IRISH FORUM FOR

**GLOBAL EDUCATION**

**Affiliated to Global Campaign for Education**

MISSION STATEMENT

and

GOVERNING DOCUMENT

**1. What is the Forum?**

The Irish Forum for Global education (IFGE) is an independent network of civil society actors, development NGOs, education agencies, teacher unions, faith-based and missionary organisations, professional associations, not-for-profit private organisations, academics and individuals concerned with global education issues, in particular education in development and emergency, progress towards Education 2030 Education Agenda and SDG 4. The Forum is the Irish national affiliate to the Global Campaign for Education. [[1]](#footnote-1)

**2. Vision and mission**

The vision of the Forum is to promote Ireland’s contribution to education in development and in emergency, to support progress towards the achievement of SDG 4 - inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, and the realisation of the wider global agenda for education - Education 2030 Agenda. [[2]](#footnote-2)

The mission of the Forum is to ensure that Ireland’s contribution to education in development and in emergency and its promotion of progress on SDG 4 and the wider Education 2030 Agenda is significant, efficient, effective, and operates within a shared ethical and human rights framework.

**2.1 Context for our vision and mission**

The Forum’s membership understand that education is a human right and a common good that transforms lives, reduces poverty, promotes economic growth, improves health and wellbeing, facilitates gender equality, and contributes to more equitable, inclusive and peaceful societies.

In developing its vision, the Forum recognises that education is essential to the success of each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Its vision is also informed by Ireland’s international obligations to realise the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and by the ambition and commitments set out in Ireland’s development aid policy, ‘*A Better World Ireland’s Policy for International Development’*.

The Forum is also inspired by the vision for Irish education set out in the Department of Education and Skills’ Statement of Strategy 2019-2021 – ‘*Cumasú: Empowering through Learning’* - which states that:

*“A progressive and equitable education and training system has the power to transform lives - the transformation begins with the individual, and moves outward: to family, to community, to society. It brings important social and economic benefits in the form of self-confident and dynamic communities – communities which foster social stability, independence, creativity and entrepreneurial endeavours. The key to accessing this transformation is through the delivery of a quality learning experience that challenges each person to realise their potential, to raise their aspirations and to achieve their personal ambitions. We want an education and training system which empowers learners to be confident in their national, cultural and individual identity, to be aware of their capability to achieve more and to take every opportunity that arises to be the best that they can be.”[[3]](#footnote-3)*

The vision is also informed by the aspirations of the 2019 EU Report on Policy Coherence for Development, and the 2017 New European Consensus on Development - ‘*Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future’*- which states that:

“*Ensuring access to quality education for all is a prerequisite for youth employability and long-lasting development. The EU and its Member States will support inclusive lifelong learning and equitable quality education, particularly during early childhood and primary years. They will also promote education at secondary and tertiary level, technical and vocational training, and work-based and adult learning, including in emergency and crisis situations. Special attention will be paid to education and training opportunities for girls and women. The EU and its Member States will intensify their efforts to ensure everyone has the knowledge, skills, capabilities and rights they need to enjoy a life in dignity, to be fully engaged in society as responsible and productive adults, and to contribute to the social, economic and environmental well-being of their communities*.”[[4]](#footnote-4)

The Forum is a member of the Global Campaign for Education, the global civil society movement working to end the education crisis. It supports the Campaign’s core commitment to ensuring that governments deliver the right of everyone to a free, quality public education. The Forum promotes the work of the Campaign across its six strategic areas:

* quality education with rights and social justice at its core
* equity, non-discrimination and inclusion in education and through education
* strong, public systems, leadership and governance in the education sector
* financing for public education
* transparency, accountability and the role of civil society in the education sector
* education in contexts of conflict, disaster or systemic shock

**2.2 Our values**

The Forum is committed to the following values

*Human rights:* Education is a human right within the broader framework of universal and indivisible human rights.

*Quality education:* Quality education is central to realising the right to inclusive and equitable education for all. Teachers are central to quality education. Education policy must recognise teachers as professionals, their right to organise, and the obligations inherent in the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers.

*Leaving no one behind:* Equity, non-discrimination and inclusion in education and through education is central to this ambition.

*Strong, public systems, leadership and governance in the education sector:* The state is the primary duty-bearer to ensure equitable, inclusive and quality lifelong learning opportunities for all.

*Financing for public education:* The Forum supports the Global Campaign for Education’s demand for increased domestic financing for education to at least 20% of budget and 6% of GDP, and to expand the domestic revenue base through tax justice.

*Education in emergency:* Development aid policy must make specific provision for the education of refugees, migrants and the displaced, for example, by supporting global funds such as Education Cannot Wait.

*Democracy and peace:* Inclusive, equitable and quality education for all is central to creating and sustaining democratic society and ensuring peace, social justice and human rights, including trade union rights.

**3. Objectives**

*Objective 1:* Serve as a space for dialogue on education in development and emergencies at national level, with a specific emphasis on sharing research, knowledge, and information between Forum members and the wider education, development and social justice communities.

*Objective 2:*Promote the visibility of Ireland’s role in education for development at national and international level

*Objective 3:*Contribute to policy processes and practice in Irish development aid for education in development and in emergency with particular emphasis on policy coherence, preparedness, response and recovery

*Objective 4:*Maximise collaboration, synergies and complementarities among different Irish actors involved in education for development

Objective 5: Promote good practice approaches in monitoring and evaluating education for development interventions

*Objective 6****:*** Facilitate capacity-building opportunities for Forum members and their developing-country partners and projects

*Objective 7:* Promote the role and engagement of qualified teachers in quality education for all

*Objective 8*: Promote gender equality in education

*Objective 9:* Advocate for adequate financing for education in development, including in Ireland’s development aid and humanitarian aid, in multi-lateral partnerships and at regional and global level.

**4. Forum’s activities**

The Forum operates through the following activities:

* Develop contributions to policy and other dialogues on education in development and in emergency
* Organize conferences, workshops and other events
* Create thematic groups to harness Irish and international expertise on specific issues
* Work with other networks and enter into collaboration arrangements
* Engage with the education community in Ireland at all levels to develop expertise, solidarity and support for work of the Forum
* Identify and disseminate research and guidance on policy and practice
* Link members to capacity-building opportunities in different technical areas related to education in development and emergency
* Cooperate with Irish Aid to promote Ireland’s contribution to SDG 4 at regional and global level
* Engage in lobbying and advocacy with public representatives in the Oireachtas and in the European Parliament
* Engage in lobbying and advocacy with private sector actors engaged in not-for-profit education projects

**5. Forum Membership**

[Membership](http://eepurl.com/k3yCv) of the Forum is open to civil society actors, NGOs and GOs, education agencies, teacher unions and other trade unions, professional associations, faith-based and missionary organisations, not-for-profit private organisations, academics and individuals concerned with global education issues, in particular education in development and emergency. The Forum will also develop a network of ‘Friends of the Forum’ to harness expertise and skills to support its activities.

**6. Forum Structure**

The Forum’s structure comprises:

1. Membership
2. Annual General Meeting
3. Steering Committee
4. Thematic Working Groups

**6. 1 Membership**

[Membership](http://eepurl.com/k3yCv) of the Forum is open to civil society actors, NGOs and GOs, education agencies, teacher unions and other trade unions, professional associations, faith-based and missionary organisations, professional associations, not-for-profit private organisations, academics and individuals.

The criterion for membership is a written declaration that the member organisation/individual shares the vision, mission, values and objectives of the Forum. (This declaration is attached to the membership application form.) Members of the Forum are deemed to remain members until they formally withdraw from the Forum. At present, there is no membership fee. At a future date, membership of the Forum will be co-terminus with the payment of the membership fee.

**6.2 Annual General Meeting**

The Forum will hold a general meeting in every calendar year, the time and place determined by the Steering Committee. Every annual general meeting except the first shall be held not more than fifteen months after the holding of the last preceding meeting. The business of the annual general meeting is to advance Forum’s objectives, receive an annua report on the work of the Forum, contribute to and decide on Forum policy, adopt a strategic plan, enable members of the Forum to have oversight of its work, elect the Forum Chairperson, elect members of the Steering Committee. Decisions will be made by a show of hand. A record of the business and decisions of the annual general meeting will be maintained by the Secretary to the Steering Committee.

The Chairperson of the Forum shall also serve as Chairperson of the Steering Committee. The Chairperson shall be elected biennially by the annual general meeting and can serve for a maximum of two consecutive terms of office. The term of office for the Chairperson is two years. The election will be by secret ballot, overseen by an external advisor.

Members of the Steering Committee shall be elected biennially by the annual general meeting and can serve for a maximum of two consecutive terms of office. The term of office is two years. The election will be by secret ballot, overseen by an external advisor. Five members will be elected and the Steering Committee has the authority to nominate an additional two members to ensure that particular skills/expertise are available to the Steering Committee. As a demonstration of the democratic principle of representation, the Forum shall aim to elect a Steering Committee which represents the diversity of the membership of the Forum.

The Chairperson will convene a meeting of the newly elected Board not later than twenty-one days after the annual general meetings.

**6.2 The Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee will meet a minimum of four times each year. The Chairperson will convene the meetings. The Steering Committee will strive to reach decisions on the basis of consensus. The main duties of the Steering Committee are to:

1. Provide strategic direction to the Forum for the achievement of its objectives
2. Implement the Forum’s strategic plan
3. Develop an annual workplan and provide guidance and support for its implementation
4. Ensure accountability to the Forum’s stakeholders and beneficiaries
5. Preparation of an annual report to the annual general meeting
6. Decide on membership application
7. Provide guidance, direction and oversight of any staff working for the Forum
8. Ensure the financial stability of the Forum
9. Comply with the Forum’s Governance Code and prepare an annual compliance report
10. Establish and support the work of the Forum’s thematic working groups

The Chairperson of the Forum will have the following responsibilities:

1. Lead the Steering Committee and ensure its efficient and effective functioning
2. Convene and chair Steering Committee meetings
3. Facilitate outreach to other networks and identify opportunities for collaboration
4. Serve as the public representative of the Forum
5. Serve as the project line manager for any staff working for the Forum

The Secretary of the Forum shall be elected on an annual basis by the Steering Committee. The Secretary will work under the direction of the Chairperson and will have the following responsibilities:

1. Prepare documentation for meetings of the Board, including recording the minutes of Board meetings.
2. Prepare documentation as directed by the Board and as required for the annual general meeting
3. Prepare documentation as required for compliance with the Charities Code of Governance
4. Liaise with any staff working for the Forum as directed by the Steering Committee
5. Record the business and decisions of the annual general meeting

Thematic Working Groups: The Forum will establish thematic working groups to develop policy and practice on specific areas. The Steering Committee will develop objectives and time frames for such groups.

A Treasurer may be elected as an additional Officer of the Board at a future date.

**6.4 Thematic Working Groups**

The Forum will create as appropriate thematic working to develop policy and practice on specific areas in order to meet the Forum’s strategic objectives.

**GOVERNING DOCUMENT**

**1. Introduction**

The Forum’s Governing Document is based on the Charities Governance Code. The Forum is a volunteer-only charity and the Governing Document reflects that status. The Governing Document is a work-in-progress and will be reviewed by the Steering Committee as the Forum develops into a professionalised network. The Governing Document was adopted in Spring 2021 by the Steering Committee. For ease of presentation, the manner in which the Forum will comply with the Code’s 6 Principles and its attendant 32 core standards are set out in the format of the Charities Governance Code Compliance Record Form.

**2. Main Object Statement of Forum Governing Document**

**What outcomes is the Forum is set up to achieve?**

The Forum is a voluntary network concerned with global education issues, in particular education in development and emergency, greater awareness of Ireland’s contribution to education in development and emergency and Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the Education 2030 Agenda. The Forum is affiliated to the Global Campaign for Education – the global civil society movement to promote and defend education as a basic human right and a common good.

**How it will achieve these outcomes**?

The Forum will achieve these outcomes by working towards becoming a professionalised voluntary network. By bringing together a wide range of organisations and individuals engaged at all levels of education, many of which have extensive global networks and on-the-ground experience, the Forum aims to constitute an innovative resource for Irish Aid in terms of policy development, partnerships, regional and global networking, innovation and expertise. It also aims to create a dynamic platform for the many diverse policy actors, practitioners and activists who are engaged in education in development and emergency, thereby increasing the visibility of education as an essential dimension of Ireland’s development aid policy.

**Who will benefit from these outcomes?**

The ultimate beneficiaries of the Forum outcomes will be children currently unable to access and benefit from inclusive and equitable quality education for all; children engaged in child labour and not in school; of displaced children in emergency. The proximate beneficiaries of the Forum’s outcomes will be Irish civil society through greater awareness of Ireland’s contribution to education in development and emergency and of Sustainable Development Goal 4. The creation of new synergies around global education will lead to innovation and partnerships in the wider Irish policy communities with an interest in education at national and international level. Through its work, the Forum will highlight and promote of the work of Irish Aid in education in development and emergency and will seek to create greater visibility and public support for Ireland’s development aid programme and humanitarian commitments.

**Where the benefits will be felt**?

The Forum works primarily in the Irish national context and advocates for the achievement of its objectives across within a range of communities involving political, policy, civil society and NGO actors, as well as education providers, education unions, faith communities, academics, not-for-profit private actors. In addition, members of the Forum belong to wider networks and communities, are active at regional and global level and, as such, promote the Forum’s objectives significantly beyond the national context.

Through its affiliation to the Global Campaign for Education the Forum will contribute to global policy discourse and practice on education in development and emergency, Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the wider Education 2030 Agenda.

**3. Membership of the Forum**

The current members of the Forum are:

Aidlink

ETB Curriculum Development Unit

Comhlamh

Concern

Education International affiliates – ASTI, IFUT, INTO, TUI

Global Schoolroom

Misean Cara

Plan International Ireland

UNICEF

WorldVision Ireland

**4. Code of Conduct for Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee is committed to ethical conduct in all areas of its responsibilities and authority. Its members shall:

* Maintain and understand the Forum’s Mission Statement, its vision, its values and its objectives
* Work collectively to promote the Mission Statement
* Be loyal to the Forum and its Mission Statement
* Understand and adhere to the Forum’s Governing Document, the six principles of compliance set out therein and the standards attendant on each Principle as set out in the Charities Governance Code
* At all times represent the Forum in a professional and positive manner
* Act in the best interests of the Forum as a whole – considering what is best for it and its beneficiaries and avoiding bringing the Forum into disrepute
* Manage possible conflicts of interest effectively and transparently –declaring and resolving actual and possible conflicts of interest
* Observe the confidentiality of non-public information acquired including not to disclose such information to any other persons
* Be diligent and attend Steering Committee meetings prepared for full and appropriate participation in decision making
* Attend Forum events
* Work considerately and respectfully with all – respecting diversity, different roles and boundaries, and avoiding giving offence
* Act jointly, strive to achieve decision-making by consensus and to accept a majority decision

1. [www.campaignforeducation.org](http://www.campaignforeducation.org) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://iite.unesco.org/publications/education-2030-incheon-declaration-framework-action-towards-inclusive-equitable-quality-education-lifelong-learning/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/8701a5-action-plan-for-education-2019/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/5a95e892-ec76-11e8-b690-01aa75ed71a1> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)