as a comprehensive guide, or go directly to the section most applicable to their own work.

Overarching these recommendations is a set of principles which should inform all policies and practices:

- **Integration of development education across subjects & institutions;**
- **Participation, inclusion & mutual respect;**
- **Connecting local with global & past with future;**
- **Critical analytical thought;**
- **Challenging inequality & unjust/unequal power relations, with regard to gender justice, non-discrimination, climate & environment change, and good governance, as equality needs to be at the foundation of all work in development and in development education;**
- **Citizens' engagement & participation in decision-making processes – at community and national level, as well as in the home, in employment settings and in social settings.**

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[10] Bourn, D., 'Discourses and Practices around Development Education: From Learning about Development to Critical Global Pedagogy', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Issue 13, p. 26, Centre for Global Education, 2011.

2.1

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR INSTITUTIONS & ORGANISATIONS

(1) PROMOTING AN ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

While enthusiastic individual champions can make significant positive impacts on development education practice within an organisation, the most effective development education programme is one that has the support of the whole organisation, from management to practitioners. To ensure the commitment, the organisation should consider developing a policy for development education, and putting in place processes to allow for inclusive participation and decision making, as well as ensuring financial and human resources are made available for development education.

ADOPTING A DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION STRATEGY

A development education policy demonstrates an organisation's commitment to development education and the rationale for doing it. It provides a clear basis for activities and programmes and informs new members, volunteers and staff as to why development education is central to the work of the organisation. A policy for development education should be drawn up in consultation with all stakeholders associated with the organisation. The policy should set out the short and long term objectives and the overall aim of development education activities and programmes. Development education should also be included and prioritised in organisational work plans, and where possible, a development education perspective should be integrated into all aspects of the organisation's work, as an integral part of what the organisation does, rather than an 'add-on'.

> ***" Initially... the work was done by a few committed people... We thought it would be more strategic to have development education***

cut across the entire organisation. There is a focus within the ETBs on skills for work so if development education is to take off, then embedding it in these programmes is the way to go."

— Melíosa Bracken, Development Education Officer at the Dublin & Dún Laoghaire ETB Adult Education Service

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INCLUDING MINORITY VOICES IN INSTITUTIONAL DECISION MAKING

Create a culture of open and honest dialogue by establishing working practices which ensure a space for minority and dissenting voices. This could include representation at decision making bodies within the organisation, for example.

(2) COORDINATING AND LEADING

ASSIGNING CLEAR DIVISIONS OF LABOUR & INCORPORATING DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION ACROSS THE ORGANISATION

A holistic and complete development education cannot be achieved through stand-alone lessons or modules only; it requires a progressive and holistic approach to education that enables learners to make linkages across subject or topic boundaries as needed. Therefore, organisations should avoid allowing development education to become the remit and responsibility of one or a few committed individuals. The implementation of development education and successful achievement of its goals is more likely if an organisation-wide approach is taken, led by management at the most senior level. This does not require micro-management, but a stated commitment and – where suitable – leading by example. Support from management, rather than rigid direction, is required. Leadership and management should ensure accountability for meeting organisational goals regarding development education, and a clear division of labour should be set to facilitate this process.

INVITING ALL MEMBERS OF THE ORGANISATION TO ENGAGE WITH DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION, AND ENSURING THAT ALL STAKEHOLDERS KNOW THEIR ROLES IN THE ORGANISATION'S DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION WORK

There is a difference between teaching about development education, and 'living' the development education commitments. The former relates to course work and curricula, while the latter incorporates working practices within the organisational processes and extra-curricular activities. Development education principles can be integrated into your organisation in a variety of ways. These include introducing policies informed by themes or topics explored in the development education programme, such as providing staff awareness and training days on development education, minority representation in organisational committees, use of recycled materials, or sourcing fair trade products for shops/eating facilities. If an organisational commitment to development education is sustained across subjects, courses and extra-curricular activities, participants will be better equipped to identify themes and issues that relate to their own lives.

(3) BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

JOINING EXISTING NETWORKS TO SHARE EXPERIENCES AND SUPPORTING THE EVOLUTION OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION PRACTICE

The rate of evolution of development education in Ireland has varied across and within sectors. While primary and post-primary schools continue to move towards a coherent development education practice, its progress remains ad hoc within the community and adult sectors, led often by individual champions or interested persons. Within these sectors, practitioners and policy makers agree that a coherent (albeit flexible) approach would work to their respective benefit, and many actors have engaged with the IDEA Community Sector Working Group in the development of a sectoral strategy for development education. The existence of the working group and its associated network base, and the active engagement of its members, demonstrates a strong sector-wide commitment to strengthening development education practice. There are ample opportunities for partnership, including the sharing of experiences, knowledge, and lessons learned across the sector. These should be explored and exploited. In addition to supporting cohesion across the sector, these networks offer policy makers and practitioners exposure to new working practices and ideas, and provide an opportunity to work more efficiently in partnership with others.

Partnerships should not be limited to existing IDEA working group members and other traditional partners, however. Organisations should be inclusive in selecting partners, and should consider other institutions and their potential role in development education, such as religious bodies, trade unions and political actors, for example, as well as organisations representing groups and communities of the majority world, or of traditionally marginalised local groups (for example, organisations representing members of the Traveller community).

Finally, organisations should make themselves aware of the funding opportunities available to undertake development education, and should avail of those opportunities where feasible.

GETTING INVOLVED!

Organisations should take advantage of the opportunity to get involved in international campaigns, for example by marking events such as "Human Rights Day" or the "16 days of action opposing violence against women", both led by the UN, through activism and awareness raising campaigns. In addition, organisations should take steps to include others in the activities that they themselves lead on.

(4) PROMOTING CAPACITY & APPROPRIATE SKILLS

COMMITTING HUMAN & FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Notwithstanding the challenges in securing and allocating scarce financial and human resources, efforts should be made where possible to commit resources to development education. This will not only increase the organisational capacity to deliver high quality programmes; it also sends a strong signal to staff and participants that it is as worthy a subject matter/theme as any other that the organisation works on.

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING TRAINING, CAPACITY BUILDING AND ESTABLISHING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE.

Organisations should integrate development education into training programmes for staff, to enable critical thinking within the organisation and to ensure peer-to-peer learning. Look for accredited training opportunities, and ensure effective knowledge management internally and across the wider sector.

> ***" This course has given me the insight to understand that one person can begin change, can make a difference and I hope through my own teaching, that I can instil some of what I've learned in completing this extremely worthwhile course delivered by passionate and professional facilitators."***
>
> *— Anonymous participant at Donegal Changemakers 'Global Development' project, facilitated by Lourdes Youth and Community Services*

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(5) MONITORING AND EVALUATING

USING MONITORING AND EVALUATING FRAMEWORKS FOR DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

Evaluation of programmes and learning is increasingly important, given the financial constraints within the community and development sectors, and the increasing pressure to provide evidence of impact. Robust monitoring and evaluation will support reflective practice and organisational improvement, as well as the development of funding proposals and accountability structures. Notwithstanding the challenges in evaluating changes in attitudes and behaviours, lessons learned and short and medium term impacts can be effectively monitored and analysed. Collection of appropriate baseline data at the outset of the project ensures that changes can be accurately tracked and measured. Practitioners should also consider a wide range of potential outcomes to measure against, including 'hard' learning and 'soft' skills. In developing a monitoring and evaluation framework, practitioners should be aware that development education outcomes are not always linear and do not always fit neatly into a pre-determined time schedule.

PROMOTING LESSONS LEARNING AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

Organisations should establish continuous learning and feedback mechanisms, using their established tools and organisational process, and integrate these into the wider organisational knowledge management structure. In larger organisations, it might be feasible to establish communities of practice, to share and disseminate lessons learned, making sure to highlight the added value of development education to the organisation's work. This may also be an option across organisations working within the same field. In smaller organisations, facilitating networking opportunities to share practices and experience with similar sized organisations might be suitable options, as well as linking in with larger organisations and their activities.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M & E)

Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) is a cycle of continuous learning and development, setting out the change that a particular programme is seeking to achieve, as well as the indicators that will be used to assess whether that change has occurred. A good M & E plan monitors progress, assesses the effectiveness of interventions and identifies what might need to be done differently in order to maximise opportunities for success .

Measuring impact in the adult and community education sectors can be highly challenging, as target groups are diverse and fluid, learning aims vary widely within the vast array of educational programmes on offer, change is often long-term and non-linear, and there are contested views as to what constitutes educational 'progress'.

Impact measurement is labour-intensive and it is important to be realistic about the amount of data collection that can be carried out. Maximum use should be made of existing baselines and of data that is routinely collected by adult and community education providers. Results frameworks need to be flexible enough to accommodate the many types of qualitative and quantitative data that will emanate from the diverse range of actors.

The evaluation process should engage with all stakeholders, including participants, training managers, trainers, teachers, donors and external actors. Presenting "results" in the formats favoured by some funders can be time consuming and sometimes challenging, and there is a need for funders, organisations, practitioners and participants to engage in dialogue about the most meaningful ways to measure the impact of development education interventions in adult and community contexts. The process should examine the methodologies and approaches used, and the short, medium and long term outcomes associated with these. It should consider educational outcomes and attitudinal change, and should be broad enough to capture unexpected outcomes.

2.2

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUAL PRACTITIONERS

This section presents options for topics that practitioners might address, how these issues might be approached in practice, and what other issues a practitioner should consider to ensure the best possible development education outcomes.

(1) ADDRESSING THE SUBJECT MATTER

" Among the many causes of poverty and injustice in our world, one of the greatest is militarisation. Yet, extraordinarily, many people fail to see this link. Afri's development education programme highlights

the fact that in excess of $1,700 billion is spent annually on the war industry – money that could be spent on eradicating poverty and tackling climate change. Pax Christi International has produced an appropriately named development education pack called "The Elephant in the Room" about the link between militarisation and poverty – it is time we opened our eyes to this elephant before more people are trampled to death!"

— Joe Murray, Director of Afri

EXPLORING THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF GLOBAL ISSUES

Place power inequality at the centre of discussions, as this is central to a range of issues such as human rights, poverty, exclusion and discrimination. Explore inequality and unequal power relations within and between countries and communities. Explore how different countries, and their populations, depend on one another. Interesting topics might include: food security & food production; energy and the trading of natural resources; global financial mechanisms; climate change & climate justice; the evolution of power structures over human history.

" Looking at the labels on our clothes ... really opened my eyes on how our everyday actions can affect everyone around us"

— Anonymous participant in Development Education course, Lourdes Youth & Community Services

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MAKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN LOCALAND GLOBAL CHALLENGES THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GLOBAL CITIZEN

Link the experiences of participants with those of members of other communities, in their locality, state, or in the majority world. Explore how the actions of participants (or the society they live in) affect the lives of individuals who live elsewhere, and how actions at local level can contribute to solutions to global challenges.

" Linking examples from around the world with local Irish examples helps people to see commonalities rather than differences and helps promote the use of inclusive language. When the goals are connected, learners can see themselves as part of a wider global community of people working to solve similar issues, not compartmentalised groups."

— Suzie Cahn, Carraig Dúlra

ENCOURAGING INFORMED ACTIONS FOR A MORE JUST WORLD

Remind participants that the world we live in, with the systems, structures and behaviours that we live with, was created by individuals, and can be transformed by individuals. Question our role in creating a more just world. Explore how we, as active citizens, communities, states & societies, can contribute to creating it, and the positive impact local actions have on local communities, while simultaneously contributing to global solutions.

Support actions of participants by providing institutional support, where possible. Connect individuals with potential partners, for example. Showcase options for active engagement and involvement, for example through your organisation or through partner organisations, or other organisations whose work you are familiar with.

" I am thrilled at the commitment and imagination of these young Irish people who are recognising this truth [our interdependence with our environment] and are actively engaged in assisting their sisters and brothers across the globe who have been ravaged by war and disaster. If the hundreds of billions spent on armaments were spent instead on relief and development this war-weary world of ours could be transformed."

— Afri Patron, Archbishop Desmond Tutu speaking about young people involved in Afri's "Just A Second" project

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(2) ADAPTING AND MAINTAINING AN APPROPRIATE TRAINING / FACILITATION / TEACHING APPROACH

Practitioners will be familiar with many or all of these recommendations, having used them in their wider work within the adult and community sectors. However, it is useful to continuously reflect on your own teaching practice and how it can be adapted to deal with particular development education subjects and themes.

USING PARTICIPATORY AND ACTIVE, LEARNER-CENTRED, TEACHING METHODS & INCORPORATING DIVERSE VOICES

Where possible, incorporate the voices of representatives of the majority world communities, and marginalised communities within Irish society. Remind participants, however, that one individual voice represents only one perspective, and should not be taken to represent his/her whole community.

PROMOTING REFLECTIVE PRACTICE & CRITICAL THINKING

Allow space for creativity, flexibility and improvisation. Encourage and support participants to reflect on, and identify, their own position in the world – in contributing to local, national or global issues, or as the result of those issues. Talk about roles and responsibilities, and always remind participants of the link between their actions and the wider environment in which we live. In addition, practitioners should remain open to learning on a continuous basis and should continuously reflect on their own training/ teaching practice.

> ***" The course brought out a different side to me, i.e. confidence in my own ability; more relaxed in my train of thoughts and attitude on certain subjects, which is a very nice place to be at this time."***
>
> ***— Anonymous participant at Lourdes Youth & Community Services development education course***

EXPLORING CAUSES AND EFFECTS

Continuously return to causes and effects: Encourage participants to identify which factors influence outcomes in their own lives (economic, social, cultural, and religious factors; or ethnicity, gender, family type, and personal decision making), and which of these are within or beyond the individual's own control. Explore how different factors affect different people or groups differently, looking at issues such as gender, race, sexuality, and others. Link the experiences of participants with those of members of other communities, in their locality, state, or in the majority world. Recognise that our own lifestyle choices can have a negative impact on the world around us, for example, on the natural environment or in the perpetration of conflict. Consider the impact that positive decisions can have locally and globally.

> ***" I have changed how I behave, from a passive onlooker with regard to social justice issues, to an active campaigner for change. I have witnessed changes in how my family and friends behave, noticed changes in their attitudes and assumptions and have heard them sharing their opinions with others in order to challenge beliefs and raise awareness of the social responsibility of every citizen to contribute to a more equitable, just and sustainable world."***
>
> *— Anonymous participant in Development Perspective's Insight Progamme*

CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES

Question and challenge stereotypes and perceptions about the majority world and about members of our own communities, including, for example, women, men, Travellers and other minority groups.

> ***" Africans are often viewed through the single lens of the asylum process, ignoring the diversity within the communities. Also, media portrayals of Africa present only the part of African life that is plagued by poverty, disease and conflict. The Training for Trainers course offered by the Africa Centre to members of the African diaspora enabled them to facilitate workshops with schools, third level and community groups, and bring their unique perspectives to development issues that impact Africa."***
>
> *— Rebecca O'Halloran and Mbemba Jabbi, The Africa Centre*

USING THE LANGUAGE OF EMPOWERMENT

Use of empowering language is the first step towards entrenching positive development education methodologies amongst the learners/participants. Language can be powerful, and practitioners should be aware that certain words or phrases might not serve the development education agenda well. For example, continuously referring to a group as "poor" or "weak" can create a picture of a group that is helpless to take action for themselves, while speaking about "disempowerment" and "marginalisation" sets the context and draws attention to the underlying structures and processes that lead to poverty and exclusion in the first place.

> ***" We showed photos of the Pitalito community to the group of Traveller women we were working with as part of the presentation on internal displacement in Colombia. One of the women was shocked by the very basic living conditions displayed. When a comparison was drawn between Travellers and the community, the same woman initially dismissed it – stating that 'those women are poor, we're not like them.' Later, having met our Colombian visitor from a campesino community, having heard her story of resistance and having had the opportunity to talk to her about her daily life face to face, I heard other women make a connection between the marginalisation of Travellers and the situation of internally displaced people in Colombia."***
>
> *— Karen Jeffares, Latin American Solidarity Centre*

CHOOSING APPROPRIATE METHODOLOGIES

As in their wider educational practice, trainers/teachers should select tools and methodologies that reflect the group's interests, abilities, and needs. Tools could include: images, multi-media, drama, role-play, experience of participants and story-telling,[11] literature, guest speakers, taking action and developing partnerships.

[11] Be aware that some participants will feel uncomfortable when asked to share their personal experiences. Trainers/facilitators/teachers should ensure that all inputs are openly and freely given.

" Art is a really good tool for people to engage with different perspectives. It helps them think outside the box in ways that you wouldn't normally imagine. It is very good for making emotional connections. We encourage people to not be intimidated by the idea of art. We talk about creativity rather than art. Our understanding is that it is not about having perfect drawing skills, it is about expressing ideas through drawing, rather than having that technical ability. It gives people a space to think creatively. It is about finding a media that suits them, some prefer music, and the more they like it the more they engage with it."

— Jessica Carson, Arts, Participation & Development course, Crawford College of Art & Design

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CALLING AN EXPERT!

In all cases, practitioners should take advantage of sector and thematic experts that are available to them: use guest speakers as well as the expertise amongst the participants to discuss particular issues.

" For the past 25 years, Just Forests has been encouraging Irish citizens to learn more about sustainable timber. Our projects are all about our economic, social, environmental and spiritual relationship with wood, water, wildlife and forests – because when people admire a wood product, they rarely think of its country of origin or the forest from which the wood is taken. Forests clean our air, our water, our soil and they regulate our climate, amongst many other things. The importance of local actions here in Ireland against the illegal global timber trade has never been so urgent. Just Forests works with consumers to educate them about the devastating effects of the illegal timber trade, so that they can change their buying habits and make responsible purchases of wood and wood-based products."

— Tom Roche, Just Forests

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3) SUPPORTING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR EDUCATORS & LEARNERS

Effective development education practice is best achieved when delivered in a supportive environment. While section 2.1 presented suggestions for the wider organisations, the following are steps that individual trainers, facilitators or teachers can adopt to ensure a setting that is conducive to openness and participation.

CREATING A SAFE SPACE FOR OPEN AND HONEST DIALOGUE

This requires, at the outset, that trainers, facilitators and teachers acknowledge their own inherent beliefs and attitudes. Everyone was born and raised in a particular environment, and no one is free of at least some of the "baggage" that our life experience collects. Be aware of it; be self-critical; and be open to new ideas and perspectives.

Be mindful that everyone has a story to tell, but that some might not feel comfortable telling it. Where appropriate, allow participants an opportunity to set the agenda. Respect all contributions and be aware that our understanding of issues may differ greatly due to our social, cultural, political and economic backgrounds. Be open to learning from people of all backgrounds. Use new and different ideas as a starting point for discussion and as a learning opportunity and avoid any language that might be interpreted as condescending or dismissive. (See below, under "Taking Risks" for more on dealing with controversial issues).

RECOGNISING INEQUALITY AND CALLING IT BY ITS NAME

Be aware of and refer to unequal power relations and forms of discrimination, wherever they arise. Don't be afraid to call discrimination by its name, and be prepared to challenge it within your discussion, organisation or community, while at the same time using language that does not alienate or offend. Explore Ireland's role in perpetuating unequal power relations, and our own individual role in that.

While all topics are connected, some topics will be best treated as stand-alone issues, while others are suitable for integration into other subject areas/issues. The issue of

gender equality, for example, can be referred to repeatedly in a range of fora, and should not be dealt with only as a stand-alone issue, to reflect the realities that attitudes and perspective impact on our lives in a variety of ways.

> ***" I've learned to not tolerate violence and ignorance in our communities, I feel more strongly. Take an attitude, take a stand, don't ignore!"***
>
> ***— Anonymous participant at LYCS development education course***

TAKING RISKS

Be willing to engage in conversations about issues that you do not have an expertise in. Because the range of topics that falls within the development education umbrella is so wide, practitioners can sometimes feel reluctant to broach them, especially those subject areas in which they themselves have limited knowledge. However, effective development education does not depend in all cases on the knowledge and expertise of the trainer/teacher. Practitioners should keep in mind that (i) the act of facilitating the discussion and encouraging critical thought and analysis is often more beneficial than any specific knowledge they themselves can bring; and (ii) there may be expertise in the room, as each participant brings their life experience to bear on the subject matter, and should be encouraged to share their opinions and perspectives. Where you do not have expert knowledge on an issue, don't be afraid to say so, and to support participants to source expert information and analysis elsewhere. This process is valuable in itself.

Some educators report a lack of confidence in their ability to teach or facilitate discussions on controversial issues. In development education, it is not advised that practitioners avoid these issues, but instead engage with them by adopting the recommendations outlined above – with openness, inclusiveness, participation and awareness that varied responses from participants can be expected, and should be listened to, and at times, challenged.

WHAT IS A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE? (CDVEC CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT UNIT, 2012)[12]

When someone talks about something being controversial, it usually means that it involves more than just simple disagreement between people. In general terms, controversial issues can be described as being:

- **Issues that deeply divide society – such as euthanasia, economic cutbacks, social welfare payments, immigration …**
- **Issues that challenge personally held values and beliefs – strong political positions, racism, gay rights, civil partnerships …**
- **Issues that generate conflicting explanations – historical events, conflicts such as Northern Ireland, Palestine and Israel …**
- **Issues that evoke emotional responses – crime and imprisonment, education, abortion, disability …**
- **Issues that may cause students [or participants][13] to feel threatened and confused – where their families have very strong views on an issue, where peer pressure is strongly in favour of one side of an argument …**

When dealing with controversial issues, educators could consider starting by agreeing on a set of core values to be followed throughout the discussion (how the group would like to proceed, rules regarding how we speak to one another within the course of the discussion, etc), and can also consider what 'role' they themselves will play in the discussion (neutral or impartial facilitator; active participant with declared interests; devil's advocate, following an official policy line, or allying with the minority view within the group). The way in which the educator frames the discussion should establish a positive and constructive environment in which to discuss the topic, for example by using a human rights framework, a legal framework or a social responsibility framework.[14]

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12 CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit, Professional Development Service for Teachers, and Authors, *Tackling Controversial Issues in the Citizenship Classroom: A Resource for Citizenship Education*, 2012, p. 13. This resource is useful for educators concerned or interested in working with participants on controversial issues, and provides tools and methods to understand why working with these issues is important, and how to approach them.

13 Editorial addition.

14 CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit, p. 25–26, and p. 29.

PART 3

FURTHER READING / INFORMATION

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, please see **www.developmenteducation.ie**, where many resource materials are collected and stored on an ongoing basis, including materials and lessons from practitioners and organisations active in development education.

While no one knows better the value of good practice guidelines for development education than the practitioners who work daily in adult and community education, they will also recognise the challenges in establishing new and improved practices within their organisations and sometimes within their own body or work. However, many of the recommendations contained in this document can be incorporated with minimum additional resources, and practitioners and organisational managers will note that many of them have been incorporated within their practice and organisations already.

Practitioners and policy makers are actively encouraged to share their experiences and learning in this area, and to engage with the development education networks active within their fields. It is through this process that these guidelines will evolve and expand, to ensure a coherent, comprehensive and high quality development education practice across the adult and community education sectors in Ireland.

> ***" I feel that I have re-found the vigour for global issues that I had in my student days, that somehow got lost to me or I let go to sleep. It all seems relevant and important to my life again and I know how to engage with it and what to do with it."***
>
> *— Anonymous participant at Donegal Changemakers 'Global Development' project, facilitated by Lourdes Youth & Community Services*

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APPENDIX 1: DEFINITIONS [15]

Development Education: IDEA uses the definition of development education supplied for Irish Aid: "Development education is 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 others at personal, community, national and international levels" (Irish Aid, 2003).

For IDEA, DE has:

- **An explicit focus on social justice, globalisation and development**
- **A focus on multiple perspectives on the story of development**
- **Roots in, and strong links to, civil society at home, promoting empowerment of the grassroots**
- **Participatory, transformative learning processes**
- **A focus on awareness-building and action for positive change**
- **A focus on active global citizenship.**

Community Education: *Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education* [16] defines community education as "an extension of the services provided by second and third level educational institutions into the wider community" and as a "process of communal education towards empowerment both at individual and collective level". Community education is a process of personal and community transformation, empowerment, challenge, social change and collective responsiveness. It is community-led reflecting and valuing the lived experiences of individuals and their community. Through its ethos and holistic approach, community education builds the capacity of groups to engage in developing a teaching and learning process that is creative, participative and needs-based. Community education is grounded on principles of justice, equality and inclusiveness. It differs from general adult education provision due to its political and radical focus.[17]

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15 Extracts are taken from: IDEA Community Sector Working Group, 'Towards a Strategy for Development Education in the Adult and Community Sector', 2013.

16 Department of Education and Science, *Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education*, July 2010, p. 110.

17 Aontas, *Community Education: More than Just a Course*, AONTAS, 2011, available at http://www.aontas.com/commed/

Adult Education: The White Paper on Adult Education defines adult education as "systematic learning undertaken by adults who return to learning having concluded initial education or training". The Paper identifies six priority areas for the role of adult education in Irish society:[18]

- **Consciousness Raising**
- **Citizenship**
- **Cohesion**
- **Competitiveness**
- **Cultural Development**
- **Community Building**

Further education and training: It should be noted that the Government has recently begun to refer increasingly to "Further Education" and "Further Education and Training", rather than to "Adult Education". The Further Education and Training Bill 2013 introduced in early 2013 contained a definition of "Further Education and Training", but no definition was included in the legislation finally enacted (Further Education and Training Act 2013). The City of Dublin VEC proposed the following working definition: "FET [Further Education and Training] is an education and training service provided to learners over 16 years of age who are no longer attending mainstream second level education or higher education."[19]

Majority World: Terms such as "third world", "developing countries", "the global south", and others are typically used to describe the economically poor countries of Africa, Asia, Central and South America, and Oceania. IDEA uses the term "majority world" to describe these countries, to reflect the fact that the people of these countries represent over two-thirds of the world's population, although they do not share equally in the world's economic wealth and resource allocation.

Minority Group: "Minority group" is a group of people whose ethnicity or identity is different to that of the majority of people in a State, for example Travellers or people with disabilities.

There is a useful discussion of these terms in the Glossary section of the resources website developmenteducation.ie.

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18 Department of Education and Science, *Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education*, July 2010, p. 12.

19 City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee, 'The Further Education and Training Sector: CDVEC's Vision and Response to the DES SOLAS Consultation Paper', 2012 (http://www.cdvec.ie/getattachment/fa60b9db-5639-4988-93e1-5562e4b1fc60/CDVEC-s-vision-and-response-to-the-DES-SOLAS-Consu.aspx).

APPENDIX 2

DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION IN ACTION – ONLINE PLATFORM

"DE in Action" is a new online platform which showcases projects, advocacy, campaigns and actions in development education for schools, community and youth groups, provided by developmenteducation.ie and IDEA. The featured case studies enable the reader to get a clear picture of what development education looks like in practice. Each case study includes information about participants, themes, methodologies, materials, learning and measuring impact.

To access the case studies, go to **www.developmenteducation.ie/taking-action/**

APPENDIX 3

COMMUNITY SECTOR WORKING GROUP

The IDEA Community Sector Working Group was formed in 2011 with the aims of:

- **Putting the local perspective at the heart of development education through linking global development issues with "live" local development issues in communities.**
- **Building awareness and uptake of development education in the adult and community sectors.**

Since 2013, the Group has been engaged with the creation of a strategy for the integration of development education into adult/community policies and practices. See 'DE in the Adult and Community Sector: Draft Strategy 2014–2017'.

The IDEA Community Sector Working Group is open to all IDEA members. If you are interested in joining, please email susan@ideaonline.ie.

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