

## Gender Equality and Development

- **Why do Gender Issues remain problematic to Development Agencies?**  
*Maria Riley, OP*
- **HIV/AIDS and Gender**  
*Michael Kelly, SJ*
- **The Hidden Challenge to Development: Gender based Violence in Guatemala**  
*Blanca Blanco and Lorna Hayes*
- **Gender and the White Paper on Irish Aid**  
*Maeve Taylor*
- **An Overview of Current International Campaigns on Gender in a Development Context**  
*Morína O'Neill and Eileen Connolly*

## Research papers

- **Smallholder Farming and Clean Development Mechanism Projects – Can they Complement each other?**  
*Conor Fox*
- **The US “War on Terror” in Africa: A Discussion of the Security-development Nexus**  
*Selina Donnelly*

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**TRÔCAIRE**

**Development  
Review 2007**

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Trócaire envisages a just and peaceful world which cherishes people's dignity and respects their rights; where their basic needs are met and they can share resources equitably; where people have control over their own lives and those in power act for the common good.

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The views expressed are the authors' and do not necessarily coincide with those of Trócaire.

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# Editorial Statement

Trócaire, the Irish Catholic Agency for World Development produces the *Trócaire Development Review* as part of its programme of policy research and development education. This programme aims to raise awareness in Ireland and elsewhere of the scale, dimensions and causes of world poverty and to advocate for policies to overcome it.

Trócaire, in producing the *Trócaire Development Review*, draws together policy analysis and research findings with particular relevance to Ireland's evolving role in international development. *Review* articles are on economic, social and political themes related to poverty and injustice in the developing world. A particular focus is the impact on developing countries of aid, trade, financial and other policies adopted by industrialised countries. Ireland's policies in the context of European Union policies are of special interest.

Articles that fall within the remit outlined above are welcome. While analytical, they should not be over-technical in presentation. In general, individual country case studies should only be used to illustrate a general argument. Research findings on pertinent issues would be particularly welcome. All articles are subject to blind peer-review by the Editorial Committee; articles should not exceed 7,000 words. Short notes and comments are also welcome.

The views expressed are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Editorial Committee nor of Trócaire.

*Trócaire Development Review* is published annually in the spring. Contributions should be submitted by 1 December addressed to:

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# Preface

This year's *Trócaire Development Review* addresses a highly topical and controversial issue that has been discussed within the development community for decades: how to achieve gender equality. The main focus of this year's *Review* asks why, after so much time and effort, is gender equality still so far from being a reality. Each of the articles in this issue presents a different angle on this topic, highlighting the multi-faceted and complex nature of gender relations, as well as the impact they have on the struggle to eliminate poverty and inequality.

The timing of this year's *Trócaire Development Review* and its coverage of gender are prescient. As new development challenges such as climate change take on greater significance in the media, it is vital that we keep our attention on other enduring inequalities which do not grab newspaper headlines in the same way. The persistent inequality between women and men throughout the world is the most obvious and prevalent manifestation of such injustice.

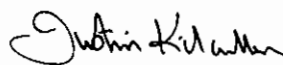
In its work in developing countries, Trócaire has always placed a high priority on promoting gender equality. Failure to address gender inequality is an injustice in its own right, preventing as it does millions of women throughout the world from fulfilling their potential and achieving their full dignity as human beings. Unless this injustice is addressed, moreover, efforts to meet the new development challenges, such as climate change, will remain ineffective.

Pope Benedict XVI recognises the urgency of dealing with this issue. In his new year address for 2007 he referred to the evil of exploitation of women, to the lack of respect for their dignity and situations and cultures where they are “firmly subordinated to the arbitrary decisions of men, with grave consequences for their personal dignity and for the exercise of their fundamental freedoms”.

There can be no illusion of lasting peace and harmony in any society which fails to overcome these forms of discrimination, since they injure the personal dignity impressed by the Creator upon every human being.



The theme of this year's *Trócaire Development Review* ties in perfectly with Trócaire's annual Lenten Campaign, whose theme is also gender equality. In deciding to publish the 2007 *Trócaire Development Review* during the Lenten Campaign, we hope to make a contribution to the level of public debate on this critical issue and to move the goal of achieving gender equality to the top of the development and justice agenda. We owe nothing less to half the population of the world.



Director, Trócaire  
March 2007

# Editor's Introduction

The 2007 issue of the *Trócaire Development Review* focuses mainly on gender and development – an issue which is not new for the majority of people involved in development policy and practice. Debates about inequality between women and men and the impact this has on development processes, have taken place within the development community for several decades. There is ample evidence of the urgent need to address these issues whether approaching them from the perspective of poverty alleviation, human rights protection or even organisational efficiency.

A central theme of the in depth examination of gender inequality in this issue of the *Review* is that across the world women suffer oppression and inequality in a host of different ways. However, violence, HIV/AIDS, economic and social disadvantage are only particular aspects of that pattern of oppression. If governments, NGOs and other civil society partners want to find a solution to this problem they need to focus on the overall framework of gender inequality throughout society, rather than particular manifestations of it, as has been customary to date. This is a radical agenda, one that few countries including Ireland, seem willing to adopt.

There have been major advances in efforts to address this gender imbalance in the past two decades such as women's political and economic participation, the education of girls and lower maternal mortality but a great deal remains to be done in a number of key areas before women enjoy equality with men.

## **Why is there such limited progress on gender equality?**

The question arises, therefore, why is it that after so much effort, so many declarations of intent and public commitments made over many years, by the international development community, there appears to be so little progress in addressing gender inequality. It seems that like the poor, gender inequality will always be with us. This year's *Trócaire Development Review* focuses on this problem and seeks to suggest ways forward for NGOs and all other actors who are committed to the goal of gender equality.

The first article in this year's *Review* by Maria Riley, OP, tries to understand why international development NGOs experience such difficulty in addressing gender inequality. In an attempt to

analyse and understand this phenomenon she boldly confronts the reluctance or inability on the part of most NGOs to address women's needs adequately. Her explanation highlights the complexity of gender issues and the fact that so much global economic policy disempowers women, as do entrenched social and political institutions. To initiate a challenge to this discriminatory approach, Riley proposes that all NGOs embark on a radical review of their organisational policies and practices which will lead to a fresh new planning process incorporating the full integration of gender and women's issues.

## **Violence against women and the feminisation of HIV/AIDS**

Two articles in this year's *Review* examine critical and seminal development challenges from a gender perspective: the prevailing pattern of violence against women and the increasing feminisation of HIV/AIDSs.

In the first article Hayes and Blanco examine the endemic nature of violence against women in Guatemala from a historical and then a contemporary perspective. The authors look at patterns of past and current gender based violence, setting it in its socio-economic and political context and viewing it as an intrinsic aspect of inequality, poverty and exclusion. This violence continues to occur in a state which abets it through inactivity, compliance and apathy. The authors then explore the impact of violence against women on development and democracy in Guatemala and throughout Latin America. They conclude by asking why peacetime atrocities receive less attention from the international community than those committed during the conflict and argue that the extent of violence against women reflects a crisis in gender relations within Guatemala. This in turn raises awkward questions about the effectiveness and validity of gender development work in Guatemala over the past decade. The authors conclude by summarising the multi-faceted responses needed to bring an end to this violence.

The second article by Michael Kelly, SJ, the speaker at the 2007 Trócaire Annual Lecture, considers the inter-relationship between gender inequality and the HIV/AIDS pandemic from an African perspective with a particular focus on Zambia where the author has lived and worked for many years. He suggests that gender inequality drives and is driven by HIV and AIDS and that this appalling scourge will continue to thrive and spread as long as gender inequality persists. Relatively unexplored to date is

what he terms the progressive feminisation of AIDS where the victims are increasingly found to be female. This feminisation reflects the dominance of women by men in Zambia and many other African countries and the author suggests this is only one manifestation of the myriad ways women are denied their dignity as full and equal human beings.

Kelly states that responding to the AIDS epidemic, in terms of prevention, treatment, and impact mitigation, will only succeed when there is robust, sustained action to reduce and eliminate discrimination and unjust treatment of women. Thus every small advance which raises the standing of women and recognises their equality with men is a blow struck against the epidemic. Former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, echoed this point when he called for universal education for girls as a crucial first step in tackling AIDS: "To help reverse the epidemic, high priority should be given to poverty-reduction strategies, girls' education, women's economic opportunities and other basic reforms".

Both of these specific problems, gender based violence and the progressive feminisation of AIDS, point to a persistent and deep-rooted inequality which requires a fundamental response on the part of NGOs, governments and inter-governmental agencies. After many years of work in this area it seems that many development agencies are still slow to address the underlying issues which perpetuate patterns of exploitation and inequality and have led to the further spread of the disease.

### **Gender inequality in the Irish government's White Paper**

Ireland has always had a strong commitment to overseas development, justice and human rights and Maeve Taylor's article considers the level of achievement by this country, now a rich developed nation, in the area of gender equality. She does this through a detailed critique of the Irish government's White Paper on Irish Aid which she says contains much rhetoric, some of it contradictory but is short on firm commitments to action on gender inequality. The White Paper does affirm some commitments to mainstreaming as a strategic approach to gender equality. However, these references lack the kind of critical framework which is essential to effect the degree of real change necessary to advance the situation of women in the developing world and to meet Ireland's international obligations in this area.

The final article in the section on gender equality and development is by Morina O'Neill and Eileen Connolly and

comprises part of a research project commissioned by Trócaire. It focuses on current international approaches in advocacy and campaigning on gender in a development context. The authors begin by studying the rationale for such campaigns and advocacy before moving on to assess key activities in public decision-making and attempts to eliminate gender based violence. They then examine advocacy around funding for gender issues and effective methods which can be used to measure gender equality.

## **Emerging issues**

Whilst the principal focus of this year's *Review* is on gender, it also contains two key papers on critical development issues which are very topical and have a direct impact on Trócaire's work throughout the world. These are climate change driven by global warming and the perceived threat to the US posed by international terrorism. These two issues are very much in the news and currently reshaping the development landscape in quite dramatic ways.

In his essay, Conor Fox examines the impact of climate change on small-scale farming in Brazil. He considers whether the current international frameworks, including the clean development mechanism, can really benefit the poor in the developing world. He frames this query in the context of an analysis which considers whether farmers in developing countries can certify sufficient carbon emission offsets through sustainable agro-forestry projects. Fox argues that such actions can make a major contribution to development and reduce the vulnerability of the participants to the negative effects of climate change. Using local initiatives in Brazil as a model, he presents a critique for the design of such initiatives, proposing that well designed, small-scale agro-forestry clean development mechanism projects can avoid many of the pitfalls of large-scale projects. They can also offer high quality carbon credits for countries such as Ireland seeking to achieve Kyoto Protocol compliance.

The final paper by Selina Donnelly examines the nexus between development policy and the international "war on terror" six years after the attacks on the United States of 11 September 2001. She examines the far reaching implications for US foreign policy in Africa and considers the impact on Africa of increasing US security interest in that continent, a focus which derives from US strategic interests in African oil. The author outlines the security-development nexus, relating it to US perceptions of the potential threat posed by the instability and

underdevelopment of many African states. She then considers those states which influence US perceptions of a potential terrorist threat. The final section examines the reality of such threats, the implications for African development of US counterterrorist measures and concludes that the current US administration is attempting to link its “war on terror” and poverty relief measures to the promotion of neo-liberal economic policies.

The articles in this year’s *Trócaire Development Review* present a strong case for the urgency of moving the achievement of gender equality to the top of the development agenda. Improving the situation of women in fundamental areas such as freeing them from the threat of violence and the spread of AIDS as well as providing equal opportunities with men will bring untold benefits for entire populations, both male and female. The only real anomaly is that this reality has not so far been recognised and acted on by those who hold the power to make effective change. Hopefully the articles in this year’s *Review* will provide some understanding of the many benefits such change can bring and help provide the stimulus to achieve it.

Lorna Gold  
Editor

# Notes on Contributors

**Blanca Blanco** holds an MA in Development Studies from the Development Studies Centre, Kimmage Manor, Dublin. Over the past five years she has been working with Trócaire in Central America, first in Honduras and currently as the Guatemala Programme Officer.

**Eileen Connolly** has an MA in Women's Studies from University College, Dublin and a PhD in Government from Dublin City University. She is a senior lecturer in the School of Law and Government at DCU and her research interests include the politics of development, and gender in international relations. She has recently completed a research report on engagement with civil society for poverty reduction for the Advisory Board of Irish Aid.

**Selina Donnolly** is Trócaire's Advocacy Intern for Sudan. She is a graduate in Political Science from Trinity College, Dublin and studied International Relations at Dublin City University.

**Conor Fox** has an MSc in Environmental and Natural Resource Economics from UCL and is doing research for Trócaire on issues related to climate change and environmental justice in Brazil. He previously worked as an environmental economist for the Environmental Protection Agency of Guyana as an ODI Fellow and in Central America with Trócaire, Concern and local organisations on sustainable livelihoods and mitigation and prevention of disasters.

**Michael Kelly** is a Jesuit priest who has been involved since 1955 in education at all levels in Zambia, and, over the past two decades, in the encounter between the AIDS epidemic and education, justice, gender equity, vulnerable children, and ethics.

**Lorna Hayes** is a graduate of University College Dublin and holds an MA in Development Studies. Since 2004, she has been working for Trócaire in Central America, primarily in the HIV/AIDS and human rights programmes.

**Deirdre McArdle** has been a Co-financing intern with Trócaire for the past six months.

**Breda O'Brien** is a secondary school teacher and a columnist with *The Irish Times*. She is a graduate of Mater Dei and also recently completed a research master's in Dublin City University on church and media.

**Morína O'Neill** is a researcher at the Centre for International Studies, School of Law and Government, Dublin City University. Her main areas of research are development aid, governance and democracy, and discourses of development.

**Sally O'Neill** is Trócaire's regional manager for Latin America, based in Honduras. She has many years' experience of development work all over the developing world working with local civil society organisations on social and environmental justice programmes.

**Maria Riley, OP**, an Adrian Dominican has an MA and PhD in English literature from Florida State University and is currently on the research staff and coordinator of the Global Women's Project at the Center of Concern in Washington, DC. She has written and lectured extensively on feminism, spirituality, justice and gender issues. She co-founded and chairs the Interfaith Working Group on Trade and Investment based in Washington, DC which monitors US trade policy and advocates for more just international trade agreements.

**Maeve Taylor** is the Policy and Training Project Leader of Banúlacht. She has represented Banúlacht and Network Women in Development Europe (WIDE) at a number of UN conferences on gender, development and trade issues. She is the author of Banúlacht's 2004 publication, *Looking at the Economy through Women's Eyes* and has taught a course entitled "Women, economy and society" as part of the MA Women's Studies at the Women's Education Research and Resource Centre, UCD.

**Alix Tiernan** has worked in Mozambique, Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina with various NGOs, both in programme management and programme quality support. At present she is the Programme Cycle Management Advisor in Trócaire.

**Alan Whelan** is the Library and Information Officer within Trócaire's Communications Unit.



The main theme of the 2007 *Trócaire Development Review* is gender equality and development, a topical and controversial issue which has been the subject of debate for decades. This issue asks why, despite so much effort and extensive public commitment to gender equality, real progress and actual achievement have been minimal. While there have been some major advances, in many parts of the world women continue to suffer oppression and inequality. Maria Riley's opening article attempts to understand why many NGOs are unable or unwilling to address women's needs adequately, suggesting they need to embark on a radical review of policy and practice to integrate gender issues fully.

Persistent violence against women in Guatemala is the subject of the second article by Blanca Blanco and Lorna Hayes, who suggest the extent of gender based violence reflects a gender crisis throughout Latin America. They also ask the disturbing question why peacetime atrocities attract less public and international condemnation than those committed during war.

Michael Kelly's article on the relationship between gender and HIV/AIDS in Africa posits that gender inequality drives and is driven by the AIDS epidemic. He argues that the feminisation of the disease reflects male domination and is only one aspect of the failure to grant women their full dignity as human beings.

The Irish government's response to gender inequality is the subject of Maeve Taylor's article on the White Paper. She finds a general commitment around gender equality, but also contradictions within the White Paper. She concludes that the verdict is still out on whether Ireland is taking gender equality seriously in its Aid programme. The fifth article by Morína O'Neill and Eileen Connolly focuses on the rationale for international gender advocacy and campaigning in a development context.

The two final articles cover subjects with a high media profile: global warming leading to climate change and the US "war on terror" in Africa. Conor Fox's article examines small-scale, clean development mechanism agro-forestry projects in Brazil and how these offer a model for such initiatives. While Selina Donnelly considers how Africa is being drawn into the US "war on terror" and the implications of US counterterrorist activities on a number of developing states.

In its comprehensive analysis of global gender inequality, this issue of the *Review* makes a strong case for moving gender equality to the top of the development agenda. It highlights the many benefits this will bring and provides stimulus and encouragement to those working to bring about this vital change.

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