Each day of delay on action is costing lives. Globally, we have the capacity to anticipate and prevent regional and global famines. Give meaning to those words ‘never again’. The transformation we need is possible – is overdue.

President Michael D. Higgins

Activity 1: What is Overseas Aid?

Step 1
Set up a word cloud on MentiMeter with the question: What is overseas aid? Alternatively, write the question on the board, or on large sheets of paper, and ask the students to discuss in pairs, then feedback to the whole class.

From the feedback and suggestions, try to come up with a short class definition that everyone can agree with.

Step 2
Explore the definition of overseas aid further by watching the Overseas Aid Explained by Trócaire video located on the Somalia branch of Tree of Justice. Ask the students to take brief notes so that they can reflect on what they hear in the video.

Step 3
Use the following questions to debrief the video with your group:

- What is the official name given to overseas aid? Official development assistance.
- What are some of the reasons why countries need overseas aid? Poverty; hunger; legacies of colonialism; conflict; impact of climate change; inability to provide basic services.
- Where does the money for overseas aid come from? Irish taxpayers managed by Irish Aid; UK taxpayers managed by UKAID.
- Why is it important that organisations like Trócaire work in partnership with local people and communities? So that solutions are not imposed, but developed in partnership.
- What are the signs that overseas aid is working? Reduction in extreme poverty; more children in school; less women dying in childbirth.
- How is Trócaire responding in Somalia? Health and nutrition services; provision of shelter.
- What financial commitment have wealthy countries made to overseas aid each year? At least 0.7 per cent of the gross national income (GNI) of each country – 70 cent in each 100 euro.
- Did Ireland reach this commitment in 2020? No – only 31 cent for every 100 euro, or 0.31 per cent.
- What other action is needed in addition to overseas aid? Address the root causes of global issues.
Extension Activity

Explain to the students that the Irish government has for years been unable to deliver on its commitment to overseas aid. In 1974 when Garret FitzGerald was the minister for foreign affairs, the government pledged to give 0.7 per cent of the gross national income to overseas aid, or 70 cent out of every 100 euro. Successive governments have made the same commitment but forty-eight years later Ireland is still falling short. Current estimates are that Ireland gives 0.31 per cent to overseas aid. The United Kingdom for many years managed to deliver on its 0.7 per cent commitment, but reduced this to 0.5 per cent in 2020 due to financial pressures on the UK economy.

Ask the students why they think Ireland has been unable to reach 0.7 per cent. Can they think of things that have happened to get in the way of this commitment?

Who has the power when it comes to deciding how much overseas aid Ireland and/or the UK gives each year? Encourage the students to think at different levels – personal, local, national, international. How can young people act to ensure Ireland and the UK meet their overseas aid commitments?

Step 4

Myth Busters

There are many myths that exist about overseas aid, often because people are unaware of the facts supporting the need for overseas aid.

Split the students into groups of four and give each group a copy of Worksheet 1: Myth Busters. Ask the groups to match each myth with its corresponding buster.

The correct answers can be found on slide 23 of the Introduction to Somalia slide show. Discuss the correct answers with the students. Did they find anything surprising? Is there anything they would like to learn more about?

Step 5

The Work of Irish Aid

Irish Aid is Ireland’s official international development aid programme. Part of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Irish Aid’s job is to manage Ireland’s overseas aid budget, which is used to reduce poverty and hunger around the world, and to support emergency assistance and longer-term development in over eighty of the world’s poorest countries. Watch this video from Irish Aid about their work.

Ireland gives overseas aid in three different ways: bilateral; multilateral; through NGOs. See slide 24 in the Introduction to Somalia slide show to learn more.

In small groups, ask the students to investigate one of the countries where Irish Aid works. Choose one of the countries mentioned in the video, or have a look at the Irish Aid website.

Students can also choose a country that is not one of the key partner countries for Irish Aid, but they still support work in that country through NGOs like Trócaire. Somalia is one example of a country where this is the case.

Ask the students to put together a report on the work of Irish Aid (slide 25) in that country under the following headings:

- General country information (location, people, capital)
- What type of aid is this?
- Areas of work
- How much Irish Aid funding goes to this country? Break it down
- Partners that Irish Aid works with
- Successes

Step 6

Increasing the Commitment

As can be seen from the various parts of this activity, there is a clear need for continued support from Ireland, the UK and other developed countries in the form of overseas aid for less developed countries. Without this aid, poverty and injustice around the world would increase and many more people would be facing enormous struggles to survive.

Ask the students to write a communication to their local TD. Explain in the communication that they have been studying overseas aid, how important it is, and the excellent work that Irish Aid, Irish NGOs and many others are involved in around the world. Ask the TD directly to take every opportunity to support any increases in the overseas aid budget, moving Ireland closer to the 0.7 per cent commitment.

You can find a list of all current TDs here.
### Myth Busters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Myth</th>
<th>Buster</th>
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<tr>
<td>Only countries in the Global South receive overseas aid.</td>
<td>Many of these problems are linked to colonialism, conflict and climate change, which have many of their roots in the Global North.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We haven’t caused these problems; it is not our problem to fix them.</td>
<td>Overseas aid is making a real impact. It has helped to save millions of lives and to reduce extreme poverty around the world. Because of overseas aid more children are in school than ever before and fewer women are dying in childbirth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governments should provide for their own people.</td>
<td>The wealthiest countries of the world each agreed to spend at least 0.7 per cent of their annual gross national income on overseas aid. This promise amounts to spending just 70 cent for every €100 on aid. Unfortunately, very few countries, including Ireland, have met this goal. In fact, in 2020 Ireland spent roughly only 31 cent for every €100 on overseas aid.</td>
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<td>Aid has no long-term, lasting impact.</td>
<td>Governments face major challenges in providing basic services such as healthcare and education and cannot do this without assistance from overseas.</td>
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<td>Local people have no say in how overseas aid is used.</td>
<td>Ireland received overseas aid during the famine from places like India and South America. Every country can experience hardships that require aid from overseas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland has fulfilled all its commitments to overseas aid.</td>
<td>Because Trócaire works in partnership with community-based groups, local people remain the driving force for change.</td>
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